



```
<html>
<body>
</body>
</html>
```

```
<p> Paragraph </p>
<a class="jabcidemo"
name="TOC">
```

Creating a Kindle Book Using HTML Templates



by
Pardu S. Ponnappalli, Ph.D



<p> This book will be about the
impact of chemistry on our
day to day lives. </p>

Creating a Kindle book using HTML templates

By

Pardu S. Ponnappalli, Ph.D.

Dedicated to

My son Krishna, who changed my world and who I cherish dearly

and

My wife Mona who is making me look forward to retirement so I can spend more time with her

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Table of Contents

- Preface to the 1st Edition
- Chapter 1 Advantages of Amazon Kindle publishing for new authors
- Chapter 2 Basic HTML tags
- Chapter 3 Creating a Chapter heading, bold and italic effects
- Chapter 4 Replicating chapters, line breaks and page breaks
- Chapter 5 Images and Hyperlinks
- Chapter 6 Final items to wrap up for the template
- Chapter 7 Modifying chapter headers to work with the table of contents
- Chapter 8 Real tests of the constructed HTML template
- Chapter 9 Enabling the Kindle Table of Contents- the OPF file
- Chapter 10 Creating a cover for your Kindle book
- Chapter 11 Kindle Compile errors
- Chapter 12 Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing
- Chapter 13 Post Publishing Blues
- Chapter 14 Tracking your Kindle Book Sales
- Conclusions
- Appendix 1 Downloading the tools you need
- Appendix 2 JABCIDEMO.html Template details
- Appendix 3 "Just a Bunch of Crazy Ideas" HTML version

Preface to the 1st Edition

"I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones."
John Cage (1912 - 1992)

I wrote a book called "Just a Bunch of Crazy Ideas" in March 2011. As an unknown author I went through the following phases, which I think are very commonly shared by new authors:

Phase 1- Hope. I got good to excellent reviews from families and friends, and I was very hopeful that my book would be a brilliant success. I even dreamed of being on the bestsellers list.

Phase 2- Expectations. Based on an early spurt of sales, my expectations soared. I started envisioning interviews on TV with myself as a famous author. The early spurt is because the circle of people you know buy the book and give you positive feedback.

Phase 3- Anticipation. I obsessively checked sales figures anticipating a steady increase until I would be on a bestsellers list somewhere.

Phase 4- Realization. After a few months or a year of flat sales, I came to the realization that I would be lucky to sell a few thousand copies of your book, never mind millions.

Phase 5- Trepidation. I started fearing that I was a fool to try to write at all. I was now worried that my lifelong dream was basically a balloon waiting to be popped. I also feared that this would be a massive blow to the ego that would be almost impossible to recover from. I was not particularly successful in life in general, and this might just tip me over the edge.

Phase 6- Belief. Faced with the prospect of a dream ready to disappear, the human mind goes back to an irrational belief in the face of all contradictory facts. I found myself with an irrational confidence that my book will succeed despite all the obvious realistic indicators that indicated otherwise.

Phase 7- Renewed energy. Instead of caving in to what appears to be impossible odds, I attacked my project with a renewed energy and faith.

Phase 8- Enthusiasm. I tried to mask my obvious failure by enthusiastically recommending the book to everyone I met. I'm sure people saw through it, but I felt I had to try something.

Phase 9- Anger . For no rational reason, I was angry the book was not as successful as I had hoped for. I'm not even sure who I was angry with. It made it even worse that I had spent some money marketing the book. There are several folks out there who encourage you to spend money on your new book, convincing you along the way that you will be the next Hemingway.

Phase 10- Knowledge. After going through phases 1 to 9 combined with a number of rejections from literary agents and other setbacks, you gain a lot of knowledge. The fundamental truth that a first time author has almost zero chance of success sinks in, along with the clear reality that you won't be gaining much financially from your venture either.

It's not an accident that all these phases, H-E-A-R-T-B-R-E-A-K spells out the emotional condition of first time authors after a couple of years of bitter experience.

I think the Amazon Kindle is the perfect mechanism for potential success for the aspiring author. In Chapter 1 I explain why I think this is the case. In addition to using Amazon Kindle, I think it's also important to find a very simple mechanism for and publishing books there. The techniques I describe in this book need absolutely no sophisticated tools. Infact,I produced the entire book I'm writing relatively quickly using nothing but NotePad++ (a free software utility that's great for HTML editing) , Internet Explorer, Kindle Previewer and the Kindle program itself. After completion of the text of the book, it took me about 12 hours of work to put it into HTML and Kindle format and get it ready for publication.

This method does sacrifice advanced formatting techniques but it's a huge gain in terms of the ability to produce of a book for small time authors. There are other techniques that are easier (for example, tools to create Mobi format files), but I don't think they offer any insight into how the Kindle Previewer is compiling files. Doing it the "hard" way by setting up a detailed HTML file, you gain insight into the entire lifecycle of how a book is produced using the Kindle Direct Publishing method. I can produce new editions of a book very rapidly with the techniques and templates I have in place and I also have a keen understanding of what the Kindle Previewer is doing throughout the effort.

To use this book for examples and building templates, you need the following:

- 1) A PC with Windows (the methods work with other operating systems and hardware, but I built everything on my Windows 7 laptop).
- 2) The Amazon Kindle Previewer program.
- 3) The Amazon Kindle for PC program
- 4) An Internet browser (the examples in the book work with Internet Explorer and Firefox, but others should work as well).
- 5) The Notepad++ program , a freely available software for the Windows operating system.

The intent is to use a very minimal toolset and build a set of templates that should get you going. You should experiment with other sophisticated toolsets and methods to augment your understanding after working through this book. I hope this book proves to be useful for new authors- I feel tremendous kinship with all of you. Please feel free to provide comments for suggestions and improvements in your reviews or email me at ponnapal@myactv.net

September 6, 2012

Chapter 1 Advantages of Amazon Kindle Publishing for new authors

"Always acknowledge a fault. This will throw those in authority off their guard and give you an opportunity to commit more." Mark Twain (1835 - 1910)

I have drawn some important conclusions from my experiences as a writer. The most important one is that a novice author must have realistic expectations. Just as you don't expect to be a grandmaster of chess after you play for the first time, or you don't expect to be a research scientist after reading a popular science book, you should not expect to be a professional writer after your first work. You have to approach writing as a profession.

Furthermore, one needs a very clear sense of purpose. What's the most important aspiration you have for your book? Undoubtedly, you want commercial success (of course most authors do), and you might also want wide readership. The reality is, since you are unknown, you need to focus on the latter. The former might follow, but alas, for most authors it does not. You probably also want constructive critical feedback so you can improve your writing.

It's fairly apparent to me that the guiding rules for first time authors are:

- 1) Get as many people reading your book as possible.
- 2) Pay no attention to sales figures. They are out of your control.
- 3) Don't expect to make any significant money. Do it for the love of writing. You will save yourself a lot of grief, since very few authors gain commercial success, nor is it clear that the ones that do are the best writers. Enjoy your craft.
- 4) Use any marketing tools at your disposal, including giving your book away. I give away free copies at a deli and my doctor's office- after a lot of experimentation, I realized these were the most effective venues.
- 5) Try to reach as many people as possible to inform them of your book.

Once I absorbed all these rules, I really started to enjoy my book project immensely. I concentrated on writing new editions with refinements and improvements. I tried to read all the most critical and positive reviews to see what understanding and insight I could gain from them. This was around the time that I caught on that the Amazon Kindle is by far the most effective tool for new authors.

Amazon has the most penetrating reach of the electronic reader market (rule 1). The Kindle program compiles all your sales into spreadsheets so you can archive them and review them at your leisure instead of obsessing about them (rule 2). The Kindle Direct Publishing program (KDP) allows you to set your price point as low as 99 cents. I think this level is most appropriate for authors trying to get recognition and readership (rule 3). Amazon has built in marketing programs like KDP Select, where there are free promotions for your book. Additionally, because of the size and reach of Amazon there are a number of affiliated programs for promoting Kindle books (rule 4). Using Amazon affiliated programs you can inform thousands of people of your book at very modest costs (rule 5). I cannot emphasize enough how significant these points are- I spent a great deal of money with marketing and production prior to my participation in KDP that produced no results whatsoever. After I decided to move to the Amazon KDP program, I have quite a few sales in just 5 months of participation. My readership has grown exponentially in just the 5 months in the KDP program compared to the prior 1 year of programs that cost a great deal more. I spent a lot of time and money accomplishing nothing before discovering the beauty and simplicity of the Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing program.

I'm sharing this experience in the hope that you won't waste your time or money in a similar manner and skip right to the KDP program.

I initially used other publishing companies to produce Kindle books. The problem I faced is that I was running into huge costs by this point. I had laid out significant amount of capital in the hopes that the book sales and royalties would justify that expense. It became pretty clear that that was not the case, so I was forced into finding the cheapest ways to publish. It took some effort, but I found that once I could devise a fairly simple set of HTML templates , the process was immensely satisfying. I had a newfound sense of freedom that I could publish and revise at will. I think this allows you to continue to refine and improve your techniques and style for writing. An additional benefit is that you feel like you can write new books in addition to refining and editing existing ones. It's as if you are an entire publishing house yourself. You can even engage knowledgeable friends and acquaintances in the editorial process.

Onto Chapter 2- the details of creating templates and enjoying the full benefits of the Kindle Direct Publishing program!

Chapter 2 Basic HTML tags

"An author is a fool who, not content with boring those he lives with, insists on boring future generations." Charles de Montesquieu (1689 - 1755)

Before starting with HTML tags, you need to install the Kindle for PC program and the Kindle Previewer on your PC, along with the Notepad++ program. Appendix 1 has instructions on where to find these programs. As we progress through HTML template setups, it's very helpful to compile the examples as Kindle books and get a feeling for how they look. The Kindle Ereader has a smaller footprint compared to a normal full page, so this is an important part of learning to publish on a Kindle. Once you have downloaded these programs, read this book on the Kindle for PC version.

HTML works via tags. Here are the tags we will be using to construct our template and their meaning:

The tag is <p> designates the beginning of a paragraph. The end is designated by </p>. Here is an example from my book "Just a Bunch of Crazy Ideas":

Example 1:

```
<p>I noticed that one of the airline ploys is to charge for luggage when you fly. I have never been enthusiastic about flying, but these types of charges are like a final blow. Flying used to be more fun. Now the seats are so cramped and the security is so tight that all the joy has been drained out of it. The only positive thing I can say now is that it's a good chance to catch up on some reading. It's also a way to avoid dreaded cell phone calls and pager messages for those of us in the IT industry.</p>
```

Every HTML document needs the following tags to start it.

```
<html>
<body>
```

And each HTML document needs the following to finish it.

```
</html>
</body>
```

Just with this knowledge alone, we can create start our sample Kindle book consisting of one chapter. Start NotePad++ on your PC. The summary of the steps is that NotePad can be accessed via Start--> All Programs---> NotePad++. You can also create a desktop icon for Notepad++ if you are familiar with that process. Once you have opened NotePad++, start typing the following. Don't try cut and paste operations from the Kindle book to Notepad++. Because I have to display HTML tags within an HTML document, you will actually get ASCII codes showing up on your cut and paste. Once you have typed the following paragraphs in, there will only be a minimal amount of typing involved for the various chapters that follow.

```
<html>
<body>
<p>I noticed that one of the airline ploys is to charge for luggage when you fly. I have never been enthusiastic about flying, but these types of charges are like a final blow. Flying used to be more fun. Now the seats are so cramped and the security is so tight that all the joy has been drained out of it. The only positive thing I can say now is that it's a good chance to catch up on some reading. It's also a way to avoid dreaded cell phone calls and pager messages for those of us in the IT industry.</p>
<p>Paragraph 2 Chapter 5.</p>
<p>Paragraph 3 Chapter 5. </p>
<p>Paragraph 4 Chapter 5.</p>
<p>Paragraph 5 Chapter 5.</p>
<p>Paragraph 6 Chapter 5.</p>
```

```
<p>Paragraph 7 Chapter 5.</p>  
</html>  
</body>
```

Stop typing here. The following screenshot shows how your NotePad++ screen should look like at this point.

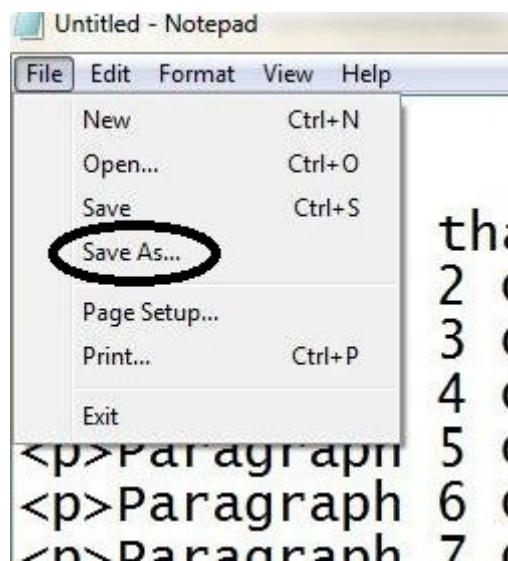
File Edit Search View Encoding Language Settings Macro Run Plug



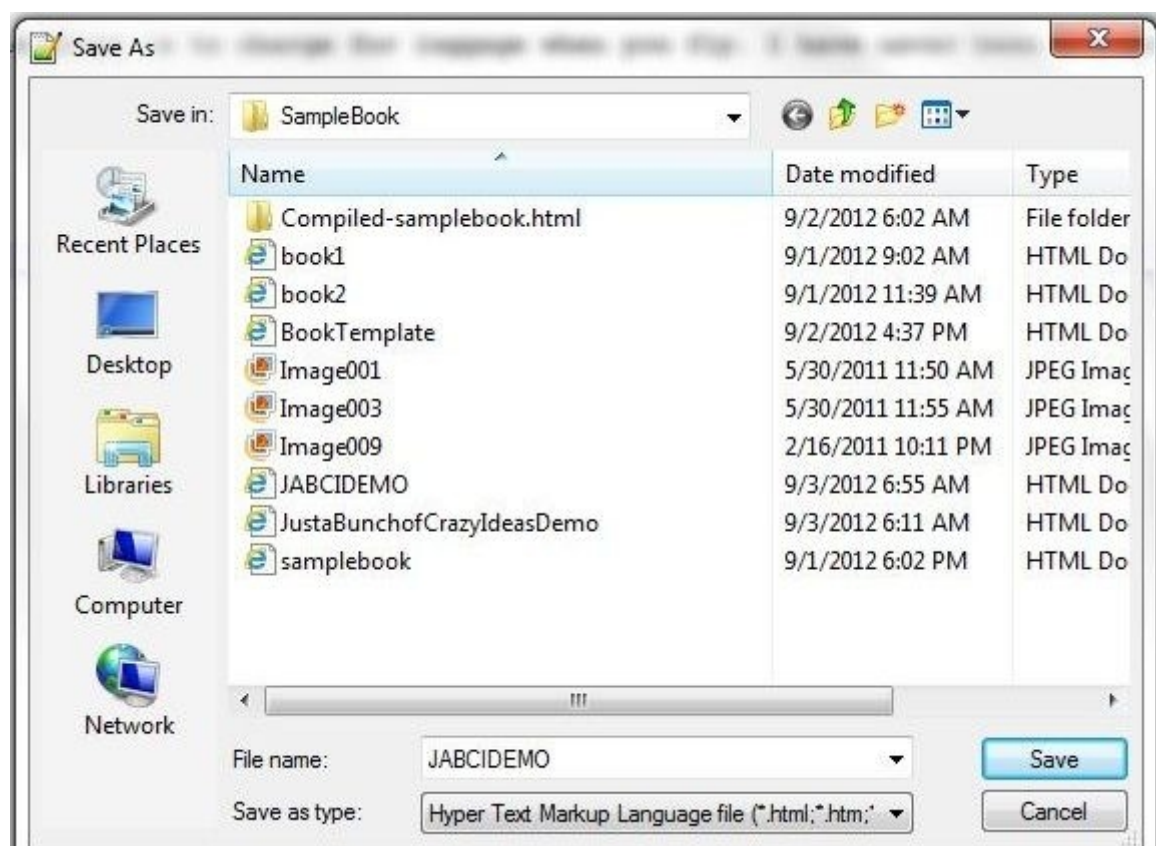
JustaBunchofCrazyIdeasDemo.html CreatK.html JABCIDEMO.html

```
1  <html>
2  <body>
3      <p>I noticed that one of the airline ploys is to
4      <p>Paragraph 2</p>
5      <p>Paragraph 3</p>
6      <p>Paragraph 4</p>
7      <p>Paragraph 5</p>
8      <p>Paragraph 6</p>
9      <p>Paragraph 7</p>
10 </body>
11 </html>
12
13
```

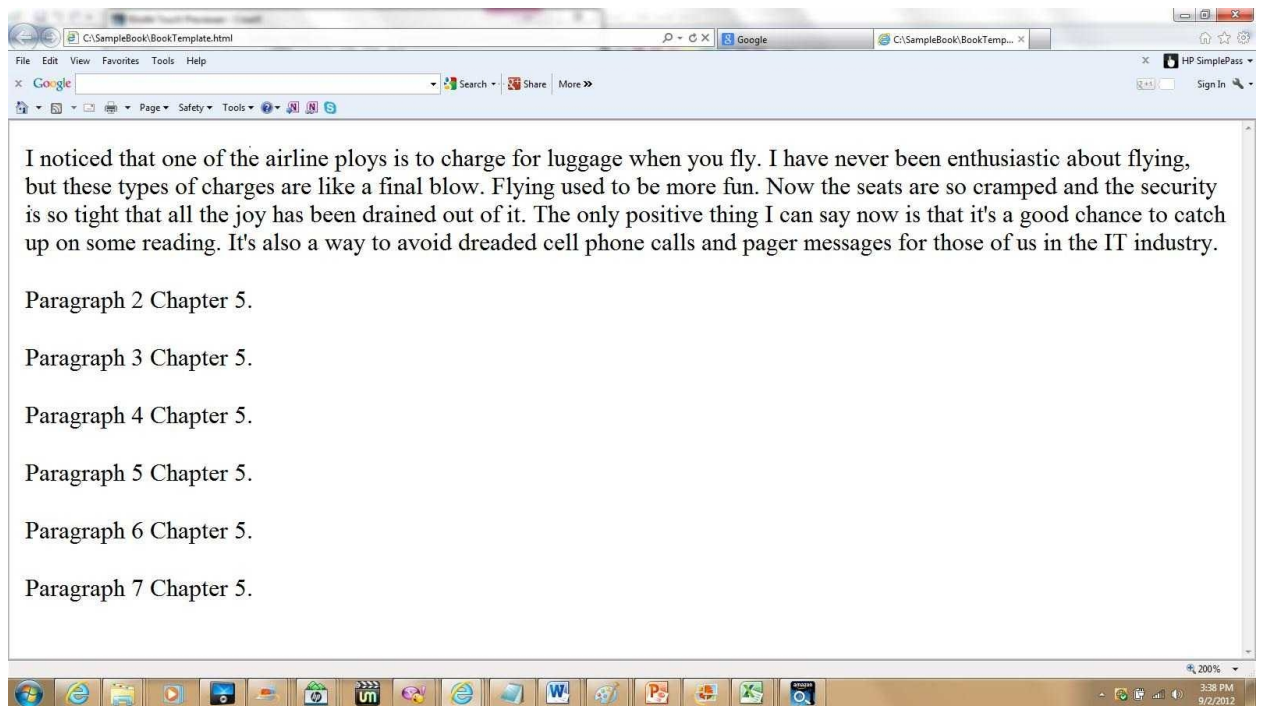
The next step is to save this file as an HTML file (the file should end with .htm or .html) in a folder of your choice. It's better to create a separate folder like C:\SampleBook, for example. Name the JABCIDEMO.html. Notepad++ allows you to save the file as type "HTML" when you select "Save as".



Here is a snapshot of what the "Save as" screen in NotePad++ should look like.



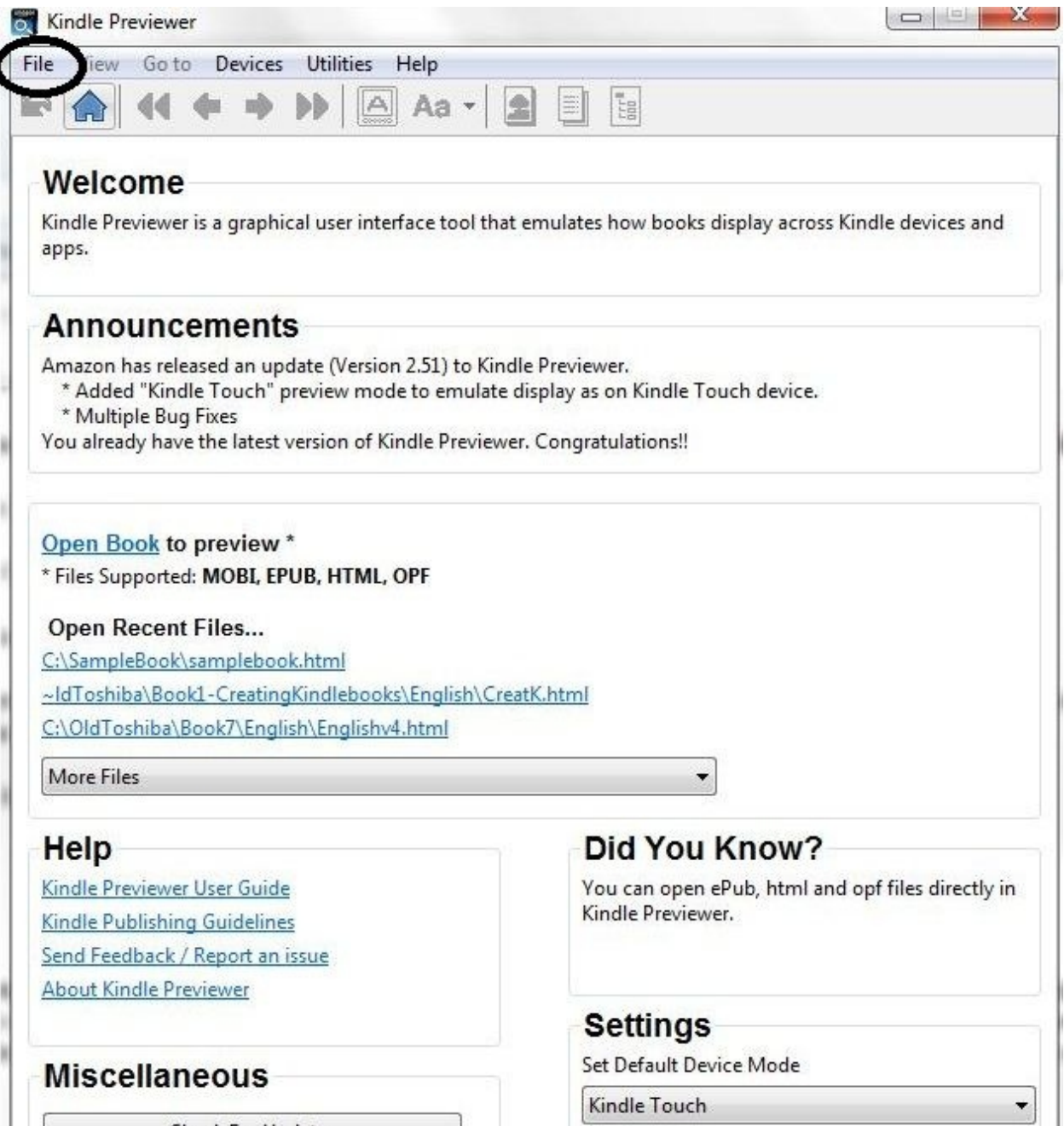
Start your Internet browser. There should be a portion at the top of the browser that has your home page address. For example, in my case, this is <http://www.google.com>. In place of this address, type in C:\SampleBook\JABCIDEMO.html. The following will appear:



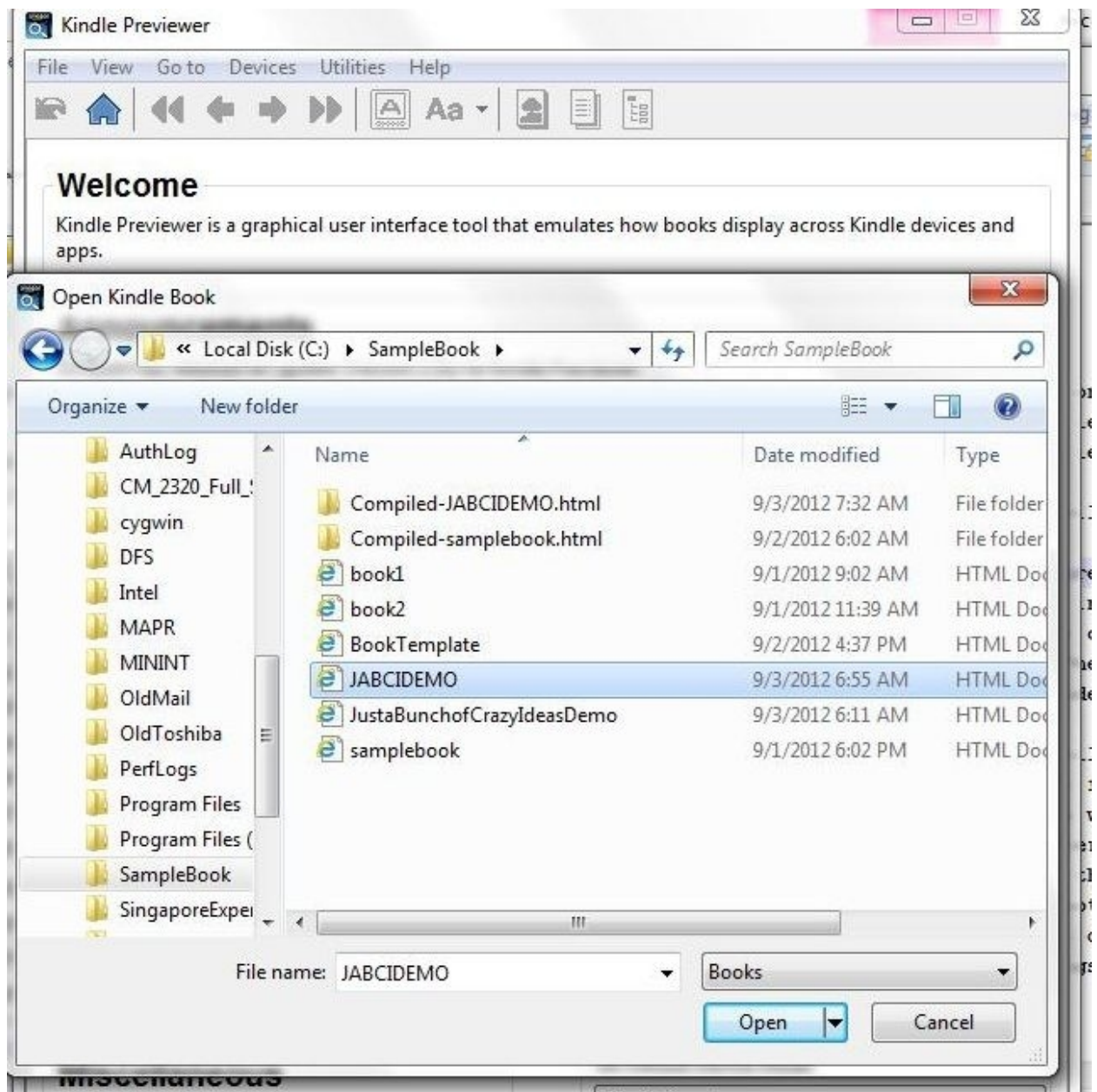
This is actually some of the text from Chapter 5 of my book "Just a Bunch of Crazy Ideas". Congratulations! You just created the core of an HTML document template for a chapter. We will now turn this into a Kindle book with just a couple of extra steps.

1. Start (Windows icon at left lower corner)
2. All Programs
3. Amazon
4. Kindle Previewer

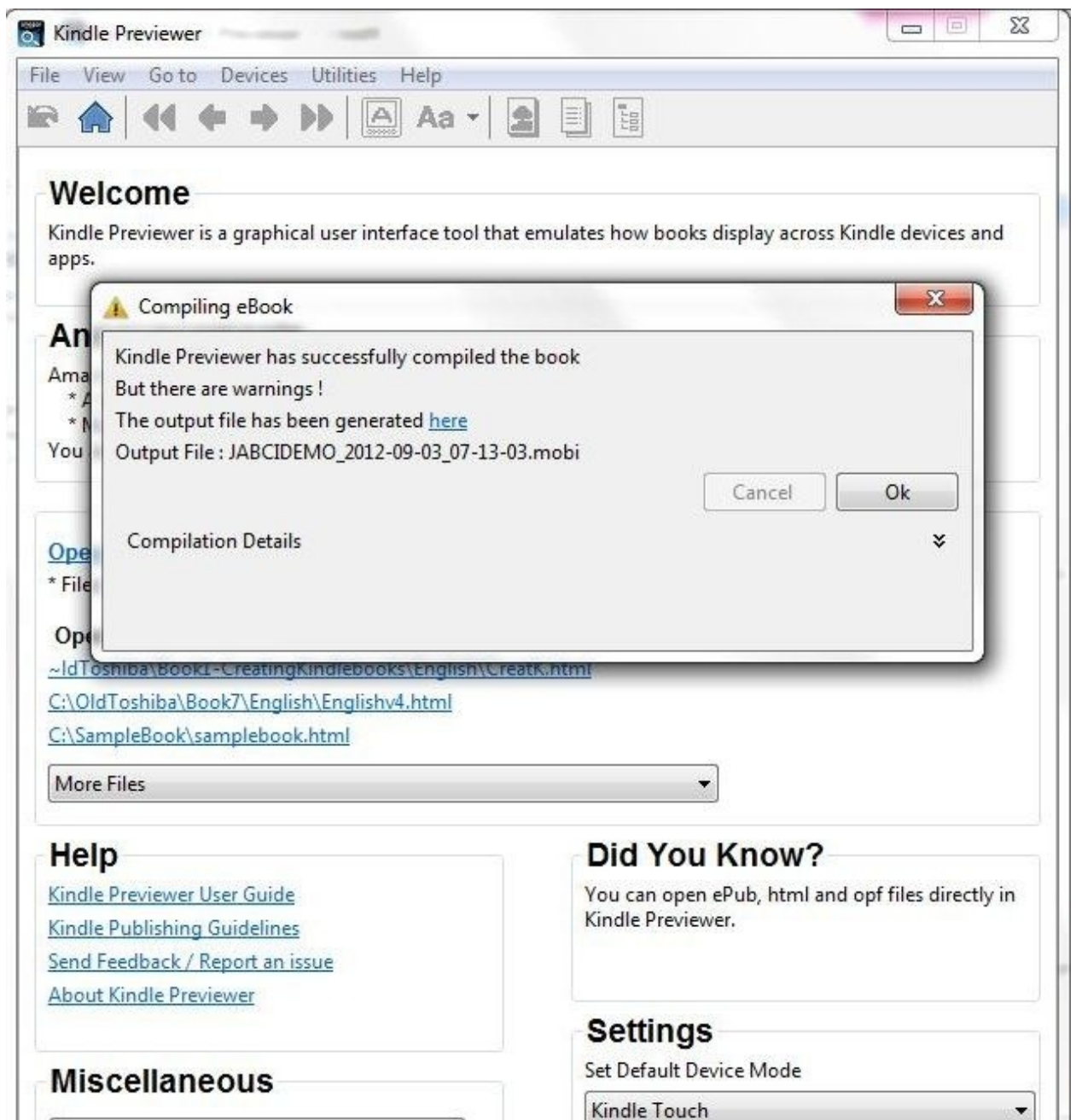
You should see a screen as follows:



At the top left, you choose the "File" option (circled in the diagram). The first option is "Open Book". Navigate to C:\SampleBook and select JABCIDEMO.html. The Kindle Previewer will compile the HTML and produce a book in a format that ends with .mobi. This is called the Mobi format- the input for the Kindle Previewer program is the HTML file, the output is a Mobi file. The Mobi file can be read by both the Kindle Previewer and the Kindle for PC programs.



Once the compile process is complete, you will see the following screen:



For now ignore the compiler warnings, and press the "Ok" button. You are treated to your first Kindle preview of your HTML book.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

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