# Sections

In this lesson, we will study the section tag in HTML5.

With the `<section>` tag, you can mark parts of your web page as a section. This tag seems to be a kind of a jolly joker, depending on what you consider a section.

In the case of a book, each chapter and subchapter can be a section, as well as sidebars or emphasized notes and hints. If the webpage displays a report, it also can have sections, for example, each region in a sales report. Let's assume, you create a news site. In the home page, each article may have its own section, as well as a collection of highlighted articles that can be put in a separate section.

It seems that a section does not have a pretty clear identity. It's up to you how you define it. The creators of HTML5 could have crafted at least two different kinds of section-like tags (for example, one for single items, and another one

for a collection of items, etc.), but they created only one for the sake of simplicity.

Let's have a look at a web page that displays an e-book. Listing 3-6 shows the skeleton of the web page using `<section>` tags.

## Listing-03-06: Using the `<section>` tag #

```html
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
  <title>Sections</title>
</head>
<body>
  <header class="pageHeader">
    <h1>Unraveling HTML5</h1>
    <p class="byLine">&mdash; with Visual Studio 2013</p>
  </header>
  <section>
    <h1>Introduction</h1>
  </section>
  <section>
    <h1>A Short Tour of HTML</h1>
    <p>...</p>
    <section>
      <h2>Creating a Basic HTML Page</h2>
      <p>...</p>
    </section>
    <section>
      <h2>Formatting the HTML Page</h2>
      <p>...</p>
    </section>
    <section>
      <h2>...</h2>
      <p>...</p>
    </section>
  </section>
  <section>
    <h1>Getting to Know HTML5</h1>
    <p>...</p>
    <section>
      <h2>The Unordinary story of HTML5</h2>
      <p>...</p>
    </section>
    <section>
      <h2>What Behind the Term HTML5 Is</h2>
      <p>...</p>
    </section>
    <section>
      <h2>...</h2>
      <p>...</p>
    </section>
  </section>
  <footer class="pageFooter">
    <p>&copy; Istvan Novak, 2013</p>
  </footer>
</body>
</html>
```
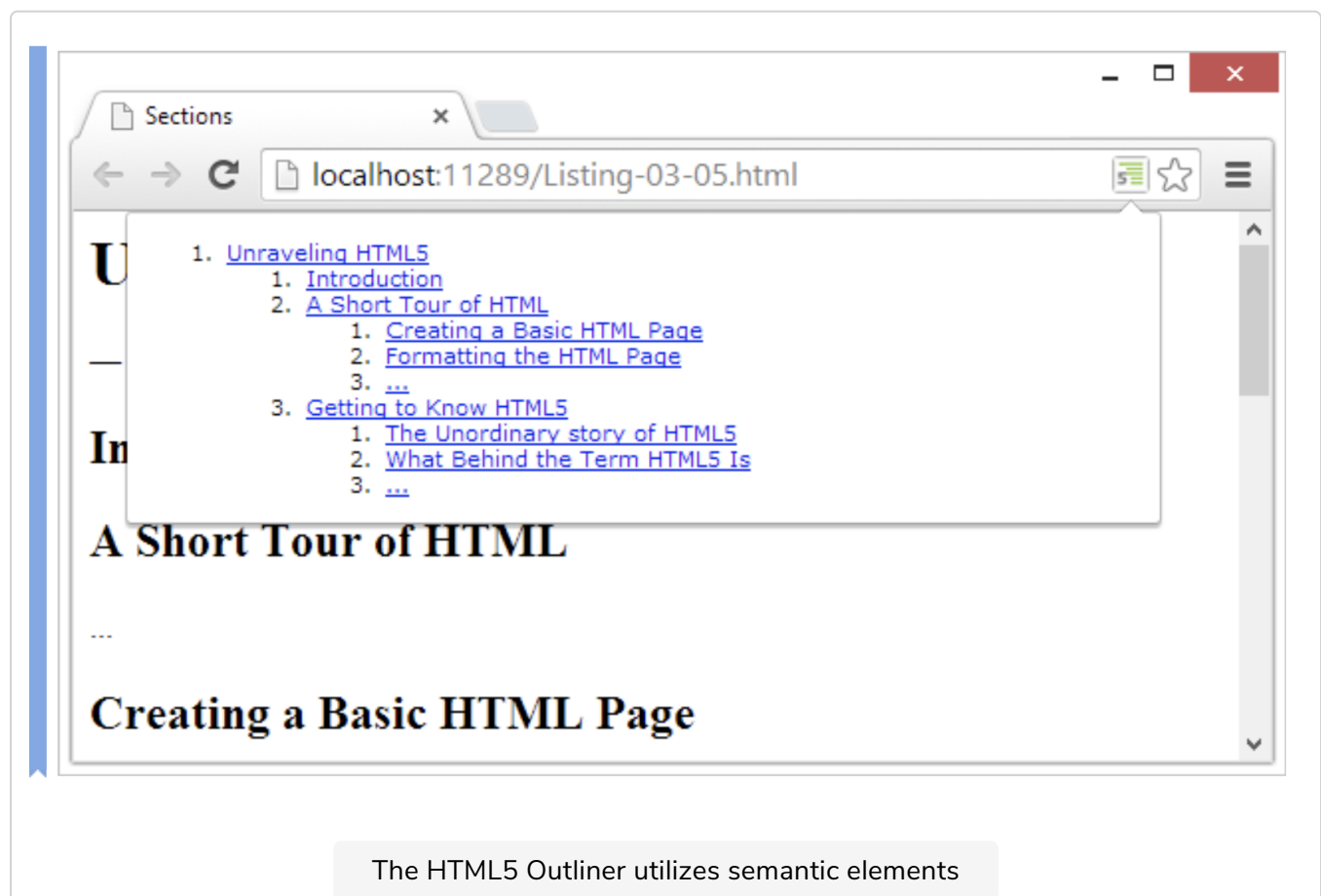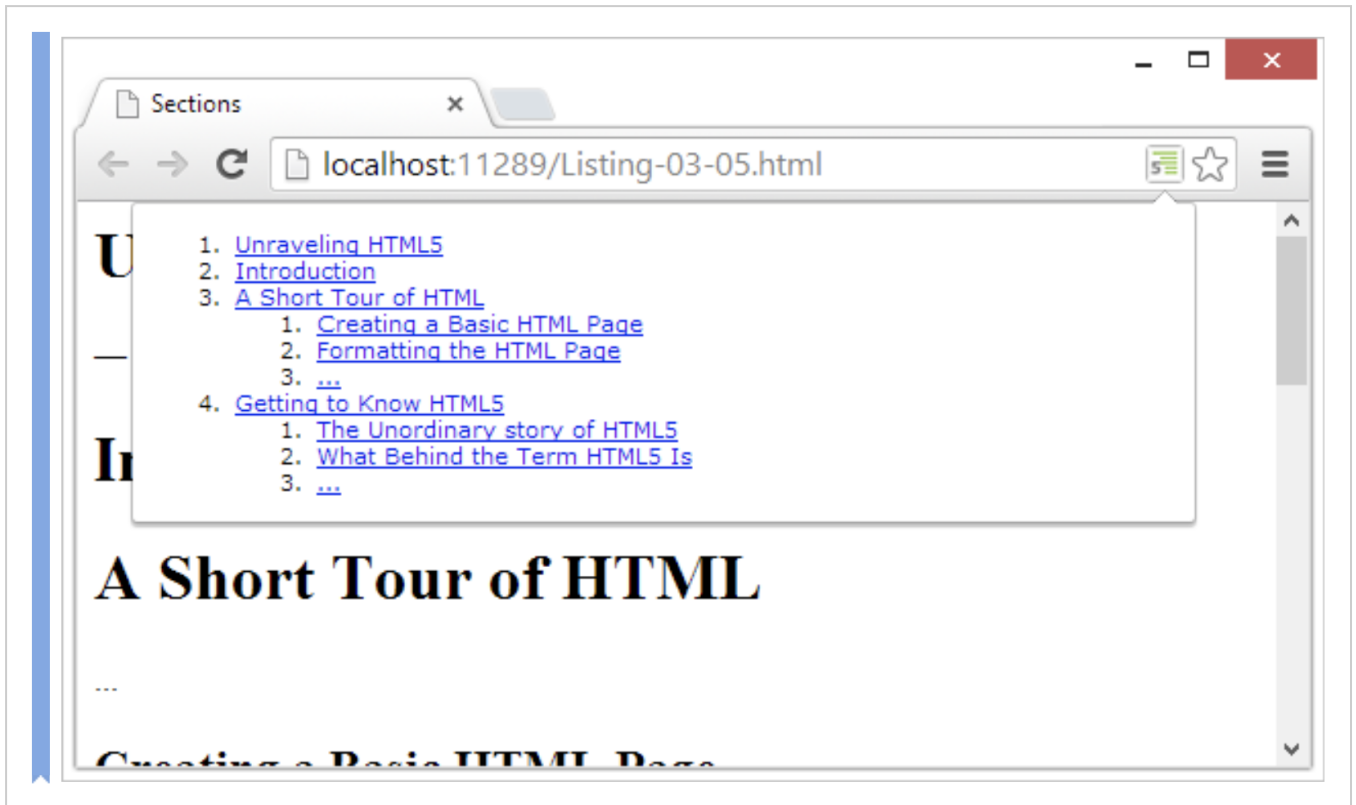
As you can see from Listing 3-6, each chapter of the course, and each subchapter, is in its own section; so actually `<section>` tags are nested in each other. As you already learned, `<section>` tags do not affect the rendering of the page, they are just simple semantic containers.

However, the extra semantics are very useful for tools. For example, if you use Google Chrome, you can add an extension named HTML5 Outliner by Dominykas Blyžė. This tool puts a small icon in the address bar and clicking it displays the outline of the currently loaded document.

HTML5 Outliner utilizes the semantic information to create the outline, as shown in the image below:



The HTML5 Outliner utilizes semantic elements

This tool uses the outlining rules defined by the HTML5 specification. If you do not use sections, the tool still understands the structure of the document using the headings ( `<h1>` , ..., `<h6>` ), but in this case the outline is a bit different, as shown in the image below:

The page outline when no semantic elements are used

Since there is no section information, the `<h1>` tag in the `<header>` is taken into account as a top-level outline entry with all other `<h1>` tags.

Now, if you turn back to Listing 3-5, and change all `<h2>` tags to `<h1>`, the document will contain only first-level headings.

Nonetheless, because the `<section>` tags still define the document structure properly, the HTML5 Outline tool will display the same outline, as shown in the first image above.

In the *next lesson*, we will learn about adding figures to our page.