

## Activity

Timing: 1 to 2 hours

Level: Ages 15 and up

# Information architecture

## Activity Overview

Information architecture (IA) allows easy access to content - it's all about ensuring that users can get what they came for. Use this activity to introduce information architecture to help students organize web projects where users have easy access to content and information.

**Note:** Portions of this activity align to the Adobe Certified Associate objectives. Within the instruction steps and technical guides, the specific learning objectives for the exam(s) are referenced with the following format: <sup>1.1</sup>

## Activity Objectives

### Design skills

- Applying information architecture
- Designing for a specific audience and purpose

## Project Assets

- *Presentation:* Introduction to information architecture <sup>1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.5</sup>
- *Guide:* Tips for information architecture <sup>1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.5</sup>

## Background preparation resources

[Technical and content information](#)

[ISTE NETS\\*S Standards for Students](#)

[Adobe Certified Associate objectives](#)

## Activity Steps

1. Information architecture (IA) is a method of organizing and labeling a website structure to support usability. Careful consideration of the content and organization of a site is the first step to creating an effective user experience. The goal of this activity is to create a site map that uses information architecture for a web project.
2. Use the *Introduction to information architecture* presentation [1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.5](#) to introduce information architecture to the students. Some guiding points are
  - Research the needs of the audience and users.
  - Identify a clear purpose and audience for the site: who they are, why they will come to the site, the goals of the site, and so on.
  - Determine how to organize content by determining the site's information structure (single page, flat structure, index page, daisy, strict hierarchy, coexisting hierarchy).
  - Collect site content and develop a content inventory.
  - Create a site map or flowchart of the site.
  - Define the navigation systems (global, local, utility links).
3. Distribute the *Tips for information architecture* guide [1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.5](#) and discuss how a site map or flowchart communicates information organization. Explain the structure of a flowchart. Discuss the definition of a home page. Point out that the home page is the default page that opens in a browser if the visitor does not specify another page. Mention that the home page is sometimes called a menu page because it usually contains the main menu links to the first set of content pages. Some of these first content pages might contain submenus to other content pages.
4. To help students understand flowcharts/sitemaps, have them create a flowchart/sitemap for a simple website. For example, students would draw the pages linked to the home page of this site and then the pages linked to those pages. By clicking through the links, students will begin to understand how a flowchart relates to a constructed site and will be able to create their own flowcharts more easily.

**Note:** Students have several options for building their site maps or flowcharts. They can draw by hand, use visual design software such as Inspiration (Inspiration Software), or use the Organization Chart feature in Microsoft PowerPoint or Microsoft Word.
5. Explain that employing their knowledge of IA will ensure that users get what they came for because the content is easy to find. Finally, discuss the importance of creating flowcharts/site maps for any web project they work on and the need to revise them if they change their design, especially resulting from client, instructor, peer, or teammate feedback.

## Assessment:

	<b>0 – Does not meet expectations</b>	<b>3 – Meets expectations</b>	<b>5 – Exceeds expectations</b>
<b>Site map/ Flowchart</b>	Absent or incomplete.	The site map/flowchart organizes the web project and shows how users will view the content and information. The site map/flowchart shows main areas of content and represents all pages within each section.	The site map/flowchart clearly organizes the web project and shows how users will view the content and information. The site map/flowchart clearly and thoroughly shows all of the main areas of content and represents all pages within each section.

## Background preparation resources:

- For more teaching and learning resources on the other topics in this project, search for resources from the community on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>

## ISTE NETS\*S Standards for Students

This project is aligned to the ISTE NETS\*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this project aligns to your state requirements.

### ISTE NETS\*S: Curriculum and Content Area Standards – NETS for Students

#### 1. Creativity and Innovation

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

- c. use models and simulations to explore complex systems and issues.

## Adobe Certified Associate Exam Objectives

### Adobe Certified Associate, Web Authoring objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for a website.
- 1.2 Identify web page content that is relevant to the website purpose and appropriate for the target audience.
- 1.5 Make website development decisions based on your analysis and interpretation of design specifications.
- 2.5 Demonstrate knowledge of flowcharts, storyboards, wireframes, and design comps to create web pages and a site map (site index) that maintain the planned website hierarchy

### For more information

Find more teaching materials for using Adobe software in your classroom on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>.



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