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Getting Started with ThinkSpace

Kajal Madeka
Iowa State University, ksmadeka@iastate.edu

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A ThinkSpace Primer

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Before you start:

1. This tutorial assumes that you already have a ThinkSpace account and instructor rights i.e. you are able to create new Spaces (you see a ‘New Space’ button on the top right of the screen when you log in to ThinkSpace)

2. If you do not, please contact support@thinkspace.org or ksmadeka@iastate.edu to help you get set up.

Fundamental Concepts: Learning Architecture and Terminology

If you are new to ThinkSpace, please watch this video outlining three fundamental concepts around which any learning experience in ThinkSpace is structured. Understanding their individual place in the learning architecture and their mutual relationship is key to successfully designing and managing your courses in ThinkSpace.

Video: Three Fundamental Concepts of ThinkSpace Learning Architecture
Step 1: Create a Space

A Space in ThinkSpace is equivalent to a Course. Each Space has its own roster and will house the Cases or assignments that you create. Students invited to a Space get access to all the active cases in it. So you should create a new Space for every course you have on ThinkSpace. If a course has two sections, create a new Space for each section.

To create a space:

1. Click on the New Space button

2. Give your space a name. A Space is typically named after the course the instructor is teaching along with the semester it is being offered in for example Physics 101- Fall 2016

3. Click on Update Space to create it.
Understanding Space – Features, Functions and Navigation:

Spaces are self-contained units. Each Space has its own **Space Roster and Team Manager** functions that act as a ‘control center’ to manage user access (inviting students, teaching assistants, instructors) and set users into teams for team based activities (such as peer review, peer evaluation, team collaboration).

Navigate to your Space and click on it to enter it. You will see the following screen where:

1. **Name** of your Space (Tells you which of your Spaces you are currently in to help situate you). You will create many Spaces while working in ThinkSpace. The name of a Space can be changed anytime with the ‘**Edit Space**’ button.

2. List of **Cases** (or assignments) in that Space. Blue underlined cases tab as well as the grey page header below it saying ‘Cases’ indicates it to be the current active screen.

3. **Space Roster** tab from where you manage user access to your Space (uploading student roster, managing roles, dropping students from the class)

4. **Team Manager** tab from where you can set users into teams for team based activities (such as peer review, peer evaluation, team collaboration).

5. **Edit Space** button from where you can change the name of your Space.

6. **New Case** button from where you will create the cases (learning situations or assignments) for your students.

7. **Spaces** tab from where you can navigate back to the dashboard which shows the list of Spaces you have access to.

8. **Support** tab: If at any time while working on ThinkSpace you need help simply click on the support button to open a chat window and type in your problem.

9. **Drop down arrow** with **Sign out/Switch user** options from where you can log out.
Cloning a Space

Cloning is the most powerful tool in ThinkSpace and once you have a Space set up to your satisfaction, you don’t have to do any case-building work again. A Space with all its cases, phases, resources, links, media can be cloned in its entirety to form a new Space.

To offer the same course to students in another semester you **MUST clone the Space.** Instructors sometimes make the mistake of inviting an entire new class of students to the same Space that they offered a class in. This is **not recommended** as there is no way for ThinkSpace or the instructor to differentiate between old and new students from the Space Roster.

*It is important to remember that student roster and student work is not cloned with the Space. Students will have to be invited again to the cloned Space, Team sets will need to be created and repopulated and team based functions will have to be re-enabled in each phase they were offered.*

1. To clone a Space, first get to the list of your Spaces by clicking on the ‘Spaces’ tab in the navigation bar.
2. Then simply click on the ‘Clone Space’ button on the right of the Space that you want to clone.
3. You will get a message that your Space is being cloned and to wait for an email notification.
4. Wait for the email and click on the link to access your cloned Space.
Case Building Basics

After having completed the preliminary steps, you are now ready to create a Case. This is done through the **Case Builder**.

- The case building process is broken down into **five easy steps** and the case-builder in ThinkSpace is designed to walk you through each step easily.

![Case Builder Interface](image)

- You can keep track of where you are in the building process by the state-indicator bubbles in the top navigation bar. You can skip ahead or go back to any step in the case building process by clicking on these bubbles.
  - The currently active step is indicated with a **blue filled in bubble** and by the title of the page (eg. ‘Case Template’ in the figure above).
  - Incomplete or yet-to-come steps are indicated by white unfilled bubbles.
  - Completed steps are indicated by **green check marks**.

- To advance in the case building process, simply complete the task or customizations you want in each of the five steps and click the blue ‘**Next Step**’ button in the right corner of the screen when finished with one step and ready to move on.

- You can also exit the builder any time by clicking on the ‘**Exit Builder**’ button on the upper right corner of the screen.

**Step 2: Create a Case (Assignment or Learning Activity)**

1. Navigate to the Space where you want to create a Peer Evaluation and click on the ‘**New Case**’ button on the upper right of the screen. This will open the **Case Builder** and you will now be in **Build Mode**.

![New Case Button](image)
2. In the **Case Details** screen (which is the first stage of the building process), type in the name for your case (or assignment) in the text box under ‘**Name your Case**’ and click ‘**Next Step**’.

![Case Details](image)

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**Step 3: Using Case Templates**

1. The Templates screen gives you several preset case templates to work with. Templates are just a collection or combination of ‘**Phases**’ (the building blocks of cases) along with built in functionality.

![Case Templates](image)
Template Descriptions

1. A **Blank Case** is devoid of any built-in phases – it is empty and allows you to build your cases by adding phases al-a-carte as you need them. This gives you the most flexibility and is a great template to experiment with.

2. A **General Case** template gives you four plain HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) phases with WYSIWYG editor functionality. The WYSIWYG editor allows you to add text, format text, add images, tables, add web links and also text input boxes where students can write their answers. You can start building your cases by adding and editing them right away.

3. **Peer Evaluation (Categories) and Peer Evaluation (Michaelsen Method)** are templates for two methods of Peer Evaluation. These are used in flipped classrooms, Team Based Learning and situations where group work is involved. It generates anonymous peer feedback for team or group members.

4. **Diagnostic Standard** is the template for Diagnostic Reasoning with observation list and lab-data sheet phases. It is most commonly used in Veterinary Medicine but has potential applications for Human Medicine, Engineering and almost any case that requires analysis of complex data and an evidence based reasoning process.

Clicking on a template will take you to the template description screen where you can view a brief description of the phases that make up the template (**phase listing**) along with examples of the phases that make up the case-template (still under construction). Look at the phase listing and decide if this is what you want or go back and ‘Choose another’ template. When ready to move on, just click **‘Use this template’** to move on to the next step.
**Working with Phases: Functions, Features and Navigation**

Once you select a template, you are in the **Phases** stage of the case builder. Phases are literally the building blocks of your case. You can see the list of phases that make up your case. The case builder gives you complete freedom in working with your phases while you design your instruction. In this stage of the building process you can:

1. Add new phases (of different functionality), edit their order or see archived phases (from the buttons on the upper right of the screen). To know more about the different Phase Types, click here.

2. Clone (duplicate), delete, archive or save any phase as draft (from the down-arrow drop-down menu) while you experiment with the builder. **NOTE:** Phases can be cloned only in the **SAME CASE** and not across **Cases or Spaces.** However, they can be **copied** along with html elements into an html phase in another Case or Space by copy/pasting the source code (see ‘source code’ in the next section below)

3. Each phase is edited individually to allow customization of content. To edit a Phase, click on the **name of the phase (NOT the icon)** in the list. To make the case building simple and intuitive, prompts, warnings and icons have been built-in at key points to help you evaluate the completeness of your case and remind you of essential settings that you may have overlooked.

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**Note:** Depending on the browser you are using you might find this page loading endlessly with the ‘system busy/working’ image of orbiting planets. To by-pass that, simply go ahead and click the **‘Use this template’** button. If that fails to solve the problem, contact Support by clicking on the support tab on the upper left of the screen.
Step 4: Editing a Phase:

1. Click on the name of a phase (NOT the icon) on the list. This will take you to the ‘Edit Phase’ screen. We can now edit the Content of the phase. The content is split into two editable panes – one for the Phase Title and other for the Content itself. The edit options will be visible ONLY when you mouse-over the panes (they get a blue border). In the example below, the content pane is showing the ‘Edit Content’ button because of the mouse-over but the Phase Title pane is inactive. This may get a bit tricky, so remember to mouse over slowly!

2. Click on the ‘Edit Content’ button. This will open up the WYSIWYG content editor. The editor has the following buttons. Hovering your mouse over them will also reveal their function.
Input buttons offering different ways to capture student inputs. These are: (from left to right)

a. Checkbox (for multiple selections from a list)
b. Text-field (for short text inputs)
c. Text area (for long text inputs)
d. Radio button (for a single selection from a list – like a multiple choice)

Text and paragraph settings area that is similar to the one found in Microsoft Word™.

Font settings buttons similar to the one found in Microsoft Word™.

Insert buttons for images, tables, horizontal dividing lines, and special characters (this function is not currently available). **NOTE:** ThinkSpace editor currently does not allow direct upload of images. It inserts only images that are online and have a URL.

Button for inserting and deleting hyperlinks to websites and webpages.

These are buttons for formatting the text content that you develop for your students (readings, questions, instructions etc.) to allow differentiation and emphasis. The options include Heading types, text color and text highlighting.

This is the “Paste from Word” button. If you have some questions or text types out in a Word document and are copy/pasting from it to save time, it is recommended that you use this function. Pasting from Word directly into the editor leads to inconsistent formatting and introduction of ‘junk’ code that will have to be deleted manually.

The ‘Source’ button shows you the html code that is being generated behind the editor as you go about developing your content. This is where you will insert the ‘Embed Code’ for Youtube videos, code for ‘Carry Forward’ and any other customization.
using HTML that is not available in the editor functions. To duplicate the content and html elements of a phase into an HTML phase in another Case or Space, select and copy the source code (or part of it as needed) from the phase into the desired phase in another Case or Space.

Once you are done, **don’t forget to click ‘Update Content’ button to save your edits and changes!!** Once you have updated the content, press the ‘Preview Phase’ button on the Top right of the screen to check how the content / inputs look or the ‘Next Phase’ button to continue editing and building.

**Step 5: Editing Logistics: Instructions, Release and Due dates**
1. Once you are building and editing the content of the Phases, click on the ‘Logistics’ button on the case-builder process bar on the top. This will take you to the next step in case-building where you will manage your case from.

2. In the Case Instructions editor, type in the instructions for your students about the case and what they are expected to do. Your students will see these instructions when they access the case.

3. Next, set the Release Date and Time and Due Date and Time by clicking inside the relevant boxes and selecting from the drop-down calendar and time list. Click on the blue ‘Next Step’ button on the bottom right to save your instructions and settings.
Step 6: Activating the Case:

The Case is in your Drafts folder at this point and is not visible to your students. Scroll down to the end and click on ‘Activate Case’ to make it visible to your students. Click ‘Finish Case’ to

Cloning a Case:
Once you have set up a Case (or process) set up to your liking, you can use it as a template to build other cases. **A Case can be cloned into the same Space or into any other Space that you have access to.** Once cloned, you can then rename it and edit it to insert new content, images, change the questions etc. to make a new case.

1. To clone a Case, navigate to the Case Screen and select the Case that you want to clone. Click the ‘Clone Case’ button on the right side of the case.
2. A list of Spaces you have access to will open up, with the current Space (where the Case currently resides) on top of the list. Select the button next to the Space you want the case cloned into and it will be cloned.

3. Navigate to the Space you cloned the case into and you will find it in the ‘Drafts’ section.

Step 7: Inviting students/users to the Space

Once you are done with building and activating your case, it’s time to invite your students to it. Students can even be invited right after you create your Space, but they will see a blank empty Space with no cases.

1. Navigate to the Space you want to invite users to and click on ‘Space Roster’

2. This will open up the Space Roster screen from where you can invite and manage users.

3. Users can be invited to a Space in two ways:
   a. Individually, by clicking on the '+ Invite User' button, entering an individual email addresses and clicking 'Send invitation'. Don't forget to choose the role you want
the user to access the space as before sending the invite. This is recommended if you are adding a single student or Teaching Assistants or other instructors.

b. To invite a large number of users at once (like a class), it is recommended that you use the **Import Roster** function. This will ask you to upload a .csv (comma separated values) file with a single row of emails only — (no names!) and no headers. Users invited by importing a roster are always enrolled in a student role.

4. To create a .csv or comma separated value file, simply download your class enrollment list from Access Plus, remove everything else (including all column headers and other fields) leaving just the email addresses and click File > Save As > and pick comma separated values (.csv) as the file format.

5. Now, when you click on **Import Roster** a dialogue box will open up. Click on ‘Browse file(s)’ and find the .csv file you made and choose it. Once the roster has been uploaded, you will get an email informing you.
6. At the same time, your students will get an invitation from ThinkBot asking to join ThinkSpace. They should be informed to be on the lookout for this invitation email and click the ‘Join ThinkSpace’ link in that to create an account and log in. Students will have to create a separate account in ThinkSpace in order to access the Space. Their ISU credentials will not work automatically to give them access (though they can use the same password as their Cymail to keep it simple). It is recommended that they have enough lead time to do that (along with intermittent reminders) depending on the format and size of your class.

Phases Types
ThinkSpace offers nine types of phases to help you build a customized learning experience. Each phase has it’s unique features and knowing what they are will help you decide which ones you want to use as well as their placement. The order of the phases can always be edited with the ‘Edit Order’ button. Just remember to ‘Save Order’ when you are done rearranging.

When you click the ‘Add Phase’ button, this is the screen you will see. What these Phase Types look like are described below.
Each of these Phase types are described below along with illustrations and examples.

**One Column (HTML) (Hyper-text markup language) Phase:**

This is the most basic Phase type, good for most case building. It can be used to deliver content to students and also capture their text inputs. It has a WYSIWYG Text Editor (described in detail above) that allows you to add radio buttons, checklist boxes, text input areas, insert images, embed videos, tables, web links and also insert the code for Carry Forward and other custom coding.

This Phase type comes with some example elements built in. You can edit them or delete them as per your need.
Two Columns (HTML, HTML) Phase:

This is an HTML phase just like the one above, with an additional HTML column or sidebar which can be built to supplement the content on the main HTML column. For instance, you can put links or resources on the sidebar, a checklist, input boxes, syllabus or even do a carry forward into it. Your imagination is the limit with a two-column html phase - have twice the fun with it!
Two Columns (HTML, Observation List) Phase:

This phase is also known simply as the ‘Observation List’. It also has two sections – an HTML section with full HTML editor functions on the left and a Dynamic observation list on the right. Any text that is highlighted in the HTML section immediately pops over to the observation list. It’s like dynamic note-taking. The observation list carries forward into other observation list phases (like Lab Data phase) and more observations can be added to it. Students can build a list of relevant observations (or selections) and then use them for Diagnostic Reasoning to solve a problem.

Lab Data with Observation List Phase:

This phase allows reproduction of authentic clinical Laboratory results for identification of abnormalities. The abnormal lab results have to be identified and named and once done correctly, they get added to the observation list, building on previous observation phases.
Diagnostic Path with Observation List Phase:

Also known simply as Diagnostic Path, this phase allows students to build a reasoned hypothesis and support it with evidence by pulling observations from the observation list and arranging them in a causal hierarchy. This phase allows students creative freedom to move things around as much as they want as they structure the complex data, making their thinking process visible to them as well as to the instructor.
One Column (Student File Upload) Phase and One Column (HTML, Student File Upload) Phase:

Also known simply as the Student File Upload phase, these phases allow student work (writing, drawings, presentations, charts, diagrams, posters) to be uploaded into ThinkSpace as a PDF file. The PDF opens up right in ThinkSpace and can be viewed by the instructor to provide feedback and comments. It can also be used for Peer Review where team members view each others work and provide constructive comments for improvement.

These two phase types named above have the same functionality, except one has an added HTML section on top to give more freedom to instructors to provide content, resources or scaffolding.
Peer Evaluation Phase:
Used in Team based learning, flipped classrooms and group work situations, the peer evaluation phase allows students to score each other on specific criteria decided on by the instructor, and provide positive as well as constructive comments to their team mates in a safe environment. The tool has also been used creatively to get peer feedback on class presentations.

Peer Evaluation Summary Phase
This phase displays the results of the Peer Evaluation to the students. The scores are averaged and comments are all anonymized to create a safe environment for honest feedback.