A Closer Look at HelloWorld

Now that you've compiled and run your first program, you may be wondering how it works and how similar it is to other applications or applets. This section will first take a closer look at the HelloWorldApp application and then the HelloWorld applet. Be aware that the following chapters, Object-Oriented Programming Concepts (page 45) and Language Basics (page 65), will go into much more detail than is presented in this section.

Explanation of an Application

Let's dissect the HelloWorldApp application. First, we will look at the comments in the code before we touch on programming concepts, such as classes and methods.

```
/**
 * The HelloWorldApp class implements an application that
 * displays "Hello World!" to the standard output.
 */
public class HelloWorldApp {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        System.out.println("Hello World!"); //Display the string.
    }
}
```

Comments

Comments make your code more readable; they help explain your code to others and serve as reminder to yourself when you maintain your own code. The Java programming language supports three kinds of comments:

/* *text* */
    The compiler ignores everything from the opening /* to the closing */.

/** *documentation* */
    This style indicates a documentation comment (*doc comment*, for short). As with the first kind of comment, the compiler ignores all the text within the comment. The SDK javadoc tool uses doc comments to automatically generate documentation. For more information on javadoc, see the tool documentation.[1]

// *text*
    The compiler ignores everything from the // to the end of the line.

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[1] You can find the tool documentation online: http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.3/docs/tooldocs/tools.html