WEBSITE NAVIGATION

MAPPING A WEBSITE

Your assignment is in two parts: first, you'll map the website of the Wing Luke Asian Museum (http://www.wingluke.org/). Use the following diagrams as a guide for how your map should look visually—it's not important that your nodes be round, or your lines diagonal. Rather, your map should visually reflect the structure of the site.

First, sketch your map out on notebook paper--you may find that you need larger paper for your final map. Indicate with arrows major paths of navigation through the site.

The second part of the assignment is to create a sketch of what you are planning on for your website's structure. The required categories are on your Research Project Assignment handout. Bring a sketch to class on Tuesday, November 4th for review before you make your final version.

Top-down Navigation

This approach to information architecture involves organizing information based on site objectives and user needs. You start with broad categories and break the categories down into logical subcategories. This is the most common form for informational sites.
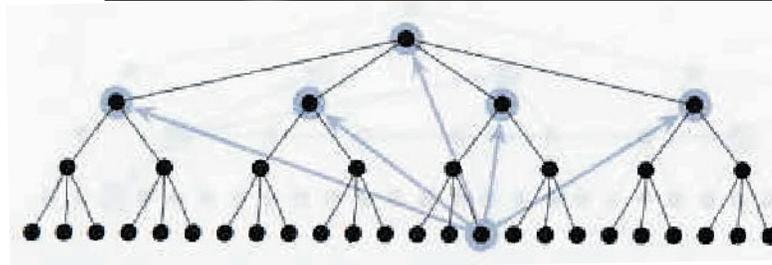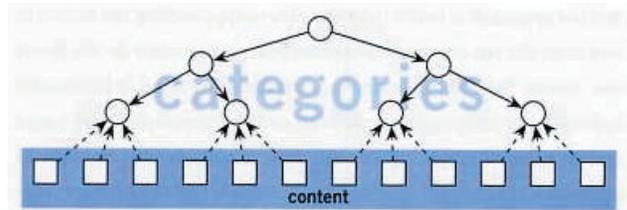

Global Navigation

Provides access to a broad sweep of the entire site. It brings together the key set of access points that users might need to get from one end of the site to the other.


Local Navigation

Provides access to what's nearby in the architecture. Local navigation will provide access to a page's parent, siblings and children. It is structured to reflect the way users think about the content.
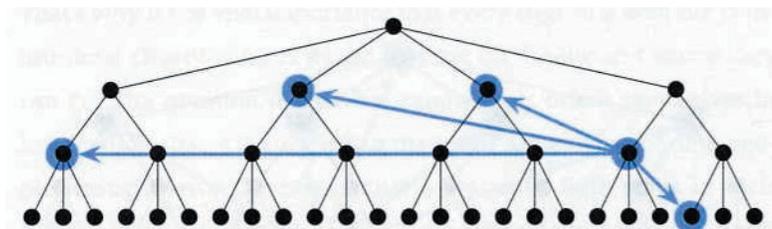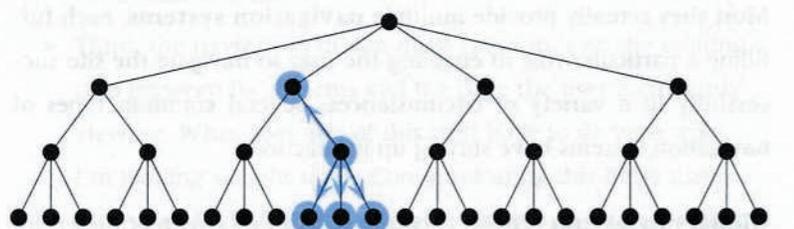

Supplementary Navigation

Provides shortcuts to related content that might not be readily accessible through global or local structures. This scheme allows the user. to shift the focus of exploration without starting over while maintaining a hierarchical structure.
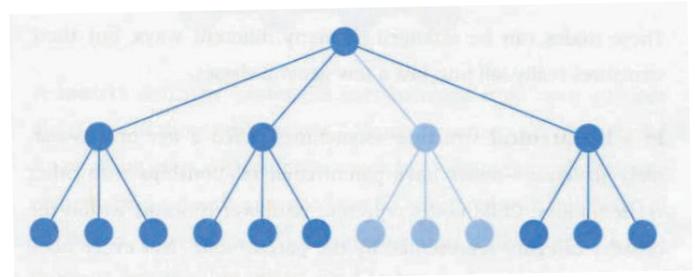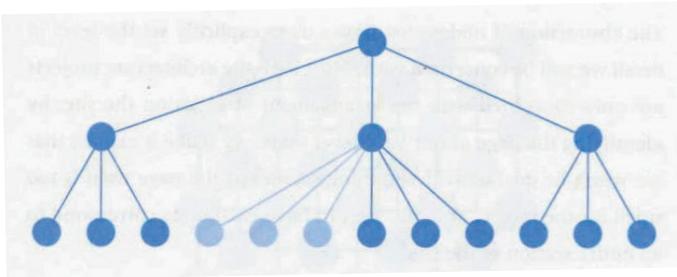
Adaptable Architecture

Adaptable architecture can accommodate the addition of new content within a section (top) as well as entire new sections (bottom).

parent node
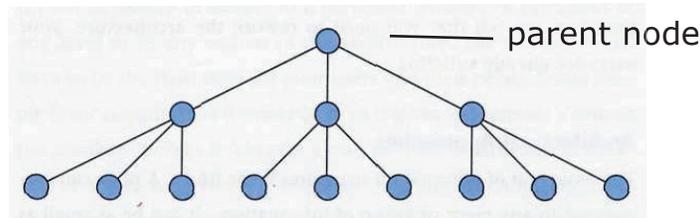
Hierarchical Structure

Hierarchical structure—sometimes called *tree* or *hub and spoke* structure—has nodes that have a parent/child relationship with other related nodes. Not every node has children, but every node has a parent, leading all the way up to the parent node of the entire structure. This is the most common form of structure.
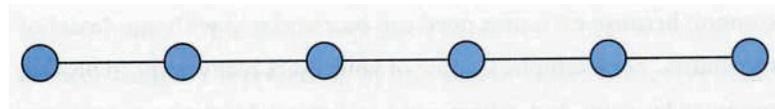
Sequential Structure

Sequential structure and the sequential flow of language is the most basic type of information architecture there is. Books, articles, video—all are designed to be experienced sequentially. Only very small sites on the web, such as articles or sections, use this technique, or it may be imbedded inside of a site.

Organic Structure

Organic structures don't attempt to follow any consistent pattern. Nodes are connected together on a case-by-case basis, and there is no strong concept of "sections". Organic structure can be a god choice for free-form exploration, such as some educational or entertainment websites. It can be challenging to find your way back to the same information again.