

How to create a lecture for “Learning With Data Workshop.”

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What is a lecture? A lecture uses the Media Viewer to display slide-show like presentations. Each slide can include text and an image. The image can be a still image file or Quicktime movie. If a still image is large enough, scroll bars appear, so the image can be magnified and dragged in the display area. The text can include links to other lectures, pdf files, or web pages. The linked web page can be specified to open in the MediaViewer web browser, or in the user’s default web browser. A lecture can be made available to students on the main window toolbar by editing the menu configuration (File menu:ConfigEditor).

The lecture is stored in a directory that you specify. Inside the directory is the lecture control file, and the media. Media can also be external to the lecture folder. If the media is not on the “LearningWithData” CDROM, it should be stored in the lecture folder, so that links are not broken when the lecture is distributed to students. Links to CDROM media and media in the “LearningWithData-Temp” directory are symbolic, so the lecture folder can be moved to student computers with different file structures.

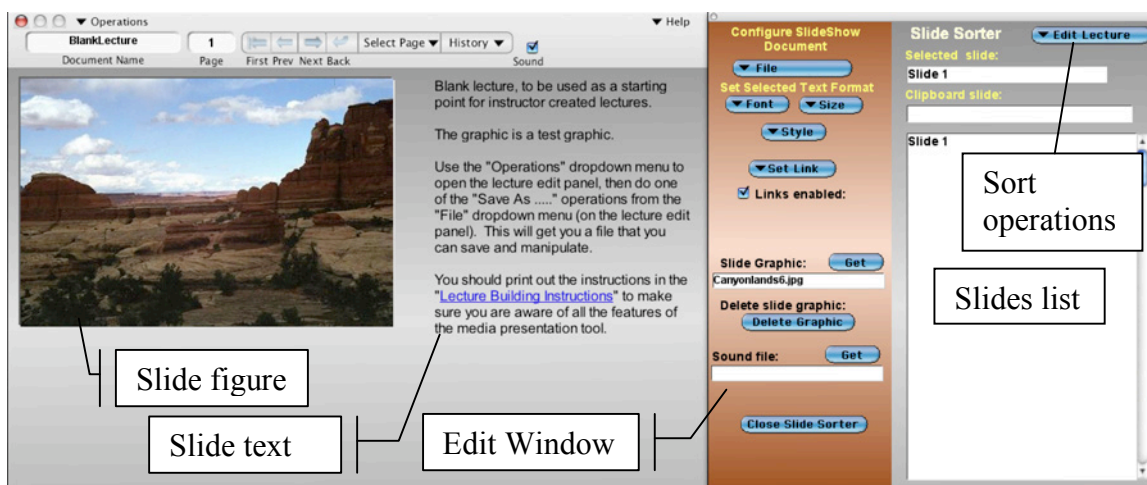


Figure 1. Screen showing blank lecture with the configuration panel open.

Lectures can only be edited or created if you log in as a teacher. See the help pages at <http://learningwithdata.org> for information on how to get a teacher’s name and password, so you can gain access to the configuration tools. Visit the FAQ’s.

The teacher demo lecture: Before editing a lecture, it is helpful to view the “Teacher Demo Lecture,” accessed from the “Readings” menu on the LWD (“LearningWithData”) desktop toolbar. This demo lecture illustrates the capabilities of the media viewer.

To make a new lecture:

1. Display the Blank Lecture by choosing “Blank Lecture” from the “Readings” dropdown menu on the Learning With Data toolbar. **Note: You must be logged in as a teacher for this selection to be visible.**

2. Open the configuration panel by choosing “Open Editor Window” from the “Operations” dropdown menu at the upper left of the Blank Lecture window (figure 1 above). The slide sorter portion of the configuration panel is opened by clicking on the “Open Slide Sorter” button on the configuration panel.
3. From the “File” dropdown menu on the configuration panel, choose one of the “Save As ...” Options to get a copy of the blank lecture. “Save As to Downloads” is a good choice. A folder will be created with the lecture file in it. When you save it, you will be asked if you want to copy the graphics and movies to the lecture folder. This is a good idea, because you may be moving the lecture to other locations, so the links to the graphics files will remain valid. A separate dialog is shown for each movie because movie files can be large and there may be a library of movies elsewhere.

To edit slides in an existing lecture, or the new lecture you created:

1. Click the "Open Slide Sorter" button on the configuration panel. The panel that appears will give you a list of the lecture slides and the "Edit Lecture" dropdown menu, where you can add and delete slides. To move between slides, just click on a line in the slides list. To rename a slide, enter the new name into the "Selected slide" field and click another slide.
2. To move a slide from one position to another, you select the slide to be moved, choose “Cut” from the “Edit Lecture” dropdown menu, then select another slide, then “Paste Before” or “Paste After” to put the slide back at the desired position.
3. To delete a slide, select the slide and choose “Cut” from the “Edit Lecture” dropdown menu. Note: when you save the lecture, you will get a warning that there is a slide on the clipboard. This warning can be safely ignored.

How to set a graphic for a slide:

1. Click the "Get" button and select your graphic. The graphic will appear on the slide. You can show still images or quicktime movies.

How to set a link:

1. Select the text to contain the link.
2. Select the type of link from the "Set Link" dropdown menu. A file dialog will allow you to select the file you want to link. The file extension for a lecture is .LST.

How to change the name of a lecture slide:

1. Display the slide. Navigate to it with the Media Viewer arrow keys, or open the “Slide Sorter” and click on the slide in the list of slides.
2. Type the new name into the “Selected Slide” text box (see figure 1)
3. Click any other slide. The name should be changed. You will need to save the lecture to make the change permanent.

Where to save lecture files?

You should save lectures in a common area where students can access them. The best place is in the "LearningWithData-Temp/Downloads/" directory. If you choose this directory, the system makes a symbolic path to this location, internally, so other file setups will not require changing a location in the menu configuration file. When you save a lecture, you will be prompted to decide whether you want to copy all of your graphics to the directory you have chosen. You should choose to do this unless you are creating a number of lectures with common images and want to save disc space. If you are displaying a quicktime movie that resides on the LWD CDROM, you should not choose to copy it to the lecture folder.

Displaying the lectures in the toolbar menus:

The lectures have been created and are stored in the "Downloads" directory, as described above. You only need to change the menu configuration to let students access them. First you log in as a teacher, then from the "File" menu on the "Learning With Data" toolbar, you choose "Config Editor." Follow the instructions on the screen to edit the menuConfig file.

You might want to consider making a master lecture for a topic, then linking to sub-topics from the master lecture. This way the toolbar menus will not get cluttered and students will be able to find content more easily.

Distributing the lectures to students:

In a school lab situation, where the "LearningWithData-Temp" directory resides on a shared volume, all instructor created lectures should be stored in the "Downloads" directory. Where students will own a CD and install it at home, the teacher authored lectures will need to be distributed to students. If students have access to a computer where the software is installed, with all teacher-authored files in the "Downloads" folder, students can log into LearningWithData on this computer and copy all of the teacher files, and their own work, to a USB zip drive. This is supported by the software under the "Tools" menu. If they choose "Copy my files FROM my mailbox", all of the files in the "Downloads" directory, and from their storage area will be copied to the USB drive. When the student gets to his/her own computer, the process is reversed by selecting "Copy my files TO my mailbox". To use this procedure, each student will have to make their own copy, as the files are encrypted to match the student's name and login ID. Alternatively, if only the teacher created files are to be transferred, these can be copied to the "Downloads" folder by each student.

Another option for distributing teacher-authored material is to make a zip file of the lectures (and menuConfig) file and have students download them from a server that is available to the teacher. Students would then need to copy the lectures to their "Downloads" directory and the menuConfig file to the "Configuration" folder, which is inside the "MailBoxes" folder in "LearningWithData-Temp".

For more information: click on this link to access the online teacher's manual. Also, you can select "Author Help" under the "Operations" menu on the toolbar above.