

Starting a new collection

Adding a new document

6. Creating your own collection

The process of creating a collection is exactly the same whether you are Moodle or not. In stand-alone FLAX you will have to log in, go to *List collections* in the drop-down list under your name, and click *Add a new collection*. In Moodle-FLAX you turn editing on, click *Add an activity or resource*, select *FLAX language learning*, click the *Language resource* button and then the *Make a new collection* link. In either case you get the form shown opposite, into which you enter a name for the collection, and a description to go on its home page. Then click *Save* to move to the next stage, which is to add documents.

Each document is added using the form shown in the second image. First choose a title. Then choose a difficulty level, either from the list provided (*Beginner*, *Intermediate* and *Advanced*), or by typing in your own level name. Then paste the document text into the box. You can copy text from a Web page, from a Word document, from almost anywhere. Of course, copyright is your own responsibility; before adding any document, please ensure that you have permission to do so. Separate paragraphs with blank lines; the form states (on the right) how many paragraphs there are.

As well as text, you can also enter other items using the blue buttons shown.

Auxiliary text might contain information about the document's source, or perhaps key vocabulary items that it introduces. This text is shown in a box at the bottom of the document, but is not included in any language activities that are made from it. ([Here](#) is an example, the "Adventure sports" article. Scroll down to see the auxiliary text.)

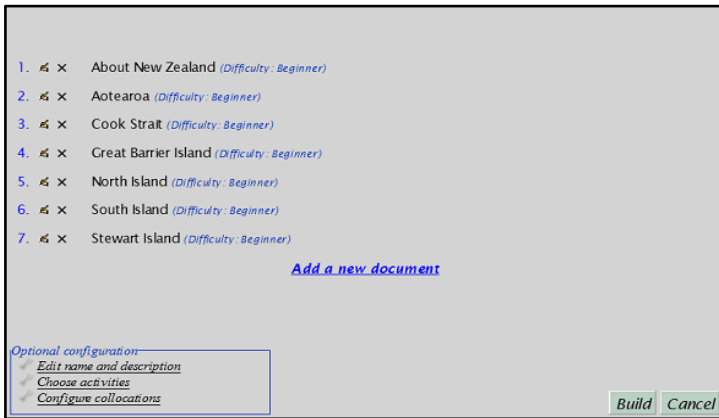
Images may be associated with the document. After clicking this button you can upload an image file, which will be displayed at the beginning whenever the document is shown. Several image files can be uploaded, in which case they will be equally spaced throughout the document. (The documents you include in FLAX collections are intended to be simple; controlled image placement is not possible.) You can also make collections where each "document" is an image accompanied by a caption or some explanatory text. This would be suitable for the Image Guessing activity in Section 4.8.

Audio files are specified in exactly the same way. This facility is intended to allow students to listen to documents as well as read them. In the document shown, which is about New Zealand, the national anthem could be given as an audio file. You can associate more than one audio file with a document; the user plays them by selecting from a menu.

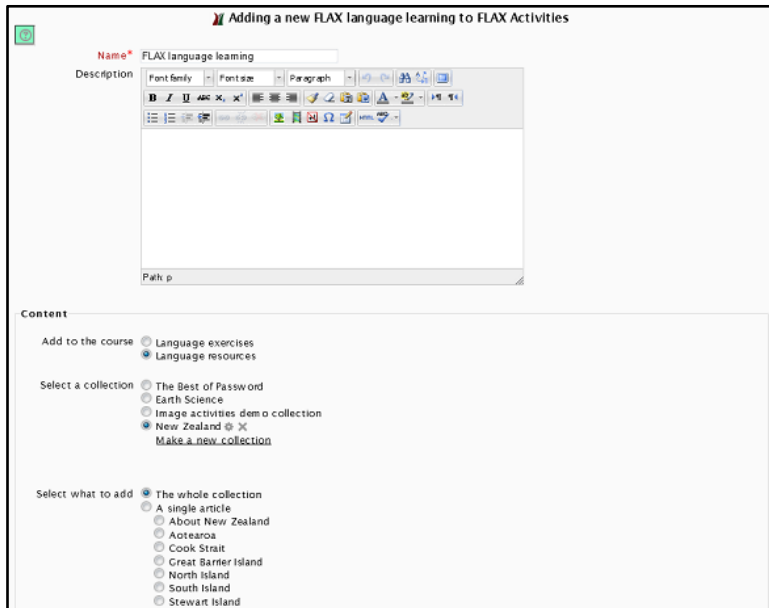
YouTube Videos are specified by giving their URL.

Glossary items can be specified. Right now FLAX doesn't use them, but it will in the future.

After adding a document, click the *Save* button. You will get a form that lists the documents in the collection so far, with a button for adding the next one. Continue in the same manner until the collection is complete. At any time you can return to an earlier document and edit it (click the *edit* icon beside the document name) or delete it (the "x" symbol).



Summary of the documents added so far



A new collection called *New Zealand*, which I can now edit if I want

6.1 Building and installing the collection

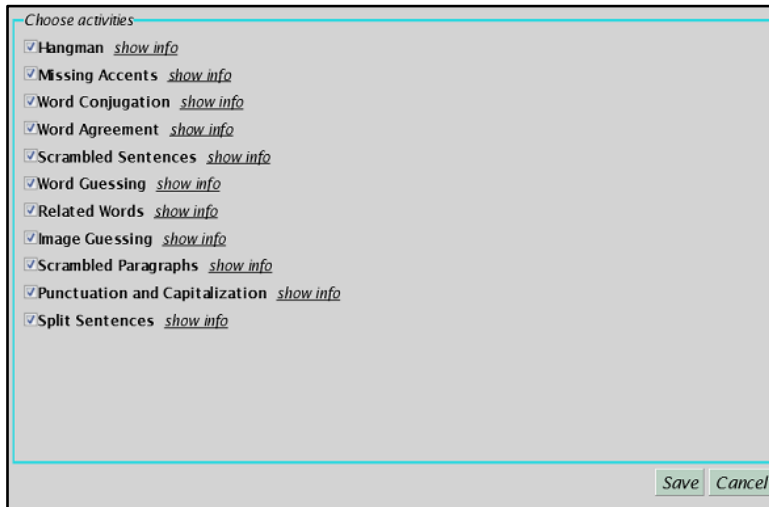
The list of documents you add to the collection is shown in the top panel opposite (you can see the *edit* and *delete* icons beside the document names). When you have finished adding documents, click the *Build* button. After a short delay, which depends on the number and size of documents, the collection will finish building and be added to your FLAX system.

If you are working in Moodle, the new collection appears in your list of collections, along with the usual Moodle *edit* and *delete* icons (these only appear beside collections that you yourself have built). It will be visible to any other teachers who use the same Moodle installation. You can go back and add new documents to your collection, or alter its configuration as described in Section 6.2.

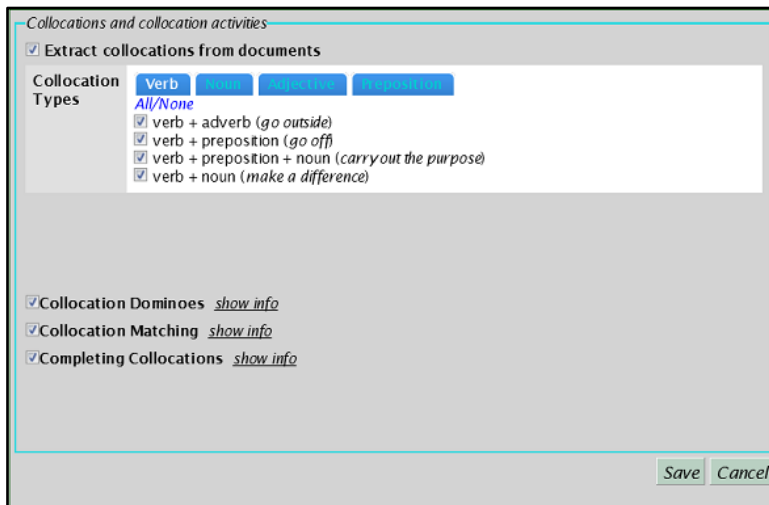
If you are using stand-alone FLAX, your collections are listed under two headings:

- My finished collections
- My collections under construction.

Your new collection will appear as under construction. Select it with the mouse and drag it into *My finished collections* to make it available to all users of the FLAX server. If you want to change the collection, drag it back to the “under construction” area, where four buttons appear alongside it: *edit*, *delete*, *copy*, and *preview*. You can only do this for collections that you have created, not for ones belonging to other people – and, of course, you can’t edit the standard collections. With these buttons you can *copy* any collection, which produces a copy under “My collections under construction,” or *delete* and *edit* collections – typically by adding or deleting documents, or changing the collection’s name. You can also *preview* collections to see what they look like.



Selecting which activity types to include



Selecting which collocation types to include

6.2 Optional collection configuration

If you wish, you can perform some optional configuration for your collection:

- Edit name and description,
- Choose activities, and
- Configure collocations.

The first is straightforward. The second lets you specify which “activity types” your new collection will allow. Some activities don’t make sense for certain collections; for example, a collection of images supports the image guessing activity, but not activities that involve textual documents – and *vice versa*. The default is to include all that seem relevant to the collection, and it’s simplest to leave it and assume that people using the collection will not try to define inappropriate activities.

The third option shows a list of collocation types to include. FLAX analyzes each document and finds the collocations that appear in it. It parses each sentence to determine the syntactic part of speech of its words, groups collocations by type and first word, and associates them with the document. They can be highlighted when users read the document, and also form the basis of collocation games. Section 4.2 contains more information about collocations.

At this stage in collection-building, you can determine what kind of collocations FLAX seeks. Select one of the parts of speech on the buttons in the second image opposite – noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition – to see the collocation patterns that are associated with it. You can select or deselect these individually. If you’re not interested in collocations at all, collection building will be faster if you deselect *Extract collocations from document* (at the top).