

CSS Text

20 minutes

Introduction to Web Frontend

Outcome 1.15

Outcome 1.16

Outcome 1.22

Outcome 2.20

Outcome 2.21

Outcome 3.3

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

This step-by-step lesson will guide you through the process of styling text on a webpage using CSS. You'll learn how to set text and background colours, align text, add decorations and transformations, adjust text spacing, and apply a text shadow. Each step includes practical examples and encourages you to modify the code to see the effects of different CSS properties.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
1.15	consider the quality of the user experience when interacting with computers and list the principles of universal design, including the role of a user interface and the factors that contribute to its usability
1.16	compare two different user interfaces and identify different design decisions that shape the user experience
1.22	read, write, test, and modify computer programs
2.20	identify and fix/debug warnings and errors in computer code and modify as required
2.21	critically reflect on and identify limitations in completed code and suggest possible improvements
3.3	use appropriate programming languages to develop an interactive website that can display information from a database that meets a set of users' needs

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Understand the fundamental CSS properties for styling text on web pages.
- Apply text colour and background colour using various value formats like names, HEX, and RGB.
- Manipulate text alignment to achieve desired layout effects.
- Enhance text appearance with decorations, transformations, and spacing techniques.
- Create visual depth by adding text shadows with customised settings.

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Open the interactive yourself and run one editable example, so you can confirm the Run Code and see the colours buttons work on the classroom machines and behind the school filter.
- Have the three colour value formats ready to show side by side: name, HEX and RGB all produce the same result.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

Introduction

Text Color

Background Color

Text Alignment

Text Decoration

Text Transformation

Text Spacing

Text Shadow

TEACHING MOVES

1. Introduction. Preview the six things CSS can do to text as a checklist. Tell students each property is one line of CSS, and that today is about editing values and watching the result, not memorising syntax.
2. Text Color. Show that blue, #009900 and rgb(255,0,0) are three ways of naming a colour. Have students change one value and re-run before moving on, so they connect the property to the visible change.
3. Background Color. Point out background-color colours the box behind the text, not the text itself. Contrast it with the color property from the previous step so students do not mix the two up.
4. Text Alignment. Justify is the one to demonstrate live: it only shows on the long About Italy paragraph. Left, right and center are obvious, but justify needs enough text to stretch.
5. Text Decoration. Draw attention to the span class in the HTML: decoration is applied to spans inside a paragraph, not the whole paragraph. This is students' first sight of styling part of a line.
6. Text Transformation. Stress that text-transform changes display only, the underlying text is unchanged. Have students confirm by comparing what they typed with what appears.
7. Text Spacing. Four related properties at once. Change one value at a time and re-run, otherwise students cannot tell which property caused which change.
8. Text Shadow. Break the four values apart on the board: horizontal, vertical, blur, colour. Have students zero the blur, then increase it, to isolate what each number does.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students confuse color and background-color, expecting color to fill the whole area behind the text. Set both on the same element in one example so the text colour and the box colour are clearly different, and name which is which.
- Students think text-transform: uppercase actually changes the letters they typed, and worry it will affect their saved text. Show that the HTML source is still lowercase after transform is applied. It is a display effect only.
- Students expect text-align: justify to visibly do something on a short heading or a single word. Apply it to the long paragraph. Justify only stretches lines that wrap, so it needs several lines to show.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Emerging: If a student's edit does nothing, check they pressed Run Code and that their change is inside the braces for the right selector. Give one property to master, colour, before moving them on.
- Developing: Ask them to predict the result of a value change before running it, then check.
- Proficient: Challenge them to combine several properties on one element, for example a centred, uppercase heading with a coloured shadow, and to keep the result readable. Ask them to explain when they would use HEX rather than a colour name, moving toward the precision expected at Higher Level.