

MADCAP FLARE DESKTOP 2026

Creating and Applying Styles

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Welcome	5
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CHAPTER 2

Creating a Project From a Template	7
How to Create a New Project From a Template	8

CHAPTER 3

Creating and Applying Block-Level Styles	9
How to Apply a Parent Block Style	10
How to Create a Block Style Class	11
How to Apply a Child Block Style	12

CHAPTER 4

Creating and Applying Character-Level Styles	13
How to Create a Character Style Class	14
How to Apply a Character Style Class	16

CHAPTER 5

Creating and Applying Generic Style Classes	18
How to Center Content With a Generic Style Class	19
How to Indent Content With a Generic Style Class	23

CHAPTER 6

Creating a Container (Div) for Special Information	25
How to Create a Container	26
How to Create a Label for a Container	30
How to Apply Information for a Container	32

APPENDIX

PDFs	35
Tutorials	35
Cheat Sheets	36
User Guides	37

CHAPTER 1

Welcome

Approximate Time: 20 minutes

Welcome to the Styles Tutorial—Creating and Applying.

- **Tutorial Goal** Learning how to create new styles, and then apply the styles to content.
- **Key Concepts** Block-level elements, character-level elements, and generic classes for a project.

Stylesheet Editor

All Styles

- h2
 - No-Page-Break-Before
 - SecondaryColor
- h3
- h4
- h5
- h6
- hr
- html
- img
- li
- MadCap | breadcrumbsProxy
- MadCap | dropDown
- MadCap | dropDownBody
- MadCap | dropDownHotspot
- MadCap | expandingBody
- MadCap | expandingHead
- MadCap | glossaryProxy
- MadCap | indexProxy
- MadCap | tocProxy
- MadCap | xref
- ol
- p
- span
 - Emphasis
 - Emphasis-BoldItalic

New Topic.htm

Layout (Web) Medium (default) Page Layout

span

New Topic

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. **Maecenas porttitor massa**.

Fusce posuere, magna sed pulvinar ultricies, purus lectus malesuada libero.


New Heading


Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. **Maecenas porttitor massa**.

Fusce posuere, magna sed pulvinar ultricies, purus lectus malesuada libero.

Creating a Project From a Template

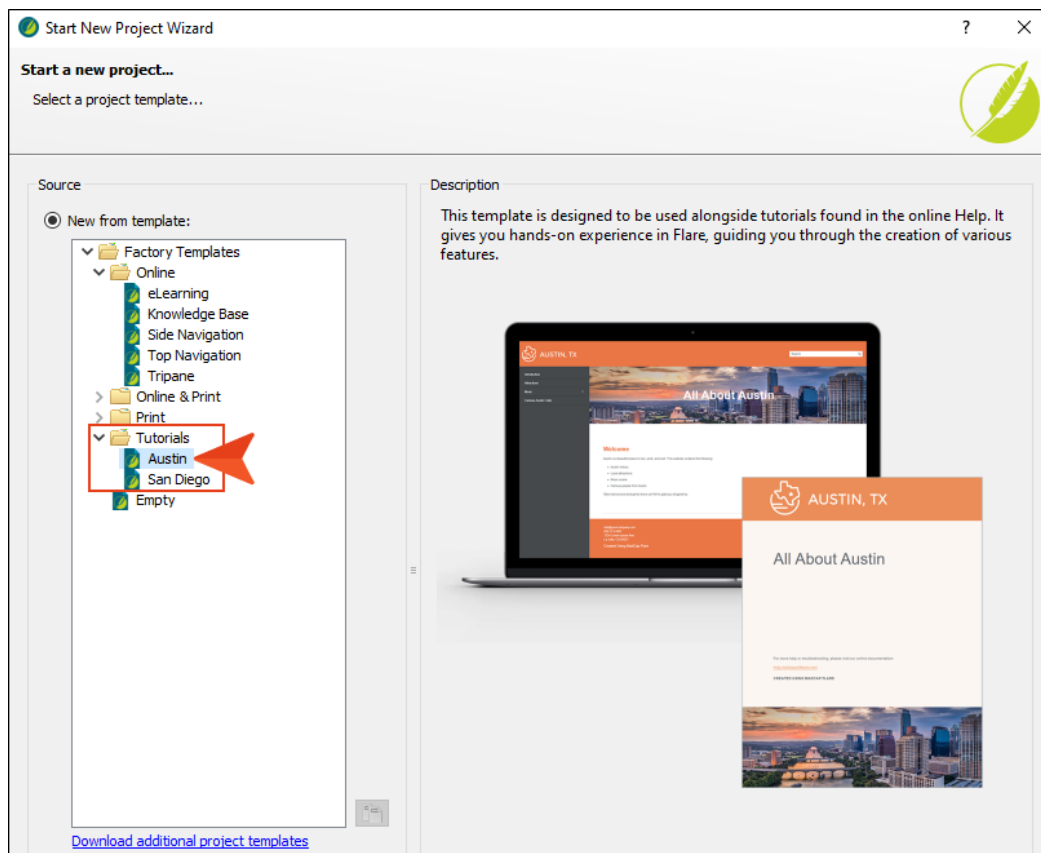
To start, let's create a new project based on Flare's Austin template.

 **NOTE** This is a standalone tutorial. However, if you have completed the previous styles tutorials, you can skip this topic since a project has already been created.

 **NOTE** If you plan to work with the project from the first styles tutorial, the images you see as you go through this tutorial will be slightly different. If you want the images to match, then it is recommended to create a new project for this tutorial.

I How to Create a New Project From a Template

1. Select **File > New Project**. The Start New Project Wizard opens.
2. In the **Project name** field, give your project any name you want.
3. (Optional) In the **Project folder** field, you can enter a location where you want to save your project. By default, projects are saved in your Documents > My Projects folder.
4. Click **Next**.
5. Under **Factory Templates**, expand the **Tutorials** folder. Select the **Austin** template.



6. Click **Next**.
7. For branding, keep the default settings. (This is where you could customize your project's look with branding, such as colors and logo.) Click **Next**.
8. Click **Finish**. The project is created and loaded into Flare Desktop.

Creating and Applying Block-Level Styles

Stylesheets contain certain root (or parent) styles. When you add a new style, you are creating a new style class (i.e., a child of the parent style). Initially, the class inherits all of its property values from the root style, but you can then give the class different values so that it serves a unique purpose.


A block-level tag takes up the entire space of the line, but can contain other inline elements. Examples of block tags are `<div>`, `<h1>`, ``, ``, `<p>`, `<table>`, and ``, which all have corresponding styles in a stylesheet.

This chapter discusses the following:

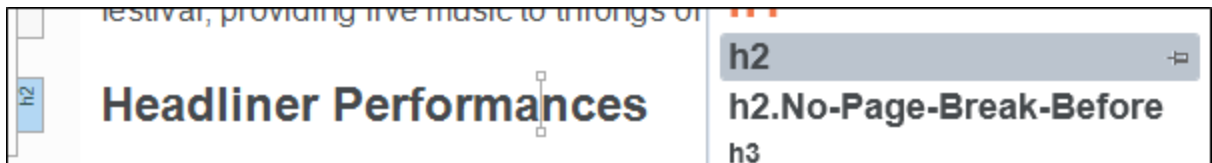
How to Apply a Parent Block Style	10
How to Create a Block Style Class	11
How to Apply a Child Block Style	12

I How to Apply a Parent Block Style

1. From the Content Explorer, open **South-by-Southwest.htm**.
2. Let's create a new heading. At the end of the existing content, create an empty paragraph.
3. Type **Headliner Performances**. Notice the position of your cursor. Since it is already within the paragraph (at the end of it), only styles applicable to block content display in the **Style** drop-down.

 **NOTE** If you select part of the text by highlighting it with the cursor, you could accidentally miss a portion of it. In addition, if a piece of the text is wanted rather than a block of text, then only character styles are applicable. The **Style** drop-down would only show relevant character styles to choose from.


4. From the **Home** ribbon, **Style** drop-down, select **h2**. The default block-level style applies.




5. Click  to save your work.

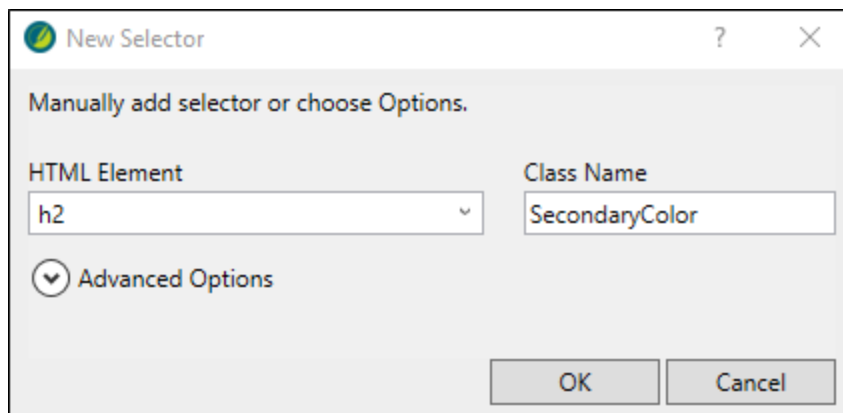
I How to Create a Block Style Class

We want to be able to apply a secondary heading style. Let's create a new style class for the h2 parent element.

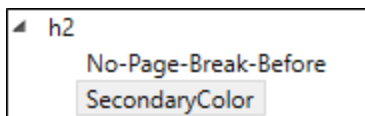
1. From the Content Explorer, expand **Resources > Stylesheets**, and double-click **Styles.css**.
2. From the **Styles** drop-down, select **Heading Styles**.
3. In the left pane tree structure, select the **h2** style.
4. From the local toolbar, click  **Add Selector**. The New Selector dialog opens.

 **NOTE** A selector is a way to associate XHTML content with style settings based on various information—most often its type, class, or ID. Sometimes the word "selector" is used interchangeably with the term "style," but a selector can be much more than just a simple style.


5. Make sure h2 displays as the HTML Element. In the **Class Name** field, type `SecondaryColor`. Click **OK**.



6. In the left pane tree structure, the new style class appears under the h2 element. Select it (if it is not selected already).



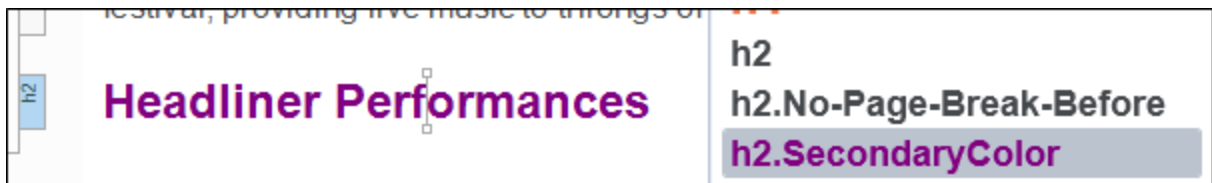
7. In the local toolbar, make sure the **Show** drop-down displays **Show: Set (Locally) Properties - properties set in this stylesheet**.

8. In the **Add Properties** drop-down, select **color**.
9. In the **Color Property** field, replace the default property "inherit," with a new value. Type **Purple**. Press **ENTER**.
10. Click  to save your work.

I How to Apply a Child Block Style

1. Open **South-by-Southwest.htm**.
2. Click inside the h2 block.
3. From the **Home** ribbon, **Style** drop-down, select **h2.SecondaryColor**.

The **h2.SecondaryColor** overrides the original color property with the assigned purple color. The style **h2.SecondaryColor** is, in effect, a child of the **h2** parent style. It also inherits other values from the parent style. A period is added between the name of the parent style and the name of the class.



Other topics in the project with an h2 style still show a black heading style, as expected.

4. Click  to save your work.

Creating and Applying Character-Level Styles

In contrast to the block-level element which takes up the full width of a line, the character-level element only applies to selected text and is used within a block element.

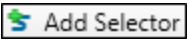
You can only create child styles classes of root (or parent) styles. There are many standard CSS character tags, such as ``, `<i>`, ``, ``, and `<sup>`, which have corresponding styles in the stylesheet. The `` style is often used for creating general character-level style classes (i.e., when there isn't already another character-level style that meets your needs).

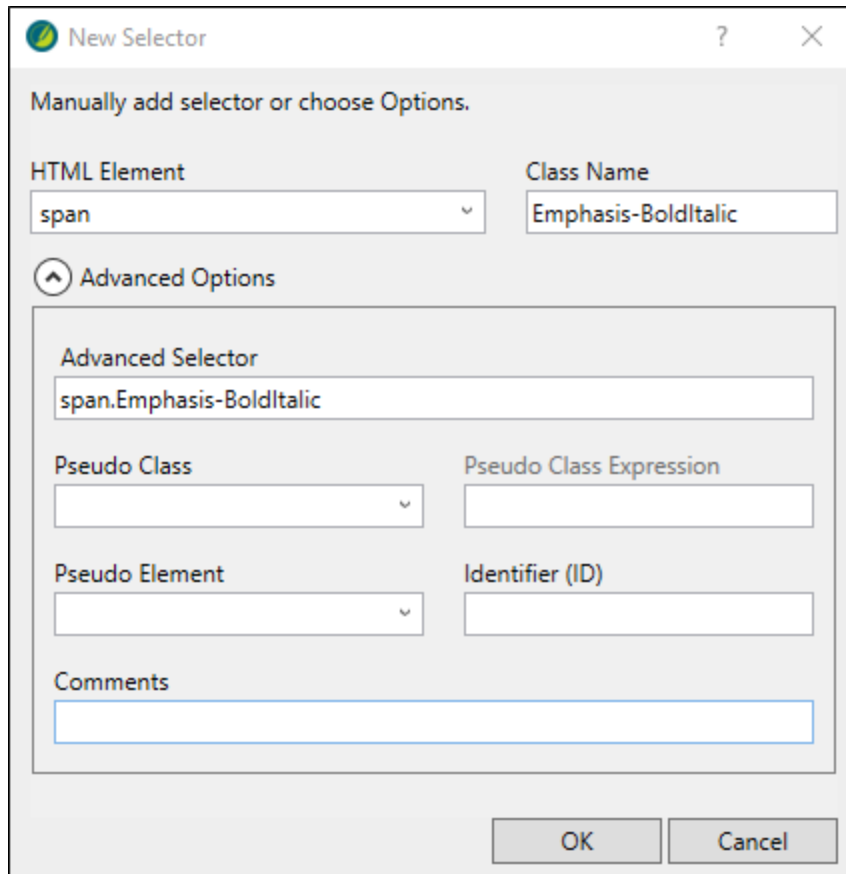
This chapter discusses the following:


How to Create a Character Style Class	14
How to Apply a Character Style Class	16

I How to Create a Character Style Class


Let's create a span class to emphasize text with bold and italic formatting.

1. Open **Styles.css**.
2. In the local toolbar, click .
3. In the New Selector dialog, from the **HTML Element** drop-down, select **span**.
4. In the **Class Name** field, type `Emphasis-BoldItalic`. Click **OK**.



 **NOTE** The image above shows the New Selector dialog with Advanced Options expanded. Notice the name of the selector is "span.Emphasis-BoldItalic." When creating a new style class, it is appended to the root (or parent) style, and separated by a period. In this case, "span" is the parent while "Emphasis-BoldItalic" is the child.

5. From the **Styles** drop-down, select **Character Styles**.

- In the left pane tree structure, make sure **span** is expanded, and **Emphasis-BoldItalic** is selected.
- In the **Show** drop-down, select **Show: Assorted Relevant Properties**.
- Expand the **Font** group.
- Next to the **font-style** property, click , and select **italic**.



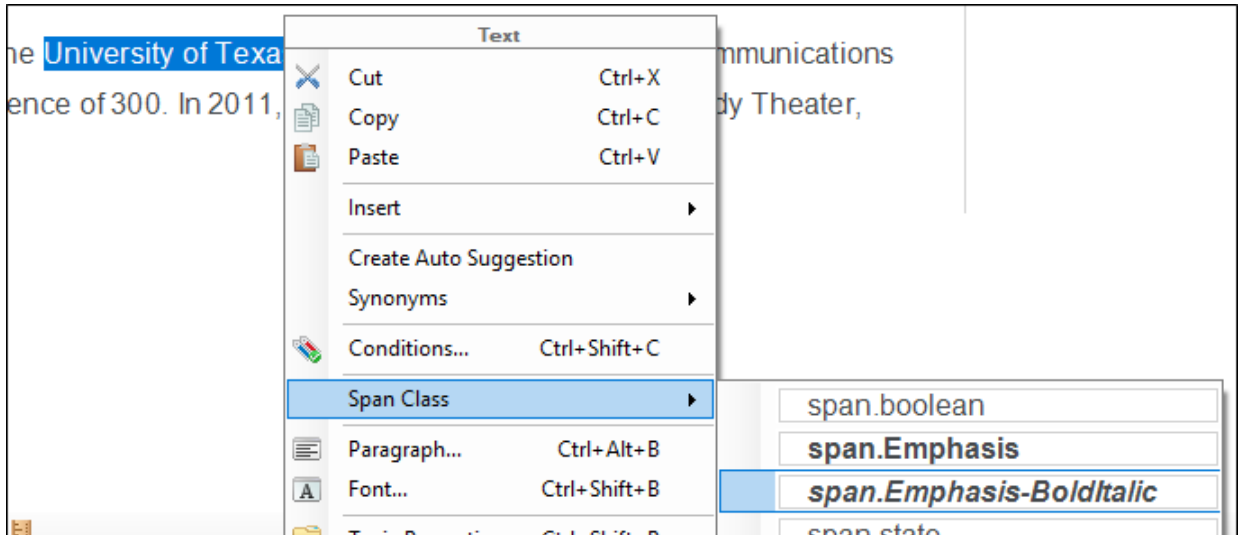
- Next to the **font-weight** property, click , and select **bold**.



- Click  to save your work.

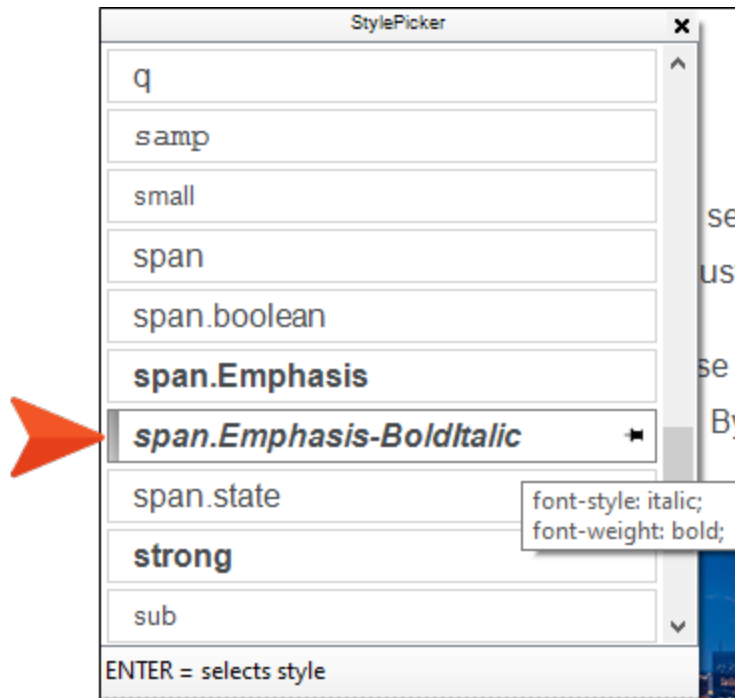
I How to Apply a Character Style Class

1. Open `Austin-City-Limits.htm`.
2. Select "University of Texas" in the last paragraph.
3. Right-click and from the context menu, select `Span Class > span.Emphasis-BoldItalic`.




4. Open `Introduction.htm`.
5. Select "University of Texas" in the second paragraph.

6. Press **CTRL+SHIFT+H**, and from the Style Picker, select **span.Emphasis-BoldItalic**.



7. Click  to save all files.

 **NOTE** Since this is a character-level style that might be used quite a bit, you can pin it to appear at the top of style lists for quick accessibility in the Style drop-down, Style Picker, or the Styles window.

Creating and Applying Generic Style Classes

In addition to creating classes that are specifically associated with parent styles, you can create generic classes. These are standalone classes that can be used with any parent style.


A generic class can be very useful if you need to apply the same formatting to several pieces of content, even if they have different HTML elements (parent styles).

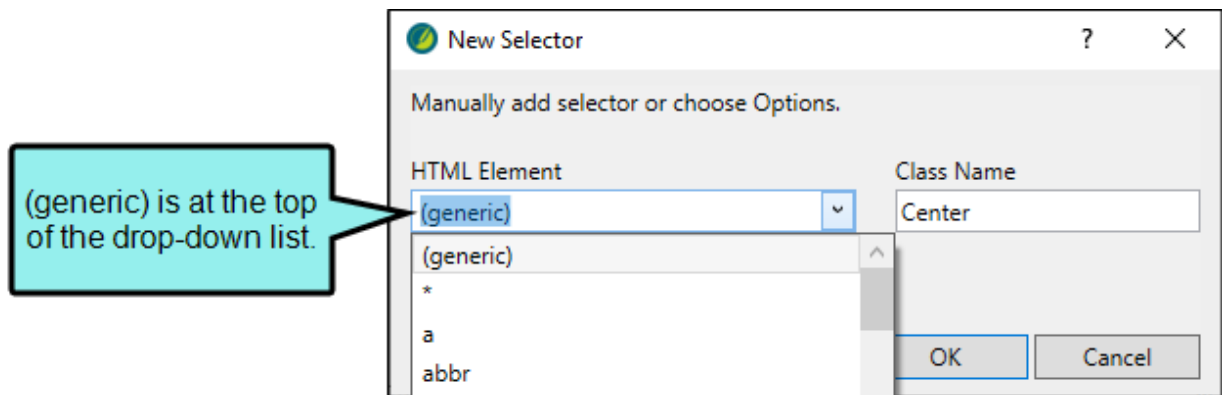
This chapter discusses the following:


How to Center Content With a Generic Style Class	19
How to Indent Content With a Generic Style Class	23

I How to Center Content With a Generic Style Class

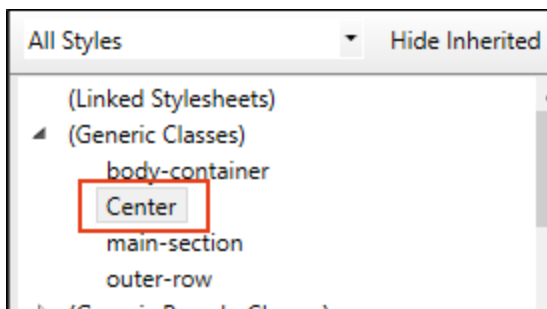
Let's create a generic class selector for centering content. This type of style can be used only on a block element.


1. Open **Styles.css**.
2. In the local toolbar, click  **Add Selector**.
3. In the New Selector dialog, from the **HTML Element** drop-down, select **(generic)**. Then in the **Class Name** field, type **Center**. Click **OK**.




 **NOTE** Alternatively, when using the New Selector dialog to add a new selector, you can leave the HTML Element field empty. If left blank, the new style class defaults to "generic," and is placed under the "Generic Classes" section in the stylesheet.

4. From the **Styles** drop-down, select **All Styles**.
5. In the left pane tree structure, expand **(Generic Classes)**, and select **Center**.

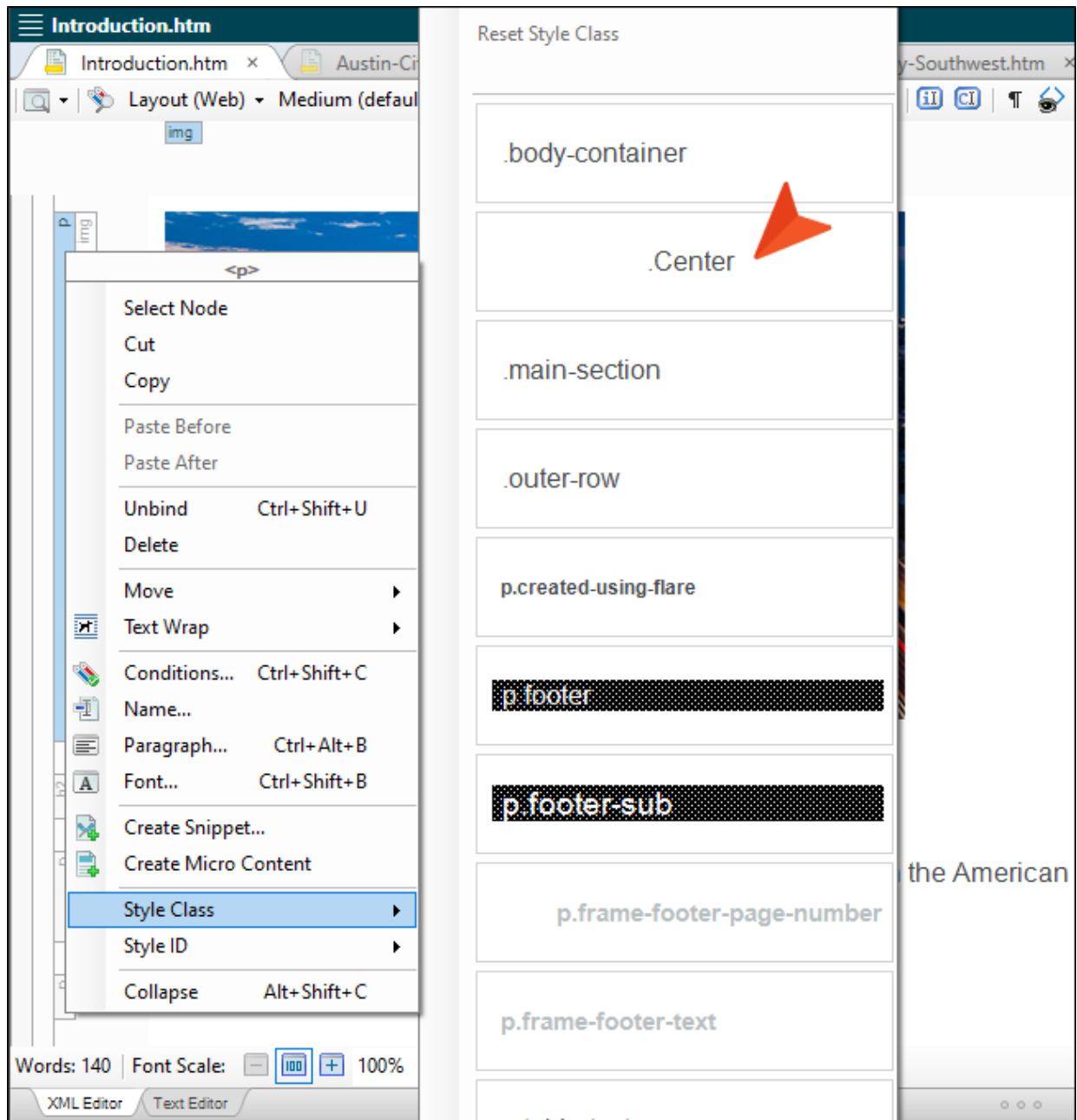



6. In the **Show** drop-down, select **Show: All Properties**.
7. Expand the **Block** group.
8. Next to the **text-align** property, click , and select **center**.

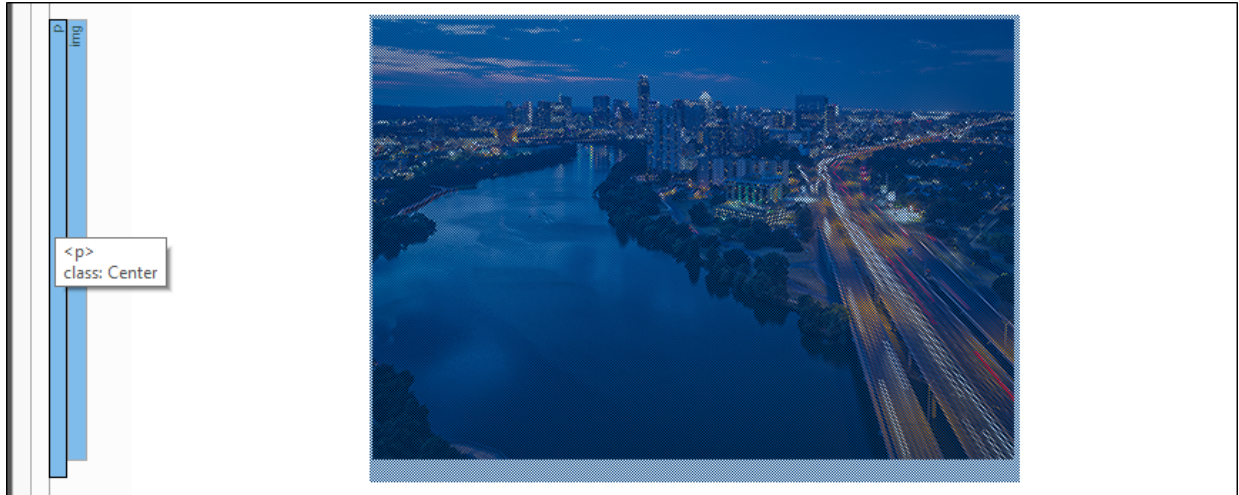



9. Click  to save your work.
10. Open **Introduction.htm**.

11. Right-click the `p` structure bar to the left of the image, and from the context menu select **Style Class > .Center**.




 **NOTE** The `` tag uses a character-level style, so the image can't be centered itself. In this case, the image is within the block-level `<p>` tag, so we can apply the style class to the `p` element (`p.Center`).

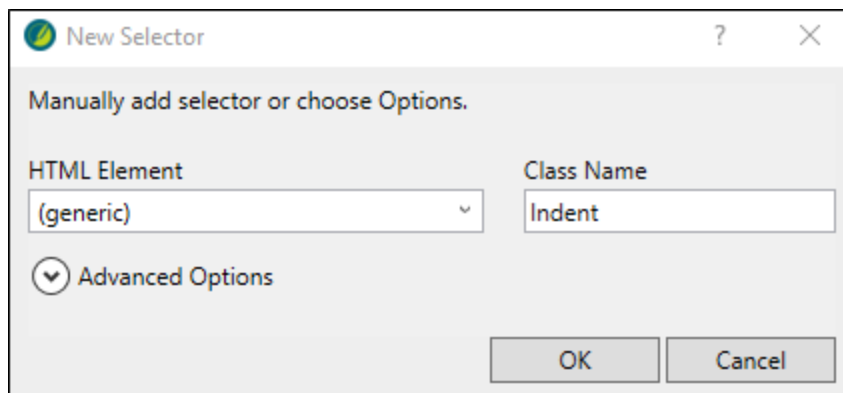


12. Click  to save your work.

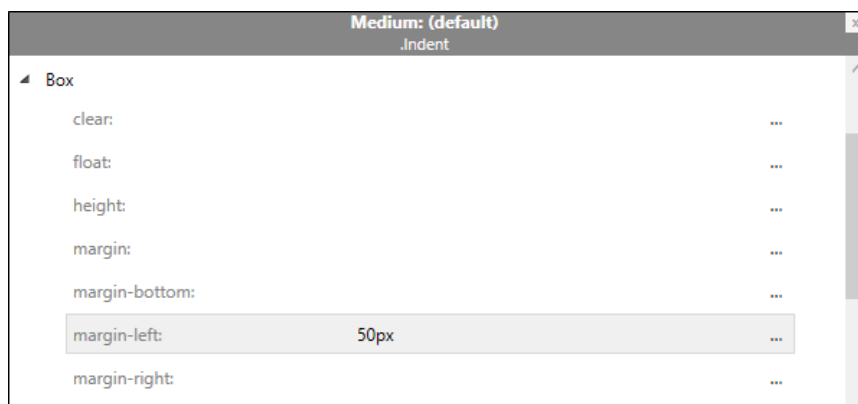
I How to Indent Content With a Generic Style Class


Let's create another generic style class for indenting text.

1. Open **Styles.css**.
2. In the local toolbar, select click  **Add Selector**.
3. In the New Selector dialog, from the **HTML Element** drop-down, select **(generic)**. Then in the **Class Name** field, type **Indent**. Click **OK**.



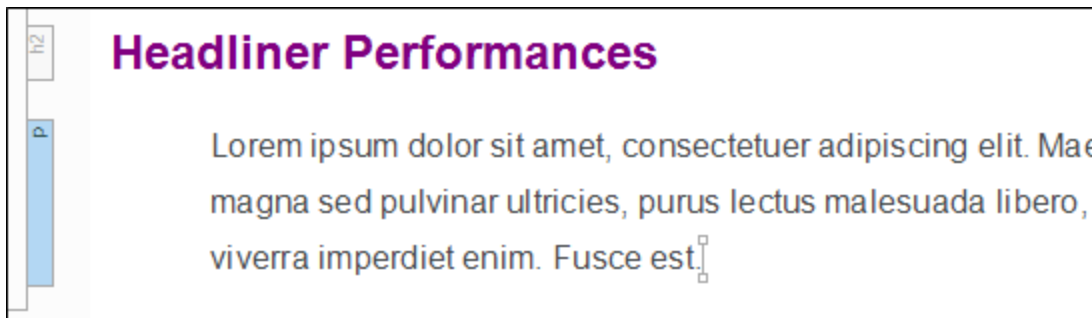
4. In the left pane tree structure, make sure **(Generic Classes)** is expanded, and **Indent** is selected.
5. In the **Show** drop-down, make sure **Show: All Properties** is selected.
6. Expand the **Box** group.
7. In the **margin-left** property field, type **50px**. Press **ENTER**.





8. Click  to save your work.
9. Open **South-by-Southwest.htm**.
10. At the end of the existing content, create an empty paragraph.
11. Copy and paste this example text to the line:

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Maecenas porttitor congue massa. Fusce posuere, magna sed pulvinar ultricies, purus lectus malesuada libero, sit amet commodo magna eros quis urna. Nunc viverra imperdiet enim. Fusce est.

12. From the **Home** ribbon, **Style** drop-down, select **.Indent**. The text indents.



13. Click  to save your work.
14. From the **Window** ribbon, select **Close All Documents**.

 **NOTE** This tutorial covers a few basic styles. Keep in mind that when creating a style class there are multiple ways to do it. Ask yourself what the style is that you need, and how often do you plan to use it? For example, if you plan to apply a bold font property to character-level content only, then creating a specific span element might work. But if you plan to apply bold font at the block-level too, then creating a generic style class might make more sense. How you go about creating a style really depends on what you are trying to accomplish.

Creating a Container (Div) for Special Information


Let's create a container with a border for placing historical facts about Austin—the content will stand out better. To do this, we'll need to create some new styles in the project's stylesheet.

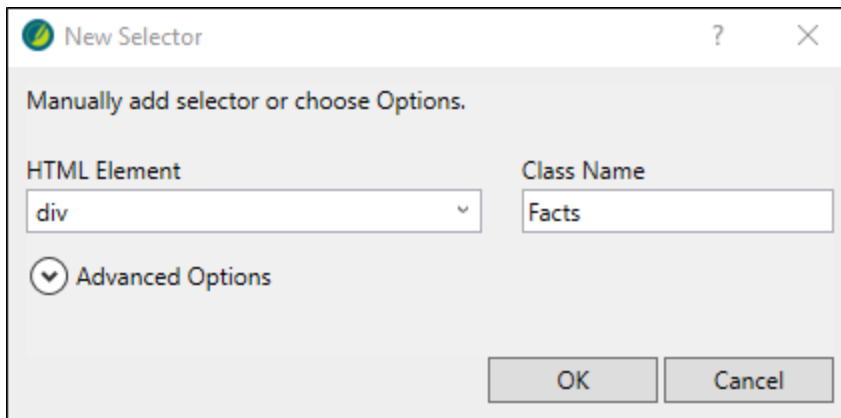
This chapter discusses the following:

How to Create a Container	26
How to Create a Label for a Container	30
How to Apply Information for a Container	32


I How to Create a Container

Creating a div selector is a good option for making a container.

1. From the Content Explorer, expand **Resources > Stylesheets**, and double-click **Styles.css**.
2. From the Stylesheet Editor's local toolbar, make sure the first button is labeled **View: Advanced**.
3. In the local toolbar, click .
4. In the New Selector dialog, from the **HTML Element** drop-down, select **div**.
5. In the **Class Name** field, type `Facts`. Click **OK**.

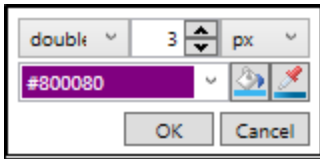



6. In the left pane tree structure, make sure **div** is expanded, and **Facts** is selected.
7. In the **Show** drop-down, select **Show: Assorted Relevant Properties**.
8. Expand the **Font** group, and at the **color** property, type `Gray`. Press **ENTER**.

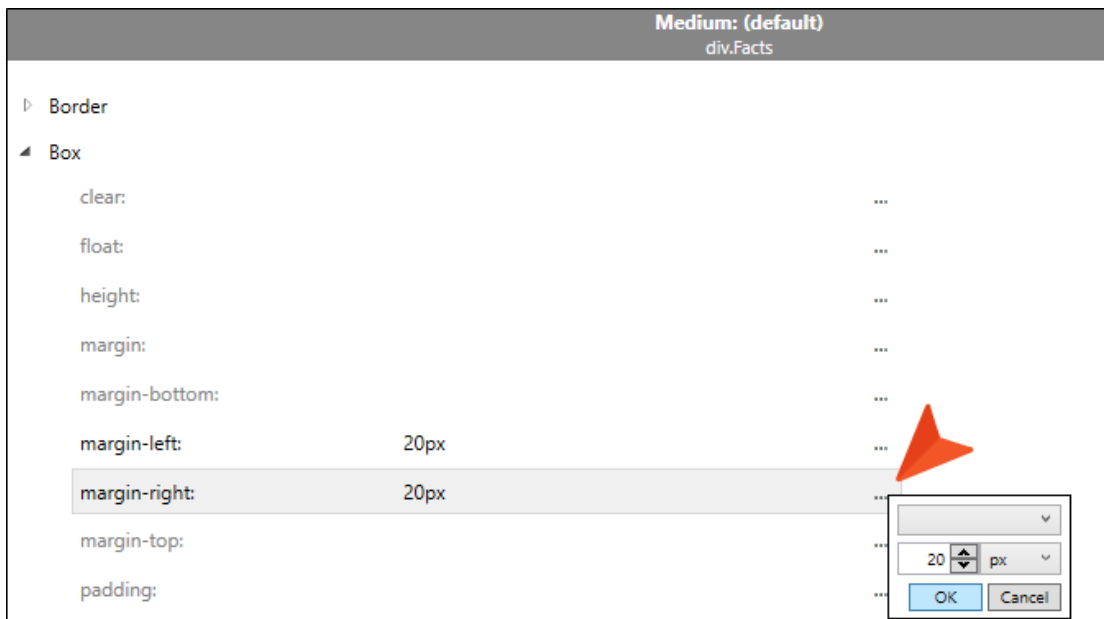
 **NOTE** If you completed the Nested Tags topic from the Styles Tutorial—Understanding the Basics, remember that the `div` font was set to display in purple. Just update the value to gray.


9. Expand the **Border** group, and at the **border** property, click .

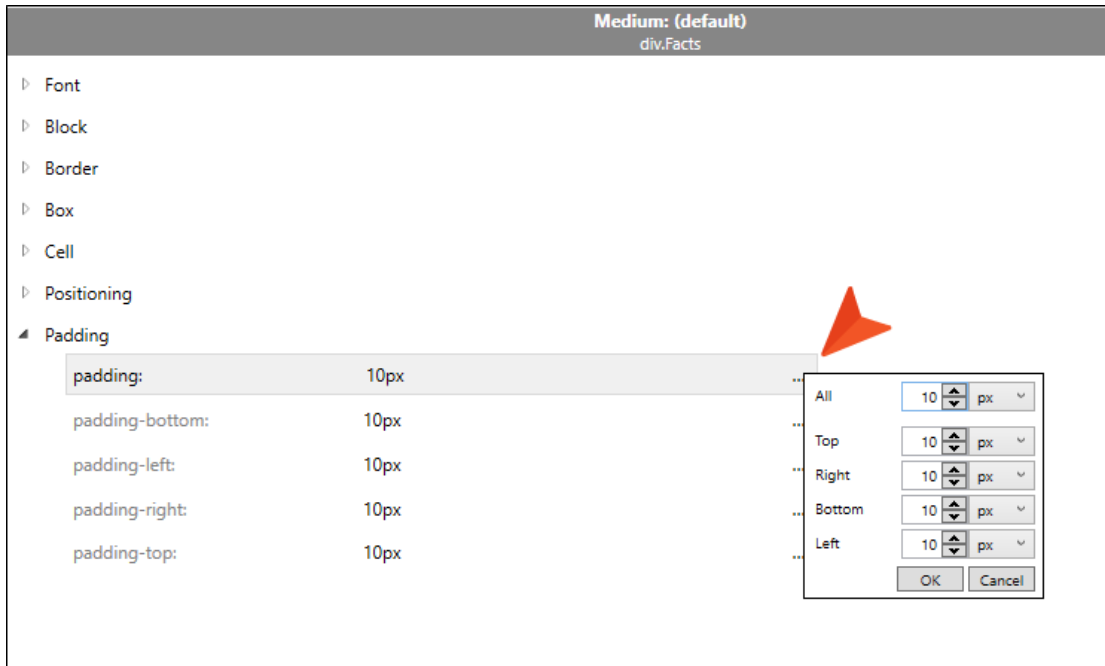
10. In the pop-up menu type Purple. From the **border type** drop-down, select **double**. Type or select 3 pixels to increase the border width. Click **OK**. (The hex color code auto-populates in the color drop-down.)



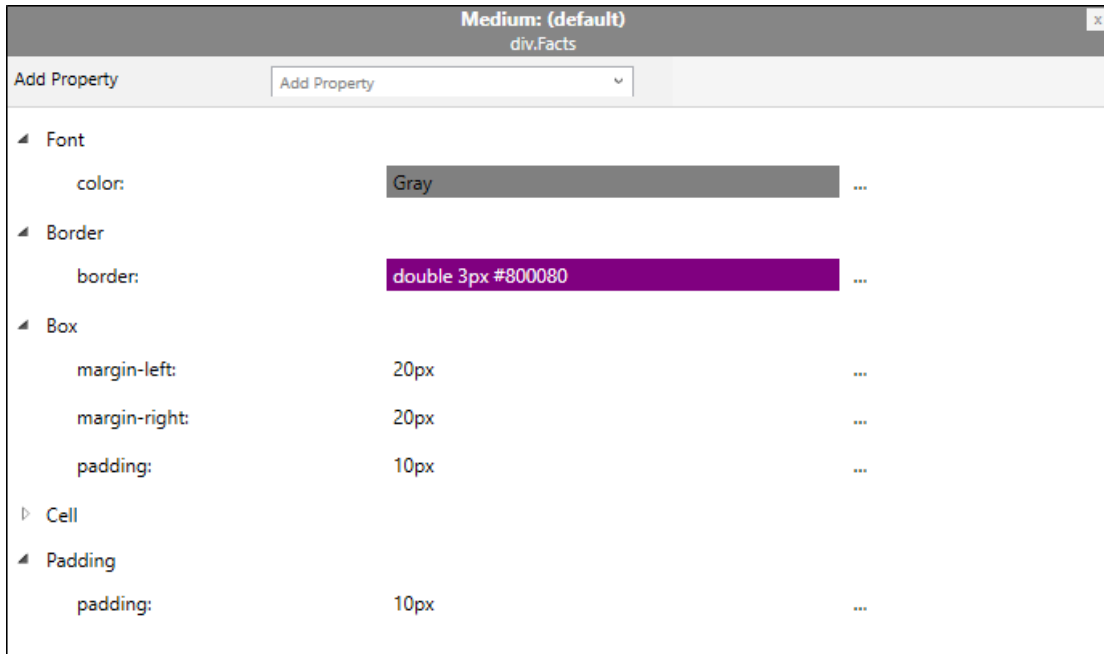
11. Expand the **Box** group, and at the **margin-left** and **margin-right** properties, click  (one at a time). Type or select 20 pixels for both properties, and click **OK**.




12. Expand the **Padding** group, at the **padding** property, click . Type or select 10 pixels to increase padding for all sides. Click **OK**.




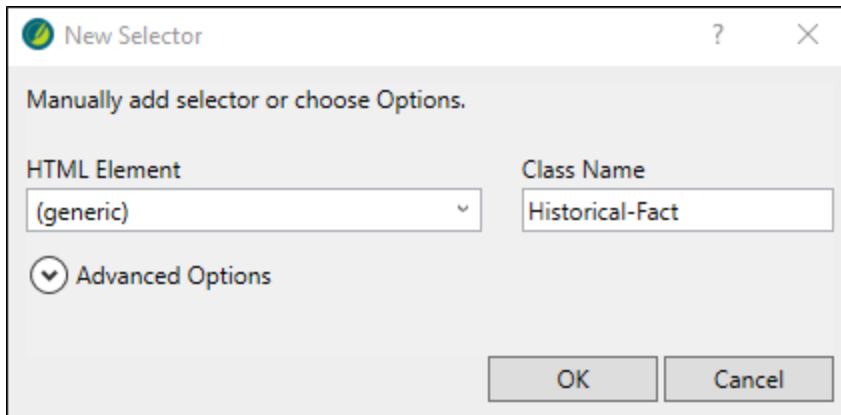
13. In the **Show** drop-down, select **Show: Set (Locally) Properties - properties set in this stylesheet** to see all of your settings.




14. Click  to save your work.

I How to Create a Label for a Container

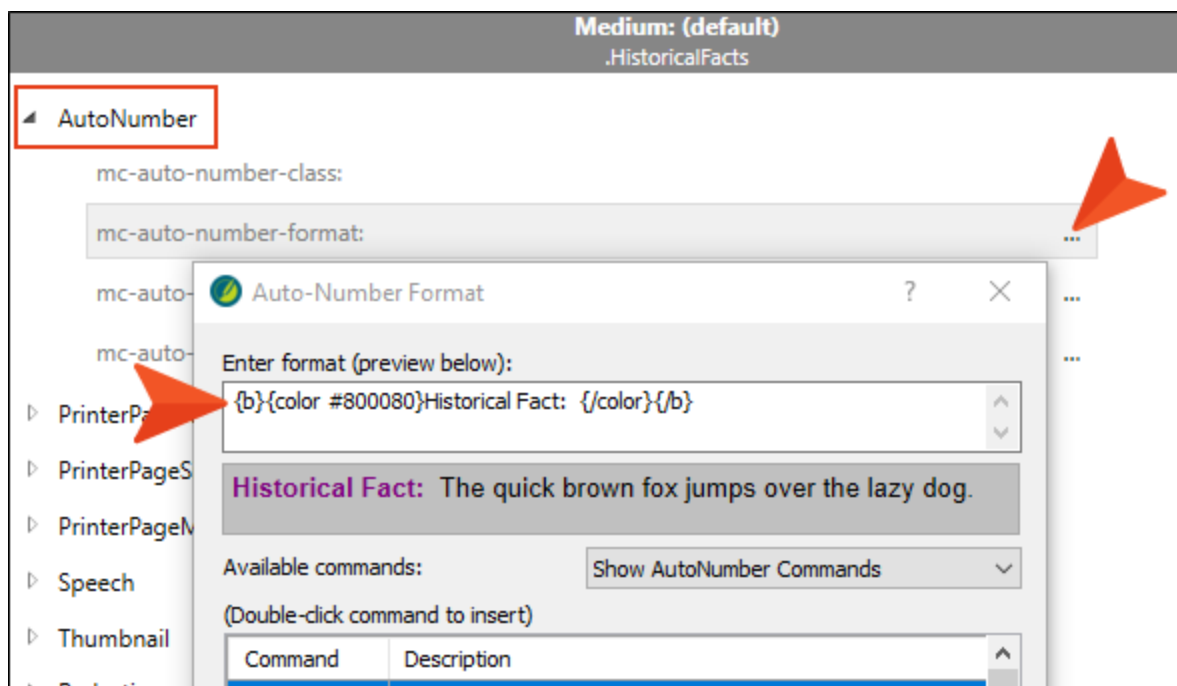
1. In the local toolbar, click  **Add Selector**.
2. In the New Selector dialog, from the **HTML Element** drop-down, select **(generic)**.
3. In the **Class Name** field, type `Historical-Fact`. Click **OK**.





4. In the left pane tree structure, make sure **(Generic Classes)** is expanded, and **Historical-Fact** is selected.
5. In the **Show** drop-down, select **Show: All Properties**.
6. Expand the **AutoNumber** group.
7. Next to the `mc-auto-number-format` property, click .

- In the Auto-Number Format dialog, copy and paste the following format into the **Enter format** field:

```
{b}{color #800080}Historical Fact: {/color}{/b}
```

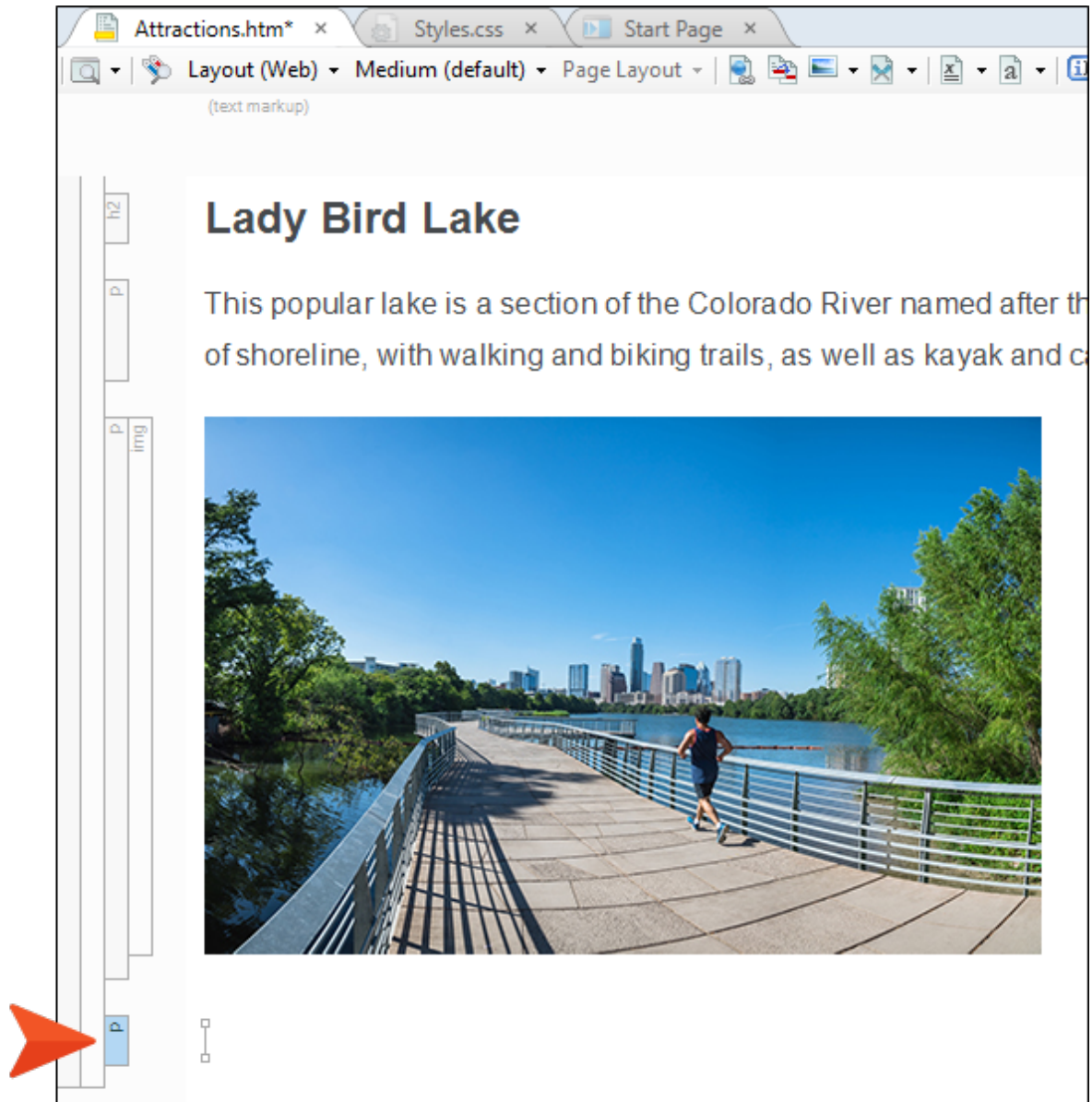


- Click OK.
- Click  to save all files.

 **NOTE** You might notice the mc-auto-number-format property begins with “mc.” This is an indication that it is a MadCap-specific property.

How to Apply Information for a Container

1. From the Content Explorer, open the `Attractions.htm` file.
2. Create an empty paragraph after the last image.

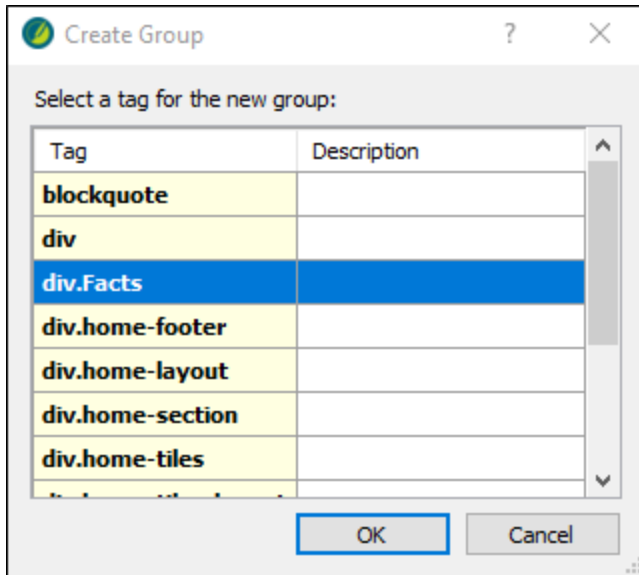


3. Type the following:

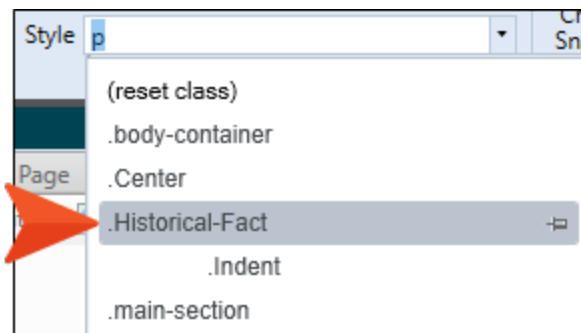
Austin has the largest urban bat colony in North America.

4. From the **Home** ribbon, click . This groups selected items.

5. From the Create Group dialog, select **div.Facts**. Click **OK**.




6. From the **Home** ribbon, **Styles** drop-down, select **.Historical-Fact**.




Historical Fact: Austin has the largest urban bat colony in North America.

7. Open **Introduction.htm**.
8. Under the "Climate" section, create an empty paragraph after the first sentence.
9. Copy and paste the following content:

Austin's hottest day in recorded history was 112 degrees on 9/5/2000 and again on 8/28/2011. The coldest day on record for Austin dropped to -2 degrees on 1/31/1949.

10. From the **Home** ribbon, click .
11. From the Create Group dialog, select **div.Facts**. Click **OK**.
12. From the **Home** ribbon, **Styles** drop-down, select **.Historical-Fact**.

Historical Fact: Austin's hottest day in recorded history was 112 degrees on 9/5/2000 and again on 8/28/2011.
The coldest day on record for Austin dropped to -2 degrees on 1/31/1949.

13. Click  to save all files.
14. From the **Window** ribbon, select **Close All Documents**.

APPENDIX

PDFs

The following PDFs are available for download from the Help system.

I Tutorials

Autonumbers Tutorial

Back-to-Top Button Tutorial

Context-Sensitive Help Tutorial

Custom Toolbar Tutorial

eLearning Tutorial—Basic

eLearning Tutorial—Advanced

Getting Started Tutorial

Image Tooltips Tutorial

Lists Tutorial

Meta Tags Tutorial

Micro Content Tutorial—Basic

Micro Content Tutorial—Advanced

Responsive Output Tutorial

Single-Sourcing Tutorial

Snippet Conditions Tutorial

Styles Tutorials

Tables Tutorial

Word Import Tutorial

| Cheat Sheets

Context-Sensitive Help Cheat Sheet

Folders and Files Cheat Sheet

Learning & Development Cheat Sheet

Lists Cheat Sheet

Micro Content Cheat Sheet

Print-Based Output Cheat Sheet

Search Cheat Sheet

Shortcuts Cheat Sheet

Structure Bars Cheat Sheet

Styles Cheat Sheet

I User Guides

Accessibility Guide

Analysis and Reports Guide

Architecture Guide

Autonumbers Guide

Branding Guide

Condition Tags Guide

Context-Sensitive Help Guide

Eclipse Help Guide

eLearning Guide

*Flare Online Integration
Guide*

Getting Started Guide

Global Project Linking Guide

HTML5 Guide

Images Guide

Import Guide

Indexing Guide

Key Features Guide

Lists Guide

Meta Tags Guide

Micro Content Guide

Navigation Links Guide

Plug-In API Guide

Print-Based Output Guide

Project Creation Guide

QR Codes Guide

*Reviews & Contributions With
Contributor Guide*

Scripting Guide

Search Guide

SharePoint Guide

Skins Guide

Snippets Guide

Source Control Guide: Git

*Source Control Guide:
Perforce Helix Core*

*Source Control Guide:
Subversion*

*Source Control Guide: Team
Foundation Server*

Styles Guide

Tables Guide

Tables of Contents Guide

Targets Guide

Template Pages Guide

Templates Guide

Topics Guide

Touring the Workspace Guide

*Transition From FrameMaker
Guide*

*Translation and Localization
Guide*

Variables Guide

Videos Guide

What's New Guide