Assignment #8: Flutterer

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Due Date: Friday, December 6th, 5:00PM

Welcome to Flutterer! In this assignment, you will implement a small but fully-functioning social network that emulates Twitter's design. The home page displays a list of "floots" (posts) made by yourself and friends, and allows you to view and make comments on those floots. As part of this, you’ll be implementing a server to persist and serve those floots to anyone who connects!

The hardest part of this assignment is less in the actual implementation and more in the process of architecting the various parts into one fully-functioning application. In particular, this is the first program you’ll have worked on that makes use of many separate files at once; in fact, Flutterer is composed of 14 Python and Javascript files: 8 Python files on the backend (the server), and 6 Javascript files on the frontend (the website/client), all working in tandem (with each other and via web requests) to present the user experience of Flutterer. Don’t worry, though; much of this is code we’ve already written to support you as you complete the assignment. On the backend, you’ll only need to implement one Python file, and read two or three others to understand how they work. On the frontend, you’ll need to implement small pieces of 5 JavaScript files.

When Flutterer is complete, you’ll have implemented a fully-functioning “full-stack” application that is capable of:

- Displaying a list of “floots” to any computer (anywhere in the world) that connects
- Displaying a list of comments on individual floots
- Allowing multiple users to post floots to the website that are later seen by everyone
- Allowing multiple users to comment on any fлот
- Displaying all the above in an attractive, modern user-interface

Owl image from pngtree.com
That may not seem like a lot at first glance, but hiding behind each of those elements are the complexities of server-client interaction and dynamic content retrieval and modification. By the end of this assignment, you will have implemented something unprecedented in an introductory Computer Science class – something to be really proud of! 😊

If you’d like to go beyond the functionality above, Flutterer has extensive opportunity for you to implement extensions. We’ve detailed some ideas for extensions at the bottom of this handout. What’s more: The best submission (as decided by Jerry, Ryan, and the Section Leaders) will be treated as a contest winner. That means your lowest assignment or midterm grade will be dropped and replaced with a 100%.

Logistics

Taking one late day will extend the deadline to Monday, 12/9 at 5:00PM, and a second late day will extend the deadline to Wednesday, 12/11 at 5:00PM. No submissions will be accepted past Wednesday, 12/11 at 5:00PM.

You may work a partner for this assignment.

Part 1: Implementing the Server in Python

For the first part of this assignment, we will focus on implementing a server in Python. A server is a computer program that provides services for other programs (called clients) over the internet. In our case, the clients are web browsers (like Google Chrome) running the Javascript you will write in Part 2. The server maintains a database of floots and comments, and the client can ask the server to do things like create new floots, add comments to floots, delete floots, and so on. Multiple clients can talk to the same server, so if one client asks the server to create a floot and then a different client asks the server for a list of all floots (for the purposes of populating its news feed), the second client will see the floot that the first client created (even though the two clients have no direct contact with each other).

The client and server "talk" to each other following a specification called an API. The API specifies, in very clear terms, how the client and server should interact so that the server can understand what the client is asking it, and so the client can understand the server's responses. It defines a series of endpoints, where each endpoint corresponds to something the client might ask the server to do. For example, if the client wants to retrieve a list of floots that have been posted, it can send a request to the GET /api/floots endpoint. If it wants to delete a floot, it can send a request to the POST /api/floots/{flootId}/delete endpoint. For each endpoint, the API specifies what information the client needs to send in its request, and it specifies how the server's response should look. For example, our API says that a client sending a request to POST /api/floots (an endpoint that creates new floots) needs to include the contents of the floot, as well as the username of the person posting the floot. A server response to that request should
contain a JSON-formatted string that includes a variety of information about the newly-created floot.

The full list of Flutterer API endpoints is described in the API overview section below. For now, don't worry about understanding all the endpoints in our API. Just focus on understanding the general ideas involved in this client-server communication.

You may remember learning about the HTTP protocol in lecture, along with various details such as how paths are specified, how headers are sent, and so on. For this assignment, you need to have an understanding of what is happening behind the scenes, but those details have already been handled for you. Your only job is to write a handful of functions that implement the functionality of the Flutterer API endpoints. This work will be described more concretely in the next few sections.

**Summary of starter code**

Approaching a codebase the size of Flutterer’s can be a daunting task, so we’ll take some space here to explore Flutterer’s files together. Although not all files need to be modified or even read, we still recommend looking through them. They can give you examples of what good decomposition looks like, and can pique your interest on Python concepts we haven’t explored yet!

You will **not** need to modify the following files, but you will need to use the classes they define in your code. Thus, you should take a look at the public methods (i.e. the ones that don't start with an underscore) and read their comments to understand how they work. You don't need to read or understand the actual code in these files, although you are certainly welcome to.

- **server/database.py** defines a `Database` class that you will use to store information in your server such that the saved information will stay saved, even if you restart the server program or reboot your computer. There is a handy table describing all of the methods at the end of this handout (see Appendix), which you can print out as a quick reference if you'd like.
- **server/floot.py** defines a `Floot` class that you will need to use when interacting with the `Database`. This class is also described in the quick reference in the Appendix.
- **server/floot_comment.py** defines a `FlootComment` class that you will also need to use when interacting with the `Database`.
- **server/error.py** is very short and defines an `HTTPError` class that you can use to notify the client of any errors you encounter.

There are a few more files that are worth noting:

- **server/data.json** stores all of the information that has been saved to your `Database`. If you ever want to clear your database to start fresh, you can delete this file. (Other than
that, you won't need to interact with this file directly; it's done for you in the Database implementation.)

- server/test_api.py contains a series of tests that you can use to ensure your code has been implemented correctly. You don't need to read or understand this file, but you will need to run it. This is covered in the Testing your server section. Don't worry about it for now.
- /run_server.py launches a web server that accepts HTTP requests and runs your code to service API requests. A lot of this code is pretty complicated and you don't need to read or understand it, but you will need to run this script starting in Part 2 (when you work on implementing the client).
- server/serve.py contains the core implementation of our HTTP server. You can read it if you're curious, but you don't need to read or understand anything here.

Lastly, note that server/api.py is the only file you'll be writing in the backend. This file implements the responses to the various API endpoints defined in the API docs (below).

**How api.py works**

Let's walk through server/api.py together, since this is where you will be doing the bulk of your work. Open the file in PyCharm, and you will see a number of functions with # TODO comments in them; these are the functions you will need to implement for this first portion of the assignment. At the bottom of the file, you will find this code:

```python
GET_ROUTES = [
    ("/api/floots", get_floots),
    ("/api/floots/([^/]+)", "floot_id"), get_floot),
    ("/api/floots/([^/]+)/comments", "floot_id"), get_comments),
    ("(/.*)", "path"), serve_file),
]

POST_ROUTES = [
    ("/api/floots")
    create_floot),
    ("/api/floots/([^/]+)/comments", "floot_id"), create_comment),
    < 4 more routes omitted for brevity... >
]
```

These two variables define the API endpoints for Flutterer. The first line in GET_ROUTES defines the GET /api/floots endpoint, and tells the server that the get_floots function should be called whenever a client makes a request to that endpoint. The second line is a bit more complicated; it defines an endpoint that has a path parameter. If the client sends a request to the server for any URL matching the form /api/floots/{some string} (e.g. /api/floots/abc or /api/floots/123), our server code will extract the {some string} part from the requested URL (e.g. abc or 123) and pass the extracted string as the floot_id parameter to the get_floot function. For this reason, do not change the parameter names in the API functions! (Or, if
you update the parameter names, be sure to update the corresponding parameter names in
GET_ROUTES and POST_ROUTES.)

The endpoints defined in POST_ROUTES work the same way, with one twist: POST requests
generally involve the client uploading some data to the server (as opposed to GET requests, where
the client is purely trying to get/retrieve data from the server). For example, the POST
/api/floots endpoint (for creating new floots) requires that the client upload the contents of the
floot as part of the request body. Our server code takes the request body that was received from
the client, parses it into a dictionary (since it is sent from the client to the server as a string), and
passes that dictionary to the specified API function as the request_body parameter. For this
reason, every API function that is mentioned in POST_ROUTES has a request_body parameter.
To give a concrete example, see the delete_floot function. The floot_id parameter comes
from the path parameter (as specified in POST_ROUTES), and the request_body parameter is a
dictionary that comes from the request body sent by the client.

Your job is to implement the remaining API functions marked with TODO comments. As
mentioned, these functions accept parameters based on the path parameters and request body;
they should return a list or a dictionary, which gets converted to a JSON string by our server
code. In some cases, you may want to return an HTTPError to the client to indicate that
something has gone wrong. For example, in get_floot, you may be asked by the client to look
up information about a particular floot. However, if the specified floot_id does not match any
floot in the database, you should inform the client of the error by returning HTTPError(404,
"no floot with ID " + floot_id + " could be found").

Finally, as a last note, observe that a Database object has been created for you at the top of
api.py:

    db = Database()

You will need to use this Database object to get floots from the database, create new floots, and
so on. You should read through the comments in database.py to see how to use this object, and
there is also a quick reference at the very end of this handout, in the Appendix.

Testing your server

Your API functions are executed whenever a client makes a request to an API endpoint.
However, you haven't implemented any client yet… So how are you supposed to test your API
code?

To solve this issue (and to make your life simpler), we have provided a series of tests you can
run to verify that your functions work correctly. These tests are fairly comprehensive, so,
provided you haven't done anything especially bizarre, passing all the tests means you should get 100% functionality for the server portion of this assignment. Hopefully, in addition to
giving you some confidence for your functionality grade, these tests will allow you to focus on implementing the client in Part 2 without needing to worry about possible bugs in your server code.

To run tests, open the server/test_api.py file, scroll to the bottom of the file, and click the "play" button to the left of if __name__ == "__main__":

```
if __name__ == "__main__":
    unittest.main()
```

(Once you have done this at least once, you should also be able to launch the tests from the upper-right corner of PyCharm.)

This will run the entire test suite (21 tests) and report any errors it finds. PyCharm will show you the output like so:

Click the arrows to see the list of individual tests, then click on a particular test to see why it failed.

This is what a failure looks like:
At the top, you’ll see an error message that describes what we expected, and what your code did; then, it will summarize the difference. Read the last line first: In this case, `api.create_floot` was supposed to return a dictionary, but instead it returned an `HTTPError`. If your code outright crashes (instead of doing the wrong thing), the test failure will instead look like this:

```
Exception: Uh oh, your code crashed!
```

In this case, you can read the stack trace from the bottom up to find where the error in your code occurred. (Here, we raised an `Exception` to induce an artificial crash for demo purposes.)

The tests are written in the same order as the things they exercise in `api.py`, so you can implement one function and then go to `test_api.py` and run the tests for just that function. You can execute a single test by clicking the "play" button to the left of the test:
Recommendations for completing the assignment

Our biggest recommendation for this part of the assignment is to **implement one API endpoint, test it, and only move to the next endpoint once the previous one functions correctly.** Do not implement all of the endpoints and then try testing things out all at once; your code will likely be broken, and it will take a lot longer to fix everything. We have given you the tests to make it easy to spot bugs early on, so please use them.

In addition, please reach out if you have questions about what's going on in this assignment. This assignment doesn't require you to write much code, but it is very conceptually dense, and we want to make sure you understand how all the pieces are fitting together. Although there is no LaIR over Thanksgiving break, you are welcome to post on Campuswire or email your section leader, Ryan, or Jerry if you have questions.

API Overview

The server you will implement provides persistent, shared data storage of Floots (which are like Twitter posts). Floots have information like the content of a message and who posted it, and are identified by a special unique **id**, which looks like this:

```
cace4adc-34b9-49dd-90cd-32f552b7b72f
```

Every Floot will have its own, unique id, which can be used to identify a particular Floot among many. Don’t worry about generating this id; our starter code will take care of that for you.

Of course, this isn’t all; just as tweets can have replies, Floots can have comments. Comments are linked to a particular floot (a-la Facebook), and are identified by both the floot within which they reside, and by another unique id that takes the same format as above.

The API you need to implement is specified here: [https://bit.ly/37wtWM7](https://bit.ly/37wtWM7). This is industry-grade API documentation, and if you ever work with an API from Google, Facebook, Slack, or some other company, you will probably need to read similar documentation. In addition, we have written up a table with the most important information that you can print out and refer to if you'd like. This table is at the very end of this handout, in the Appendix.

**Part 2: Implementing the Client in JavaScript**

Now that you have a functioning server that is capable of storing data for multiple users, let's build the frontend of the website to connect to it!

**Components**

Before we begin talking about the code, it is important to discuss how the code is organized, as well as why it is organized that way.
Modern websites are huge; my Facebook home page has 4,338 DOM nodes, and the Google Docs document I am currently typing in has 6,883. That's a lot of elements, and we need some way to manage that complexity.

One way to manage the complexity is to organize DOM nodes into components. For example, say these are the DOM nodes needed to display a floot "card" on the screen, including the author's profile photo, the author's name, the contents of the floot, a "like" count, and a "number of comments" count:

```html
<div class="card floot-card" event flex
  <img class="user-photo" src="img/Anand Shankar.jpg">
  <div>
    <div class="user">Anand Shankar</div>
  </div>
  <div>Greetings, I am Anand</div>
  <div class="comment-like-count">
    <div class="like-count"></div>
    <div class="comment-count"></div>
  </div>
</div>
```

We can group these nodes into logical "components":

```
<Floot />
  <ProfilePicture />
  <FlootContent />
  <LikeCommentCount />
    <LikeCount />
    <CommentCount />
```

Then, we can implement each component as a simple function that takes some parameters (e.g. ProfilePicture would need to know the username of the floot's author) and generates the DOM nodes that would be needed to add that component to the page. As a concrete example, we have implemented a ProfilePicture component that looks like this:

```javascript
function ProfilePicture(name, imageUrl) {
  let image = document.createElement("img");
  image.src = imageUrl;
  image.className = "user-photo";
  image.alt = "User Profile Image for " + name;
  return image;
}
```

Then, using smaller components, building big components (like Floot as shown in the two pictures above) becomes much simpler:

```javascript
function Floot(floot, loggedInUser, actions) {
  let card = document.createElement("div");
  card.innerHTML = "floot content";
  return card;
}
```
card.classList.add("card");
card.classList.add("floot-card");
card.appendChild(ProfilePicture(floot.username,
   "img/" + floot.username + ".jpg");
card.appendChild(FlootContent(floot.username, floot.message));
card.appendChild(LikeCommentCount(floot, loggedInUser, toggleLike));
return card;
}

All of the DOM generation for this assignment is structured in terms of components. Throughout the rest of this handout, we will use the term "component" extensively, but it's important to remember that a component is just a normal function that takes some parameters and returns a DOM node as output.

Starting the server

Launch the server by opening run_server.py in PyCharm, scrolling to the bottom, and pressing the green "play" button to the left of if __name__ == "__main__":

This will run the server and, upon any Python file change, will automatically restart the server so you’re working with the latest version of your code. (You shouldn't need to make any changes to your Python code in this part of the assignment, but this will be useful if you want to implement an extension.) To exit, press the stop button.

Once the server is running, you can connect to it by going to http://localhost:1066/ in your web browser, all ready to go! When you make changes to your JavaScript/HTML/CSS files, changes will be reflected automatically – just refresh your browser! (No need to restart the server.)

You may run into an error that complains about “address already in use” or an “error binding port 1066” when running the server. This probably means the server is already running somewhere else (maybe another PyCharm Run tab). If it’s not or you can’t get it to work, you
can edit the `SERVER_PORT` constant in `server/serve.py` and change it to a different number between 1024 and 65534.

Note that unlike previous assignments where you could double-click `index.html` to run your Javascript, you must launch the website by going to `http://localhost:1066/`! If you open the website by double-clicking `index.html`, things might appear to work at first, but you will run into problems making `AsyncRequests`. (If you try making an `AsyncRequest` for `/api/floots` after opening `index.html` directly, the browser will try looking for the file `/api/floots` on your computer instead of sending a request to your Python server.)

### Milestone 1: Read the starter code

First, take some time to familiarize yourself with the code that has been provided to you. We wanted to give you a real-world problem for this assignment, but building web applications often involves a significant amount of tedious work (e.g. basic DOM manipulation) that we didn't feel was worth your time in Week 10. We have implemented most of the tedious work for you! While you don't need to understand how all of it works, you should skim the files to see what code we have already implemented and how to use it.

The following notable files are provided for you:

- **client/index.html**: This is the HTML file that browsers first read when they are loading Flutterer. You might notice that there is very little in this file; the entire page is dynamically generated from JavaScript. You won't need to touch this file for this assignment; you'll manipulate the HTML by using JavaScript to manipulate the DOM.

- **client/style.css**: This file contains the CSS for Flutterer. There is quite a lot of CSS involved, and we have no expectation that you understand how it works. Feel free to skim this file if you are curious, but you don't need to do anything with this file for the purposes of this assignment.

- **client/img/**: This directory contains all the images that Flutterer can load. You’re free to peruse these images, or to add your own! If you want to change the names of the users that show up in Flutterer, you can add new profile pictures in this directory. Just be sure to replace any spaces in the user name with `%20`.

- **client/js/flutterer.js**: This is where you will need to write most of your code. The `Flutterer` function is called when the HTML file first loads; you will need to extend this and implement `MainComponent` to generate the contents of the page.

- **client/js/sidebar_components.js**: This file contains the `Sidebar`, `FluttererLogo`, and `AccountSelector` components, which make up the left side of the screen in the finished product. These components are fully implemented, and you won't need to change anything here except for one line in `AccountSelector`. You will need to use this code in Milestone 2.
client/js/floot_components.js: This file contains components making up the right side of the screen: NewsFeed, NewFlootEntry, FlootList, Floot, and a few other small components. NewsFeed generates the entire right side of the screen via NewFlootEntry (the text box and submit button at the top of the screen that allow you to create a new floot) and FlootList (as you might expect, a list of Floots). These components are mostly fully implemented, although you will need to make a few one-line changes for Milestones 5-7.

client/js/comment_components.js: This file contains components making up the display and entry of comments on a floot: NewCommentEntry, CommentList, Comment, and CommentContent. Like floot_components.js, these components are mostly fully implemented. You'll have to make a few one-line changes for Milestones 8 and 9.

client/js/modal_components.js: This file contains the single FlootModal component. A modal is a window-in-a-window; an example of this is the Google Docs “share” screen (“share” modal). In Flutterer, the FlootModal is responsible for displaying the details of a Floot, including that floot’s comments. The FlootModal is already implemented, but you’ll have to make a couple changes for Milestone 7.

client/js/general_components.js: This file contains several components used throughout the rest of Flutterer, including the ProfilePicture, CommentCount, and DeleteButton components, among others. These are already fully implemented for you.

Milestone 2: Display the basic interface

In this milestone, you'll implement your first component! (In fact, it is the only component that we are requiring you to implement on your own.) Make sure that you have read the earlier section called Components.

You should first implement MainComponent, which generates the nodes needed to show the entire page. To keep things simple starting out, we'll just generate a container div with the class primary-container that contains a Sidebar and a NewsFeed. First, create a div node using document.createElement(). Add the primary-container class to the div, so that it is styled properly using our provided CSS styles. Then, call the Sidebar and NewsFeed functions, each of which return a DOM node you can add to your div by calling container.appendChild-sidebar or news feed node). (You may want to use the USERS constant when calling Sidebar.) Finally, return the container div.

If you would like a reference for implementing MainComponent, take a look at Sidebar in sidebar_components.js. The two functions are very similar.

Once you have done this, update the Flutterer function to display MainComponent on the page:

document.body.appendChild(MainComponent(selected user, floots, actions) ;
For now, when calling `MainComponent`, you can pass `USERS[0]` as the selected user, `[]` as the list of floots, and `{}` as the actions aggregate. We will explain these parameters in milestones 3 and 4, and we can pass better values then.

At the end of this milestone, the left sidebar should appear with the first user highlighted, and the right side of the screen should be populated with a text box that allows you to enter a floot:

![Example Image]

This is an exciting result to get for writing less than 20 lines of code! However, it's not magic; as you should have seen in Milestone 1, `Sidebar`, `NewsFeed`, and the components they depend on are simply doing a lot of mundane DOM manipulation similar to what you did in Assignment 7. CSS is being used to make the page look pretty. You should have a good sense of how everything on this page is working; hopefully, you feel like you could use the same techniques to implement a different kind of web application without our scaffolding, if given sufficient time.

Be sure that your code generates the above web page before moving on to the next milestone.

**Milestone 3: Load the news feed**

In Milestone 2, you passed the empty array (`[]`) as the list of floots to `MainComponent`. Let's pass something more real! For this milestone, we will add code to `Flutterer` to load the list of floots from the `/api/floots` API endpoint that you implemented in the first half of this assignment; then, we will pass this to `MainComponent`.

Modify the `Flutterer` function to create and send an `AsyncRequest` to `/api/floots`, following lecture and section examples for making asynchronous requests. When the request is completed and the response comes back from the server, use `JSON.parse()` to convert the string returned from `response.getPayload()` into an array of aggregates. Pass that array to `MainComponent` to display the floots returned from the server.
If you run into errors in sending the AsyncRequest, make sure you are loading the website through `http://localhost:1066/` as described earlier in *Starting the server*.

When you are finished, you should see a list of demo floots displayed nicely on the screen:

![Example screenshot](image)

Again, this leverages a lot of existing code we wrote for you in `floot_components.js`, but there are no new concepts in how these DOM nodes are generated, and you should have a good sense of how everything is working.

**Milestone 4: Implement user switching**

This looks great so far! However, clicking different names in the "Log in as" sidebar has no effect. Let's fix that.

Remember that components are simply functions that take some parameters and return DOM nodes that can be shown on the page. The `selectedUser` parameter passed to `MainComponent` determines which user is highlighted in the left sidebar and which profile picture appears to the left of the "What's fluttering?" text box in the top right of the page. As such, if we want to change which user is shown as being logged in, one way to do so is to delete all the elements on the page (i.e. remove all the children of `document.body`), and then reconstruct the page by passing a different `selectedUser` to `MainComponent` and displaying the returned elements (by appending the returned DOM node to `document.body` as you did in Milestone 2). This process of "clear the screen, regenerate the page, and display it again" happens so fast that the user can't perceive anything was deleted. The only changes they can see to the screen are that the highlighted user and "What's floating?" profile picture have changed.

Side note: This "let's destroy everything and regenerate everything from scratch" approach might feel lazy and inefficient to you, and I would agree. However, modern web applications are so complicated and have so many things on the page that handling updates to the page in the most efficient way tends to yield extremely complicated code. Tools have been developed over the last
10 years to make this "functional" paradigm ("given some inputs, generate the output DOM from scratch") more efficient so that we can spend more time writing simple functions and less time debugging really complicated code.

To implement this approach, define a function inside Flutterer that should be called when someone selects a different user to log in as. (You could also define this function as a top-level function, but it will be much easier to define it as a closure function inside Flutterer.) This function should take one parameter (the name of the user being switched to), and it should:

- Clear anything being currently shown on the page:
  ```javascript
  while (document.body.lastChild != null) {
    document.body.removeChild(document.body.lastChild)
  }
  ```
- Generate a new tree of DOM nodes by calling MainComponent with the new username
- Show the new nodes using `document.body.appendChild()`

You will need to define a top-level variable inside the Flutterer function that stores the list of floots retrieved from the server in Milestone 3. Otherwise, you won't have a good value to pass as the `floots` parameter to MainComponent.

Once you have done this, the only task that remains is to call this function when one of the users is clicked in the left sidebar. We have installed a click-handling function on each sidebar button (see `buttonClicked` inside of AccountSelector in sidebar_components.js). You only need to add a single line of code, calling the function you wrote inside buttonClicked. However, this is easier said than done; the function you wrote is a (hopefully) a closure function inside Flutterer, and it isn't accessible from inside AccountSelector.

To solve this problem, we have included an `actions` parameter in several of the components. This aggregate is intended to contain functions that small components (like AccountSelector) can use to send information up to Flutterer, and so that Flutterer can re-render the page with updated information. Inside Flutterer, put your function inside of an `actions` aggregate:

```javascript
let actions = {
  changeSelectedUser: function(username) {
    // your code here
  },
};
```

Pass this aggregate as the third argument to MainComponent (instead of passing {}, as you did in Milestone 2). Then, you should be able to access this function inside of buttonClicked in AccountSelector. (You can verify this by doing `console.log(actions);` in buttonClicked.) The function can be retrieved as `actions.changeSelectedUser`, so you can call it and pass the clicked username by calling `actions.changeSelectedUser(username).`
By the end of this milestone, you should be able to click different users in the left sidebar. The sidebar should update to reflect the selected user, and the profile picture to the left of the "What's fluttering?" text box should also update.

Milestone 5: Post new floots

In the first half of this assignment, you implemented a POST /api/floots API endpoint that allows the client to add new floots to the database. For this milestone, when the "Floot" button is clicked, you should make an AsyncRequest to that endpoint; then, make another AsyncRequest to GET /api/floots to get an updated list of floots (including the one that was just created). Use this updated list to create a new MainComponent and update the user’s view.

Let's walk through all of that step by step. First, in Flutterer, add another function to the actions aggregate that takes the contents of the floot (as a string) as the message parameter. For now, just put a console.log() call inside the function so that we can see that it's being called:

```javascript
let actions = {
    changeSelectedUser: /* code from Milestone 4 */,
    createFloot: function(message) {
        console.log("actions.createFloot was called, message:", message);
    },
};
```

Then, let's wire up the code so that function gets called when the "Floot" button is clicked. Have a look at the NewFlootEntry component inside floot_component.js. This component creates the "What's fluttering?" text box, as well as the "Floot" button that submits the floot. When the "Floot" button is clicked, the postFloot function is called. You can access the createFloot function you just created via the actions aggregate. Add a line to postFloot to call that function, passing it textbox.value (i.e. the contents of the "What's fluttering?" text box).

At this point, you should be able to type some text into the "What's fluttering?" text box, click the "Floot" button, and see that text appear in your browser console. (Try it out, and make sure everything is working. If it doesn't work, console.log the actions object at various points to make sure actions.createFloot is being passed properly.)

Next, add to your actions.createFloot function so that it sends an AsyncRequest to /api/floots using the POST method. When you are creating theAsyncRequest, you will need to call request.setMethod("POST"); to make sure the POST method is used. If you don't do this, the server will think you are trying to GET a list of floots, and it will send you back a list of all floots (without creating any new floot). Then, you will need to call request.setPayload(request.body); in order to specify the data for the request (i.e. the username and message). Note that setPayload's request body parameter takes a string, not an object, so you will need to use JSON.stringify() to convert an aggregate/dictionary to a string that can be sent to the server:
request.setPayload(JSON.stringify({
    username: username,
    message: message,
  }));

When the request finishes (i.e. the callback passed to request.setSuccessHandler (callback) is called), that means the server has saved the new floot. (You should be able to manually refresh the page and see the floot appear.) In the success handler, you should load an updated list of floots (i.e. make another AsyncRequest to GET /api/floots), and when that second request succeeds, you should reconstruct MainComponent to re-render the page with the updated list of floots. Throughout this process, try to find ways to consolidate your code with the code you wrote for Milestone 3 (loading and displaying the news feed) and Milestone 4 (re-rendering the page by creating a new MainComponent). Our solution decomposes into three functions:

- A function that loads the list of floots from the server (GET /api/floots). This function is called on initial load and whenever a new floot is posted (and it is also called several times for the later milestones).
- A function that serves as the AsyncRequest success handler for the previous function (i.e. is called whenever the server responds to GET /api/floots). This function extracts the list of floots from the server's response.
- A function that re-renders the MainComponent (i.e. clears everything in document.body and then adds a new MainComponent). This is called from the previous function (i.e. when the server responds with an updated list of floots), but it is also called when the logged-in user is changed, and it is called again in Milestone 7.

You can decompose your code any way that makes the most sense to you; we are only providing this as a reference.

Note that this code is pretty conceptually complicated. This is probably the first time you're working with chains of 3 callback functions, so there is a lot to think about. If things don't work, add gratuitous console.log() statements to try to build an intuition for what your program is doing and where it might be deviating from what you expect.

Milestone 6: Delete floots

Next, we’ll be giving your users the opportunity to do something seldom allowed by today’s social networks: deleting content! You’ll notice that your Floots already show a trash can icon on deletable floots (i.e. floots that were posted by the currently logged-in user). Your job is to connect this trash can to the action of deleting a Floot, which you implemented in the POST /api/floots/{id}/delete API endpoint on the server. This is extremely similar to the work you did in Milestone 5. To get you started, here are some concrete things you'll need to do:

- Add another function to actions that can be called to delete a floot.
- Call this function from inside the `deleteFloot` event handler in the `Floot` component (`floot_components.js`).
- In your function, make a `POST` request to `/api/floots/{id}/delete`. Note that this endpoint takes a `path parameter` (the ID of the floot you're trying to delete). Make sure you don't do `let request = AsyncRequest("/api/floots/{id}/delete");` you need to build up a target URL string that substitutes `{id}` out for the appropriate floot ID. Fortunately, the floot ID is embedded in the `flootInfo` parameter passed to the Floot component function.
- When that request succeeds, refresh the display so that the deleted floot disappears, just like you did in the previous milestone. Make sure to decompose your code well, since this does the exact same thing as Milestone 5.

**Milestone 7: Show comments in a FlootModal**

When a floot is clicked, a `modal` (kind of like a friendly, in-page popup window) should appear, displaying the floot's comments and allowing the user to add a new comment. We have already implemented the components necessary to create this kind of modal; your job is to make it appear when a floot is clicked.

To make a modal appear on the page, you can modify `MainComponent` to create a `FlootModal` (`FlootModal` is defined in the file `modal_components.js`):

```
  main component container.appendChild(
      FlootModal(floot object, logged-in username, actions));
```

Of course, you only want to show a modal if the user has clicked a floot. Somehow, you need to indicate to `MainComponent` whether or not a floot has been clicked, so that it can decide whether or not to create a `FlootModal`. If a floot has been clicked, you also need to provide that floot object to `MainComponent` so that it can be passed to `FlootModal` (so that the floot's comments can be displayed).

To address this, we recommend adding a `selectedFloot` parameter to `MainComponent` containing `null` if no floot has been clicked, or a floot object if the modal should be displayed. You can then change your implementation of `MainComponent` to include a `FlootModal` if `selectedFloot` is not `null`. 
Once this is done, you need to update **Flutterer** so that it passes a meaningful value to **MainComponent** for this new parameter. You should add two new functions to **actions**:

```javascript
let actions = {
  // Earlier code here...
  openFlootInModal: function(flootObject) {
    // Re-render the page, passing flootObject to MainComponent
  },
  closeModal: function() {
    // Re-render the page, passing null as the selectedFloot parameter
    // to MainComponent
  },
}
```

Then, wire up the rest of the code so that the modal opens/closes appropriately:

- In the `handleCardClick()` function of the **Float** component (**floot_components.js**), call `actions.openFlootInModal` to display the given floot.
- In the **FloatModal** component (**modal_components.js**), after the code that creates `closeBtn`, add an event listener to `closeBtn` that calls `actions.closeModal` on click.
- Also in the **FloatModal** component, towards the very end of the function (the part that calls `modal.addEventListener`), add a line that calls `actions.closeModal()`. This will close the modal if the user clicks outside the modal.

**Milestone 8: Create and delete comments**

For the last piece of functionality, you will add the ability to add and remove comments to floots. This is extremely similar to the work you did in Milestones 5 and 6:

- You will need to add functions to **actions** that make **POST** requests to `/api/floots/{flootId}/comments` (to create a comment), in addition to `/api/floots/{flootId}/comments/{commentId}/delete` (to delete a comment). When these requests succeed, reload the list of floots from the server and re-render the page. When re-rendering the page, make sure that you also update the `selectedFloot` object being passed to MainComponent. If you don't do this, the modal won't update to show the updated list of comments after a user adds a comment, so it will look like commenting isn't working (even though the new comments are being successfully sent to the server).
- In the **NewCommentEntry** component (**comment_components.js**), you will need to change `submitComment` to call your comment-creating function in **actions**.
- In the **Comment** component (also **comment_components.js**), you will need to change `deleteComment` to call your comment-deleting function in **actions**.

Congratulations! You're done!
General advice

You don't need to write much code for this part of the assignment, but the code you do write can be pretty complicated. We strongly recommend adding `console.log()` statements throughout so that when things go wrong, you can get a better sense of what your program is doing. However, we would like to add two caveats:

- Make your `console.log` statements descriptive. If you have too many `console.log` calls, and the messages printed don't explain what they are printing, you will have a hard time interpreting the output.
- Please remove extra `console.log` statements before submitting your assignment. (It's not a big deal if you forget, but removing them makes grading easier.)

Conclusion

By the end of this assignment, you should have a minimal but fully-functioning social network site! You can even use the site from other computers (including your phone). Try identifying your local IP address (Mac, Windows). Pretend your IP address is 12.34.100.200; then, if you have another computer connected to the same WiFi network, you should be able to go to http://12.34.100.200:1066/ and see Flutterer load. (Note that for security reasons, some WiFi networks prevent computers from talking directly to each other, so if this does not work, that may be the reason.)

We hope you have enjoyed seeing how strings, arrays, dictionaries, and objects can interact to form something of this complexity. As it turns out, every web application is built using the concepts presented in this class and in this assignment. Some of them use fancy database technologies, some of them use fancy server frameworks, and some of them use fancy client rendering libraries, but fundamentally, they all do the same thing: A server implements some functionality and presents an API that clients can use to interact with it; then, a client written in Javascript will make network requests to exercise that API, and will subsequently update the DOM to display information to the user. We hope this assignment has given you a better sense of how large applications are structured and demystified some of the magic of Google Docs, YouTube, and other common websites.

Extensions

This assignment has many opportunities for creativity. What additions can you add to your version of Flutterer? As mentioned at the beginning of this handout, the best submission (as judged by Jerry, Ryan, and the section leaders) will be treated as a contest winner, granting a 100% on any assignment or on the midterm.
If you submit an extension, please make a copy of the project and submit a version without any extensions. This way, we can grade your base submission and not penalize you for any mistakes (functionality or style) that arise from your extension. Also, please add a comment in your extension documenting what changes you made, so that it is easy for us to find your extra features.

Here are some ideas to get you started, sorted (very roughly) in order from least difficulty to greatest difficulty. These are Javascript/CSS-heavy extensions:

- **Show post timestamps:** When each floot is created, a timestamp is saved indicating when the floot was posted. The floots are already sorted by timestamp, but you can modify the `Floot` component to display the timestamp as text on the screen. You may want to add a little bit of CSS to make this pretty.

- **Adding a "like" button:** There are two API endpoints already defined in `api.py` that you can implement, and much of the frontend code for a like button is already provided. You will need to do a bit of work to wire up all the pieces and make everything functional.

- **Adding a "like" button to comments:** If you do the previous extension, you can take this one step further and add a like button to comments. This will probably require a bit of DOM manipulation and CSS, since this was never implemented in our solution.

- **Reacts:** Instead of having a simple "like" button, you can allow users to react to a floot in several different ways. This will require some extra DOM manipulation and CSS.

- **More secure login:** Add a way for a user to sign up on the website with a username and password. For login, require that they submit the correct password.

- **Other ideas:** Try implementing stickers, "refloots," floot search, hashtags, followers, mentions, notifications, more...

Here are some Python-heavy extension ideas:

- **Floot sort order:** Instead of sorting the floots by the time at which they were posted, experiment with some more interesting criteria. For example, Facebook sorts posts by "relevance" (upweighting posts from friends that you talk to a lot, and upweighting posts with keywords like "congratulations" or "life update").

- **Do some data analysis on the floots:** For those interested in data processing and visualization, you might try something like generating diagrams of which users interact the most, times of day where posts are heavy, etc.
## Appendix: Printable Reference

### List of API endpoints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GET</strong></td>
<td>/api/floots</td>
<td>Returns a list of Floots from the database.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **POST** | /api/floots | Given a new Floot to post (in the request body), puts it into the database and returns it. **Request Body:**  
  ```json  
  {  
    "message": "string",  
    "username": "string"  
  }  
  ``` |
| **GET** | /api/floots/{id} | Returns a particular Floot, identified by the given id. Returns an HTTPError 404 if that id doesn’t exist. |
| **POST** | /api/floots/{id}/delete | Deletes a particular Floot, identified by the given id. Returns an HTTPError 404 if that id doesn’t exist, or an HTTPError 403 if the user isn’t allowed to delete that Floot (by trusting the username they send in the body). *Security Note: This is clearly terrible security practice; you should never trust that the user is who they say they are without some kind of verification. However, for the sake of simplicity, we decide to simply trust the client.*  
  **Request Body:**  
  ```json  
  {  
    "username": "string"  
  }  
  ``` |
| **GET** | /api/floots/{floot_id}/comments | Returns a list of comments on a Flood identified by floot_id. Returns an HTTPError 404 if the floot isn’t found. |
| **POST** | /api/floots/{floot_id}/comments | Given a new comment to post (in the request body) on a particular Floot (identified by the floot_id parameter), adds that comment to the Floot, then returns the new comment (including its new id). Returns an HTTPError 404 if the floot isn’t found.  
  **Request Body:**  
  ```json  
  {  
    "message": "string",  
    "username": "string"  
  }  
  ``` |
POST /api/floots/{floot_id}/comment/{id}/delete

Given a particular comment (identified by the floot_id it’s a part of, and the id of the comment), deletes that comment. Returns “OK” if successful. Returns an HTTPError 404 if the floot isn’t found, or an HTTPError 403 if the user isn’t allowed to delete that comment.

Request Body:
{
  "username": "string"
}

How to use the Database

We have provided the Database class to do persistent data storage for you, so that saved data stays saved even if you restart your computer. When the Database class is constructed, it loads all of the previously-created floots, comments, users, etc. from server/data.json. Then, every time you call `db.save_floot(floot)`, the floot is saved back to the hard drive so that it can be loaded again later.

Here are some methods you may find helpful:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>db = Database()</code></td>
<td>Calls the constructor to create a new Database. You won't need to call this yourself; a Database is already created for you at the top of <code>api.py</code>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>floots = db.get_floots()</code></td>
<td>Returns a list of Floot objects (see below) stored in the database, sorted from newest to oldest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>present = db.has_floot(id)</code></td>
<td>Returns True if a Floot with the provided id exists in the database; returns False otherwise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>floot = db.get_floot_by_id(id)</code></td>
<td>Returns the Floot object with the provided id. Raises a KeyError if the id is invalid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>db.save_floot(floot)</code></td>
<td>Saves the provided Floot object into the database. You can call this multiple times on the same floot to replace old data and save the floot’s latest version. Important: you’ll need to call this method to re-save a Floot if you add or remove comments from that Floot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>db.delete_floot_by_id(id)</code></td>
<td>Deletes the Floot object with the provided id. Raises a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deletes the provided Floot object. Raises a KeyError if the provided Floot is not in the database.

We also provide a Floot class in server/floot.py, outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>floot = Floot(message, username, liked_by)</td>
<td>Calls the constructor to create a new Floot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>timestamp = floot.get_timestamp()</td>
<td>Returns a timestamp (string) of when the Floot was created.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comments = floot.get_comments()</td>
<td>Returns a list of FlootComments associated with this Floot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floot_id = floot.get_id()</td>
<td>Returns the id (string) that uniquely identifies this Floot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>username = floot.get_username()</td>
<td>Returns the username of this Floot’s creator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floot.delete_comment(comment, username)</td>
<td>Deletes the provided FlootComment if it was written by the provided username. Raises a KeyError if the provided comment isn’t present in this Floot, and raises a PermissionError if the provided comment wasn’t written by the provided username. Make sure to call db.save_floot(floot) after deleting the comment, so that the change gets saved to the database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floot.create_comment(comment)</td>
<td>Adds the provided FlootComment to this Floot. Make sure to call db.save_floot(floot) after adding the comment, so that the comment gets saved to the database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floot.set_liked(username, liked)</td>
<td>Accepts a username (string) and boolean value and notes that the given user likes (or doesn’t like) this Floot. Make sure to call db.save_floot(floot) after changing the liked status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liked_by = floot.get_liked_by()</td>
<td>Returns a list of usernames (strings) that like this Floot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>num_likes = floot.get_num_likes()</td>
<td>Returns the number of users that like this Floot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as_dict = floot.to_dictionary()</td>
<td>Returns a dictionary where the keys are field names and the values are the values of the fields. Use this if you want a dictionary representing a Floot, which is useful since dictionaries are JSON-encodable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There’s also a FlootComment class, which we’ve opted to omit here. Take a look at server/floot_comment.py to learn more!