

## Introduction to Flash Homework Four

1. Examine the homework four [example file](#)
2. Download the [start file](#) for homework four
3. Examine the symbols and bitmaps in the Library
4. Examine the names of the buttons and movie clips throughout the file
5. Place the following actions on frame one of the actions layer

```
stop();
walker_mc.stop();
// all the functions below receive mouse events and return no data

function navigate(event:MouseEvent):void {
gotoAndStop(event.target.name);
walker_mc.alpha=0;
}
/*event listeners connect all the buttons in this ActionScript panel to the
parameters -mouse event and the function name. The button now listens for
the mouse click and runs the function */
home.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, navigate);
timeline.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, navigate);

function playMC(event:MouseEvent):void
{
gotoAndStop(15);
walker_mc.alpha=1;
walker_mc.play();
}
play_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, playMC);

function stopMC(event:MouseEvent):void
{
gotoAndStop(15);
walker_mc.alpha=1;
walker_mc.stop();
}
stop_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, stopMC);

var web_req:URLRequest = new URLRequest("http://www.santarosa.edu");
function web(event:MouseEvent):void {
navigateToURL(web_req, "_blank");
}
website.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, web);
```

6. Place the following actions on frame ten of the actions layer

```
function goBack(event:MouseEvent):void
{ if(currentFrame == 10)
  { gotoAndStop(14); }
  else
  { prevFrame();}}
```

```
function goForward(event:MouseEvent):void
{ if(currentFrame == 14)
  { gotoAndStop(10); }
  else
  { nextFrame(); }}
back_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, goBack);
next_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, goForward);
```

**This approach gets rid of the message *Error #1009: Cannot access a property or method of a null object reference at hw4 fla::MainTimeline/playMC()***

It is important to understand why this error message was appearing in the first version of this project and why it is now gone.

**The error message meaning:** This error basically means that you are trying to reference something that isn't there yet.

**The reason for the error:** Both functions playMC and stopMC call to the movie clip whose instance name is walker\_mc. The problem is that the movie clip originally appears on frame 15 at the label movie\_clip. The function is on frame one so for the function, this object walker\_mc did not exist.

**The solution:** By placing a single instance of the walker\_mc movie clip on frame one but setting its alpha (transparency) to 0, we make sure that the movie clip exists as an object from the very beginning. This way when the functions playMC and stopMC call to the movie clip, the object already exists. We add the change of the alpha to 1, which means 100% so when the walker starts walking we can see him. We then change the alpha back to 0 so when we get back to either the main timeline or the home state, he disappears.

I hope this clarifies matters.