REST API Guidebook

This guidebook provides an independent exercise that supports the *Introduction to Representational State Transfer (REST) with Java, Beginner Part 3* course.

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Using the VMware Environment

VMware is a tool offered by VA ITWD that allows you to log in to a virtual machine loaded with all of the tools needed to create a REST API. You can follow the step-by-step directions listed in this guidebook to recreate the demonstrations shown during the course presentation to help you practice in a hands-on environment.

Accessing the VMware Environment

Upon registration for the *Introduction to Representational State Transfer (REST) with Java, Beginner Part 3* course, TMS ID 3878052, you will receive an email message with the link to the VMware virtual machine.

Depending upon your user profile, you may see icons for other tools that you have access to use in this virtual environment.

Eclipse icon →

Setting Up Your Files in the Environment

After opening Eclipse, you need to set up a workspace to make sure your work is in a saved folder designated for you.
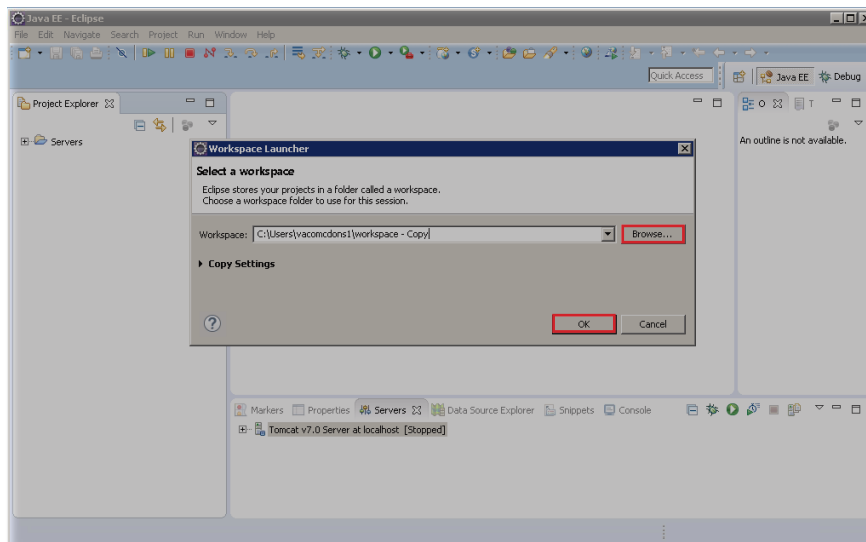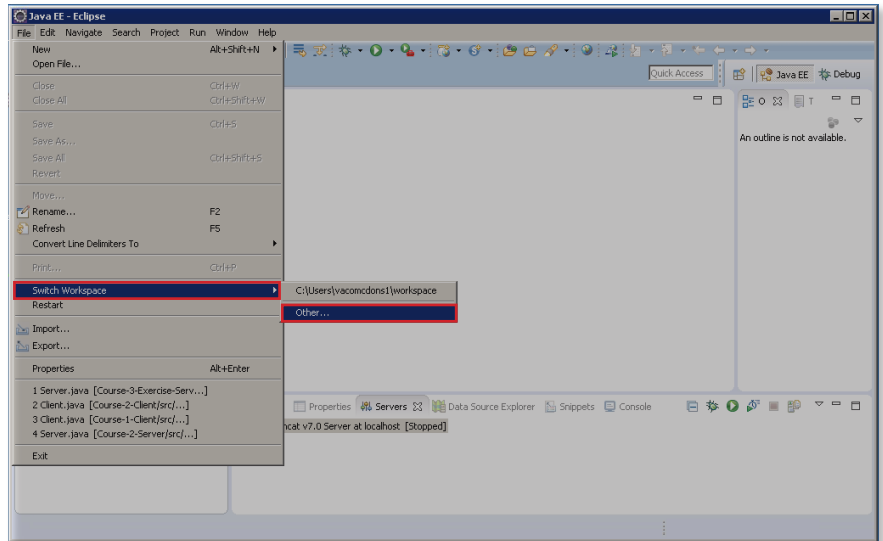
1. Select File Tab

The **File** tab opens to display its menu.

2. Select Switch Workspace

Selecting **Switch Workspace** opens a sub-menu.

3. Select Other

Selecting **Other** opens the **Workspace Launcher** dialog box.

4. Browse to the Workspace

In the **Workspace** field of the **Workspace Launcher**, select **Browse** and navigate to the folder where you want to save your work.

Select or create a folder associated with your account, such as a folder on your Desktop or in **My Documents**.

Select **OK** to finish.

Your REST API project will now be saved in the workspace you designated. Your VM workspace will remain active for the two weeks following the course.
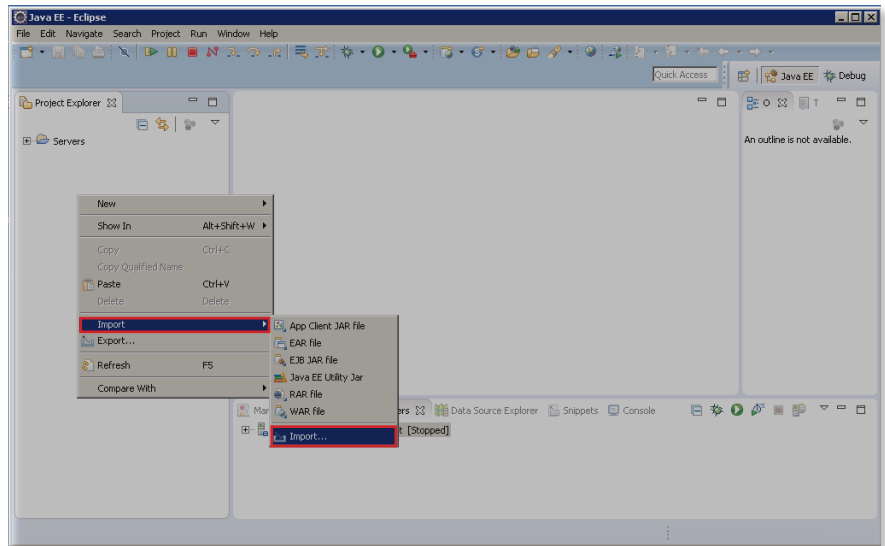
Importing an Existing Project

When you want to import an existing REST project into Eclipse, open Eclipse to start the import.

1. Right-Click on the Project Explorer Pane

A dialog box will open with several different options; navigate down to the Import option and select it.

2. Select Import

Once you've selected **Import**, you'll need to navigate down to the bottom of the sub-menu and select the **Import** option again. Selecting **Import** will open the **Import** dialog box shown below in step three.
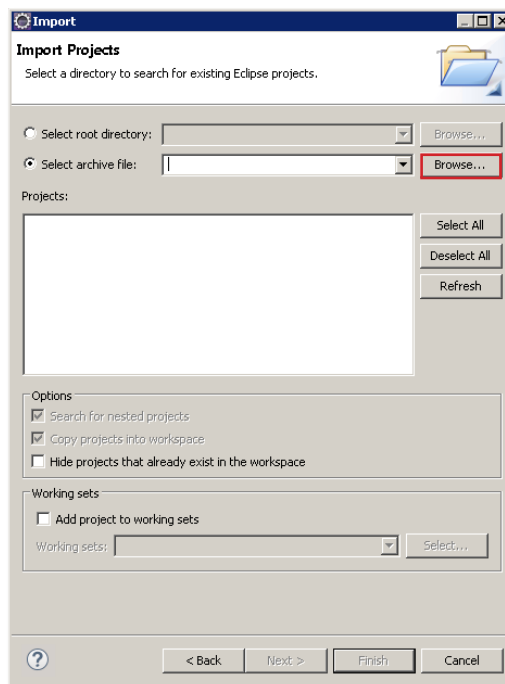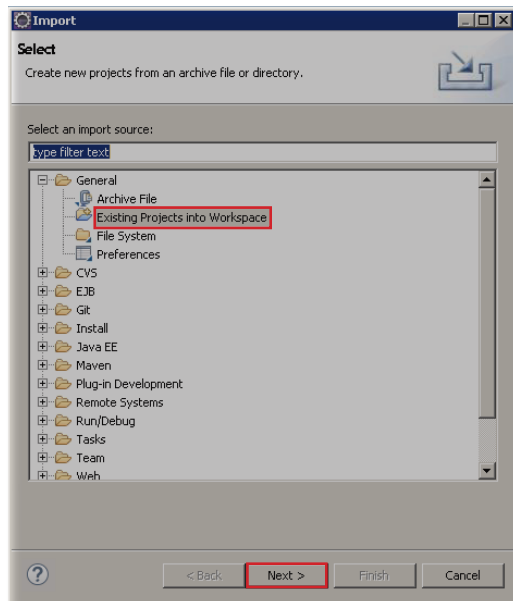
3. Select an Import Source

From the **Import** dialog box, select **General** and **Existing Projects** into Workspace. Select **Next** to continue.
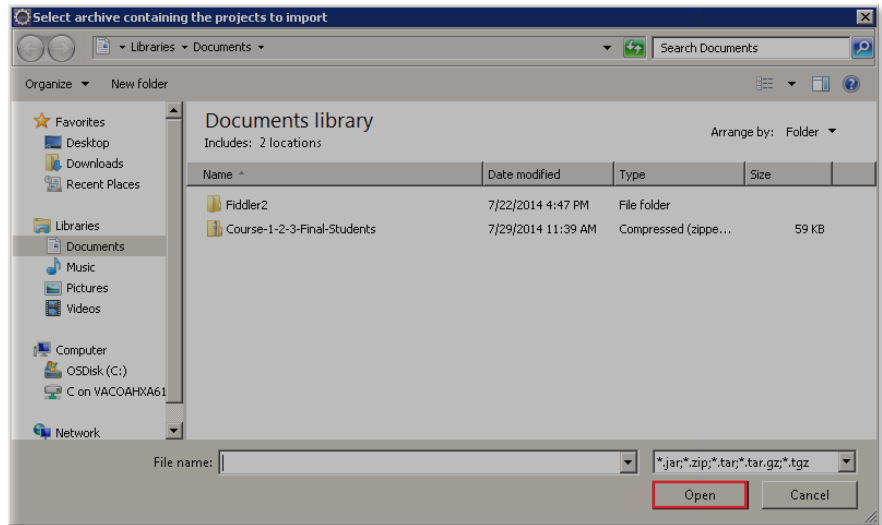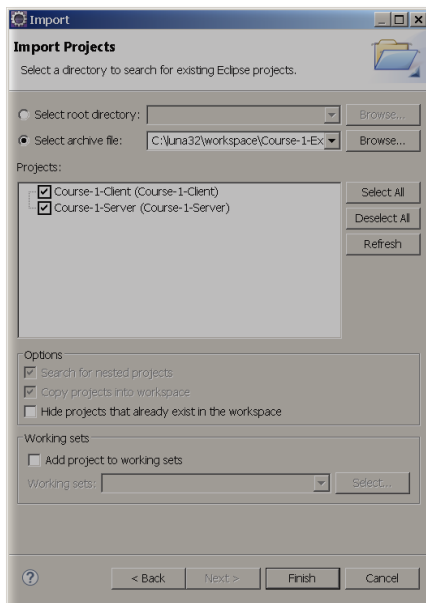
4. Select the Project to Import

On the **Import Project** dialog box, select the **Browse** button.

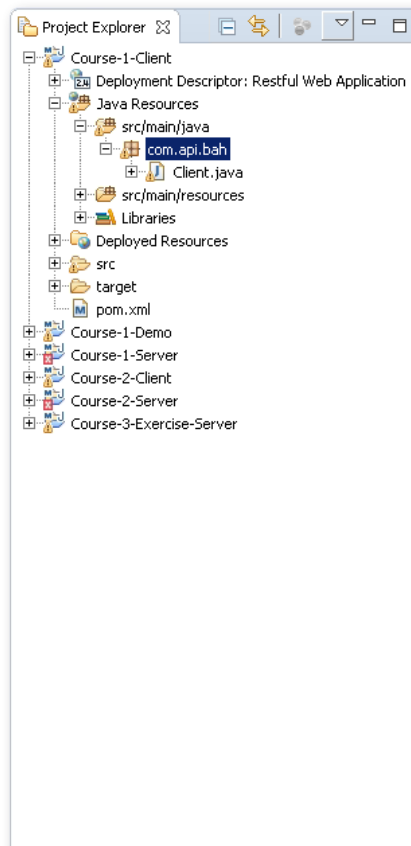## 5. Locate on Your Computer Where the Project is Stored

Navigate to and select the zip file that contains the project, then select **Open**.

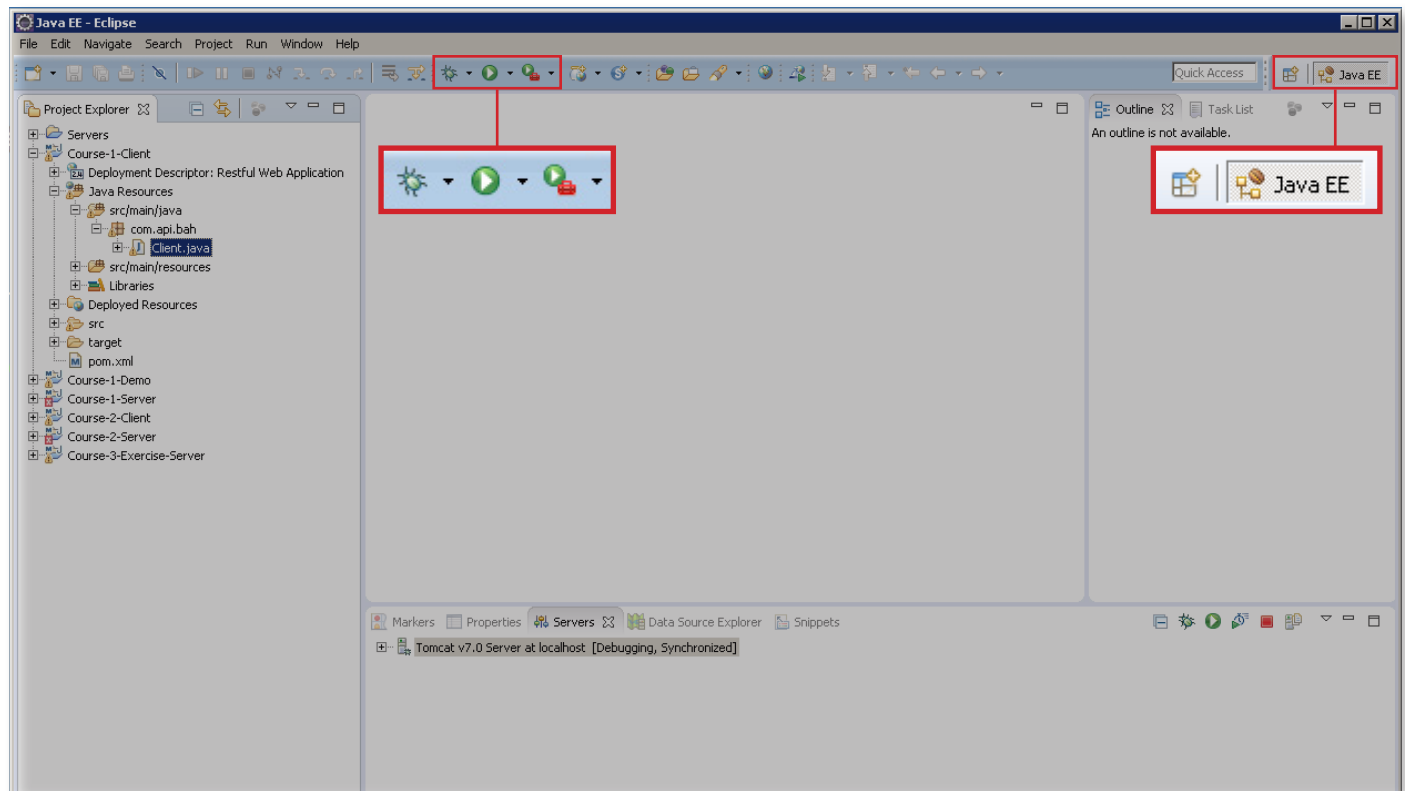This will show you your projects in the zip file.

6. View the Imported Project in Project Explorer

Go to **Project Explorer** to locate the existing project that was just imported into your Eclipse. From there, you can add or edit the REST API project as you wish.

The Eclipse Interface

To help you become familiar with Eclipse's interface, we've highlighted some of its tools and features and provided the purpose and function of each.

1. Top bar

The buttons on this bar help run and edit your applications. The buttons we're going to highlight are the ones that will help you debug and run your assignments.

a. Debug Button

This button runs your app in debug mode by attaching the debugger. It enables you to discover and diagnose coding and other mistakes that may occur in your application. This is especially useful for determining run-time errors or errors that can only be detected once the application has launched One of the many useful features of the debugger is the ability to step through your code and examine the contents of variables.

b. Run Button

This button runs your API without attaching the debugger. When developing your APIs, it is a best practice to avoid using this button because it does not show you where errors are, only that you have them. Once your system is in production, it should always be compiled without debug options enabled.
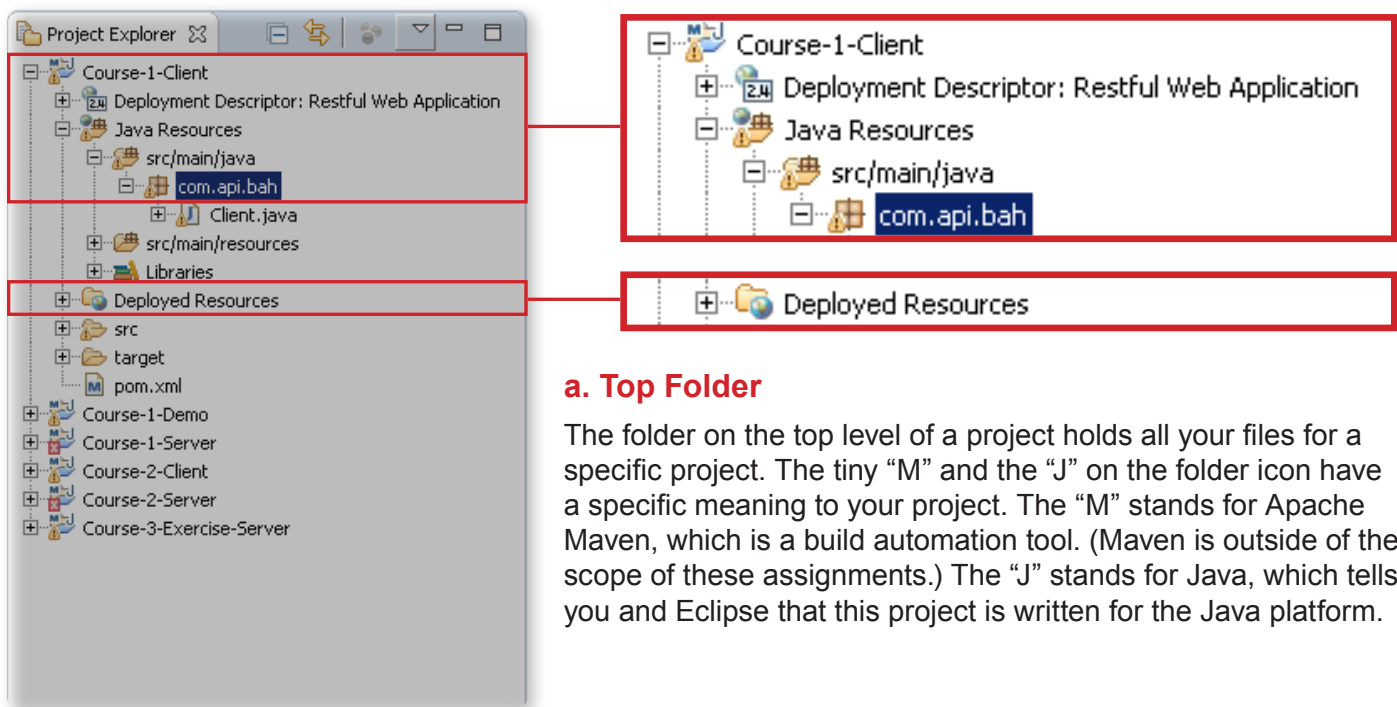
c. Open Perspective Button

This button provides different views to assist you in completing specific steps while creating REST APIs. This button switches between different perspectives. The perspectives that will be most helpful in your assignments will be the Debug and Java.

d. Java EE Perspective Button

This button is another perspective button and it opens the **Java EE perspective**. It's used for Java projects and will be helpful if you get lost and need a shortcut to get back to your projects.

2. Project Explorer Pane

The purpose of this pane is to organize the files of the project you're working on. Files in this pane are displayed in a hierarchical view to help show how project files are arranged. The project files we're going to highlight will help you understand how a REST API project written in Java is organized in Eclipse.

a. Top Folder

The folder on the top level of a project holds all your files for a specific project. The tiny "M" and the "J" on the folder icon have a specific meaning to your project. The "M" stands for Apache Maven, which is a build automation tool. (Maven is outside of the scope of these assignments.) The "J" stands for Java, which tells you and Eclipse that this project is written for the Java platform.

b. Deployment Descriptor

As the project hierarchy is expanded, the next file you'll notice is the **Deployment Descriptor.** This file identifies the project as a RESTful web application.

c. Java Resources

The next folder in the same level of hierarchy as the **Deployment Descriptor** is the **Java Resources** folder. This folder holds content such as Java code and the file where you will edit your assignments.

src/main/java folder

As we expand down the Java Resources hierarchy one level, you'll see the **src/main/java** folder. This folder holds the file, **Server.java**, to edit your assignments. To locate this file, expand down the **Java Resources.**
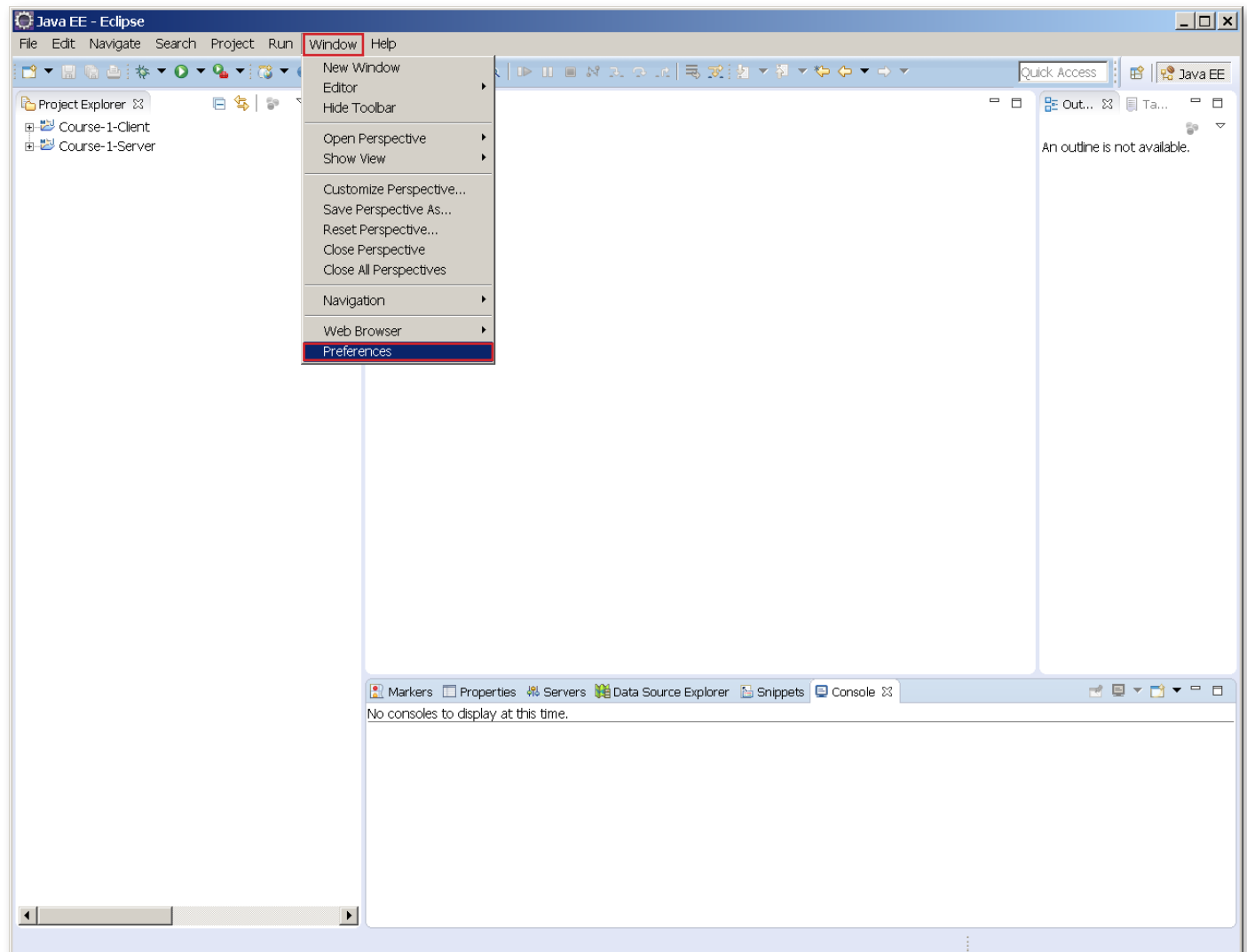
d. src and target folders

The **src** and **target** folders are in the same level of hierarchy as the **Java Resources** folder and shouldn't be edited or removed. The files in these folders were created to point to specific files necessary for running your program.
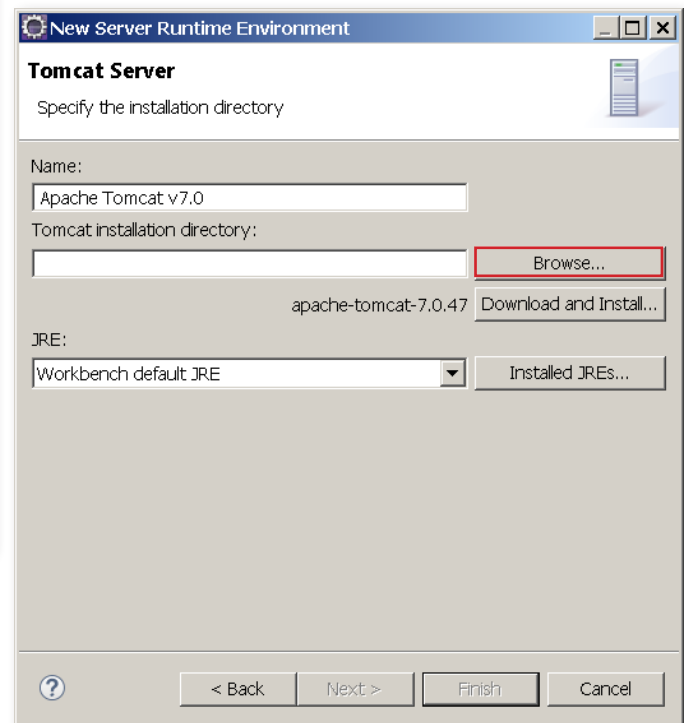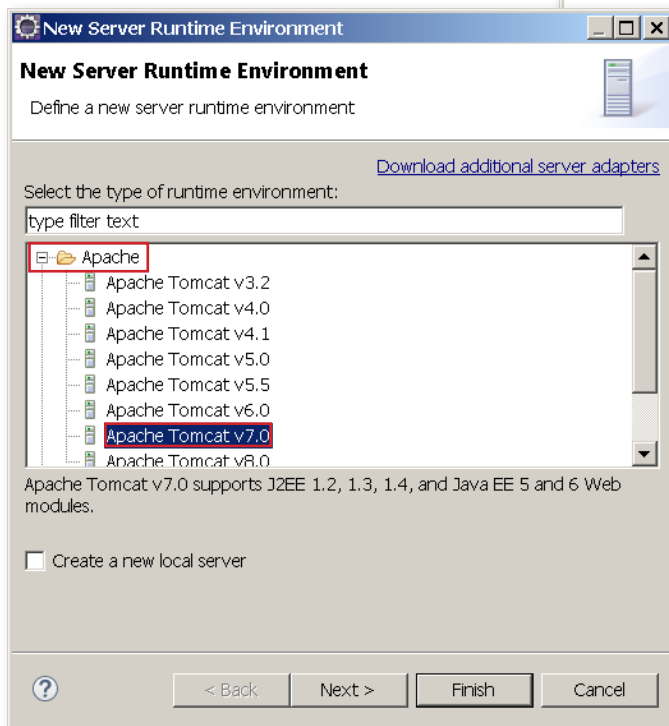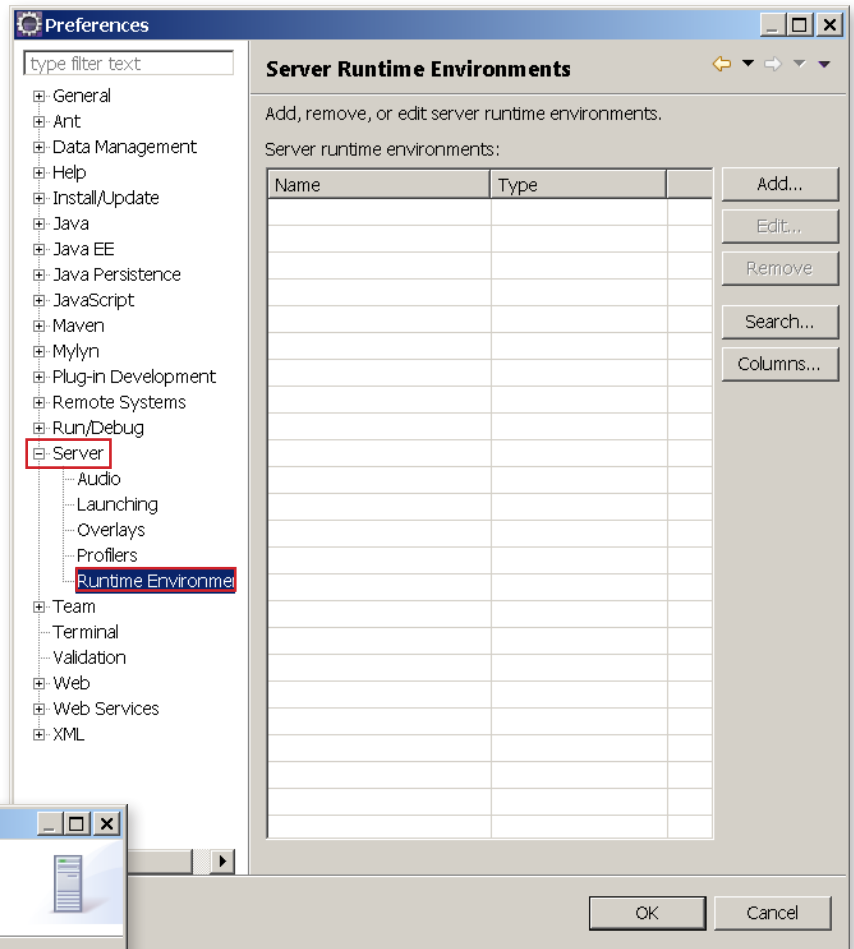
Setting Up For Testing

Before you can test your server project, you will need to define the server runtime executables that Eclipse will need to load. In our case, we are using Apache Tomcat version 7.
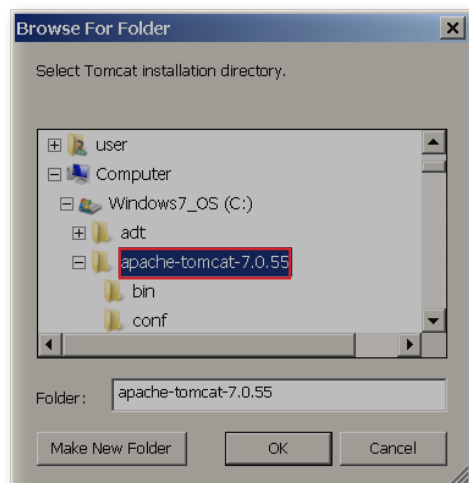
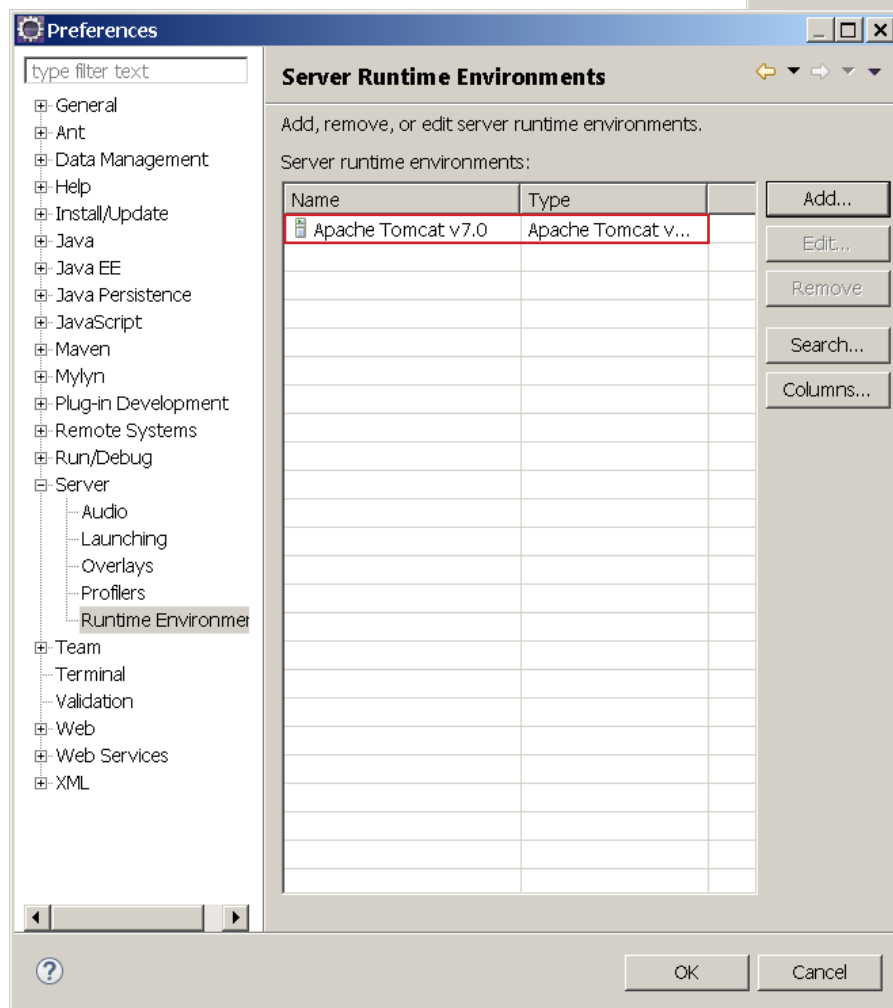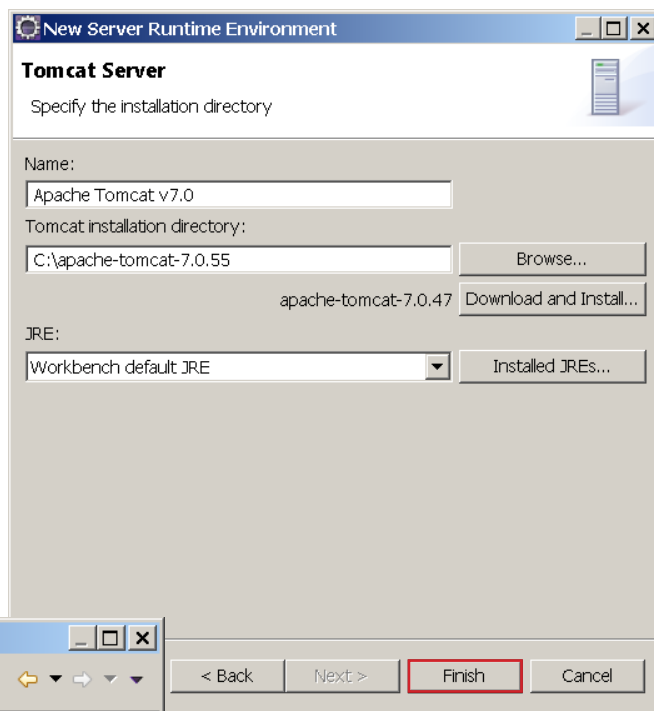**1.** Click on **Window** in the top menu and go to **Preferences**.

2. Expand the **Server** tab on the left, and select **Runtime Environment**.

3. Expand the **Apache folder** and select **Apache Tomcat 7.0**. Click **Next.**

4. Click **Browse** to select the **Apache Tomcat 7.0** folder.

Preferences

type filter text

- ⊞ General
- ⊞ Ant
- ⊞ Data Management
- ⊞ Help
- ⊞ Install/Update
- ⊞ Java
- ⊞ Java EE
- ⊞ Java Persistence
- ⊞ JavaScript
- ⊞ Maven
- ⊞ Mylyn
- ⊞ Plug-in Development
- ⊞ Remote Systems
- ⊞ Run/Debug
- ⊟ Server
  - Audio
  - Launching
  - Overlays
  - Profilers
  - Runtime Environmer
- ⊞ Team
- Terminal
- Validation
- ⊞ Web
- ⊞ Web Services
- ⊞ XML

Server Runtime Environments

Add, remove, or edit server runtime environments.

Server runtime environments:

Name	Type

Add...
Edit...
Remove
Search...
Columns...

OK   Cancel

New Server Runtime Environment

New Server Runtime Environment

Define a new server runtime environment

Download additional server adapters

Select the type of runtime environment:

type filter text

- ⊟ Apache
  - Apache Tomcat v3.2
  - Apache Tomcat v4.0
  - Apache Tomcat v4.1
  - Apache Tomcat v5.0
  - Apache Tomcat v5.5
  - Apache Tomcat v6.0
  - Apache Tomcat v7.0
  - Apache Tomcat v8.0

Apache Tomcat v7.0 supports J2EE 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and Java EE 5 and 6 Web modules.

☐ Create a new local server

⑦   < Back   Next >   Finish   Cancel

New Server Runtime Environment

Tomcat Server

Specify the installation directory

Name:

Apache Tomcat v7.0

Tomcat installation directory:

[   ]   Browse...

apache-tomcat-7.0.47   Download and Install...

JRE:

Workbench default JRE ▼   Installed JREs...

⑦   < Back   Next >   Finish   Cancel

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5. Select the **c:\apache-tomcat-7.0.55** folder and click **OK.**

6. Click **Finish**.

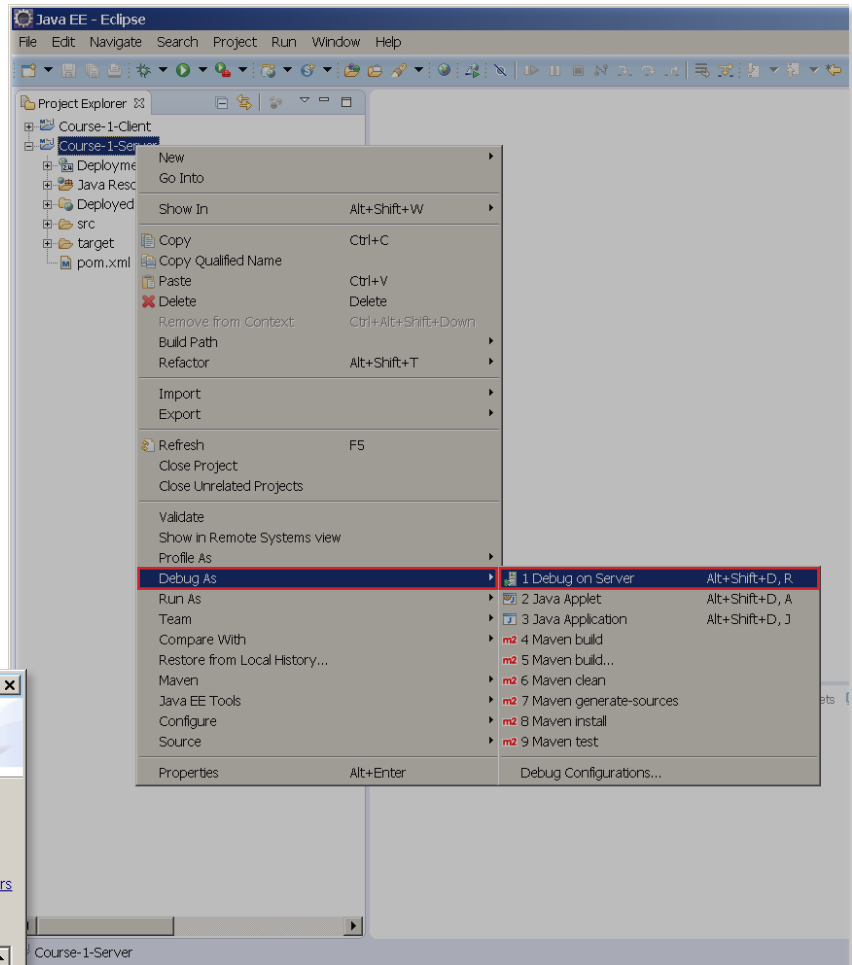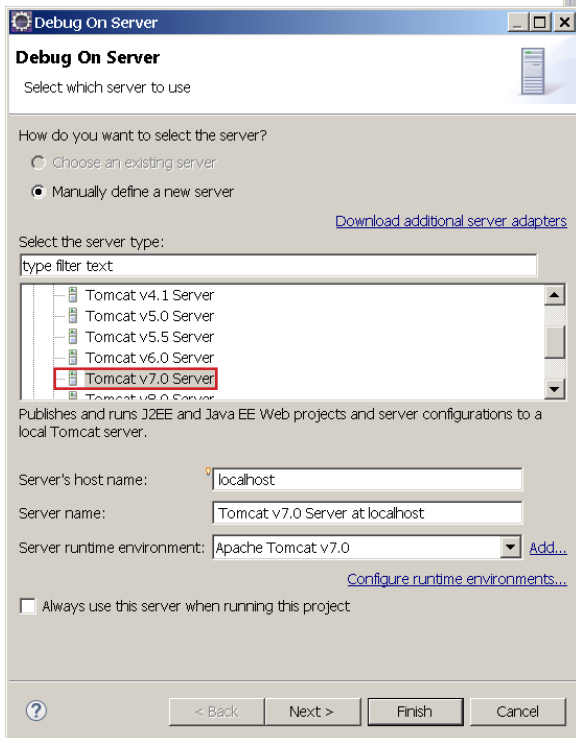**7.** You will see that the **Apache Tomcat 7.0** runtime environment has been linked to Eclipse.

That's it—now Eclipse knows how to run your web server applications.

How to Test Your Exercises

Once you have completed the exercises in the next section of this guidebook, and you have resolved all the errors, you are ready to test. To test your exercises, you will need to select the context (click on the project folder), and then debug your project. For the clients (and other projects that do not need to run in a server container), debug as Java Application. For server applications, you will need to launch the debugger from the **Project Explorer** pane. The steps below show you how to test your exercises.

1. Right-Click on the Top Folder of the project you're working on

When you right-click on the top folder a sub-menu will open. Navigate down to **Debug As** and select Java Application for non-server code. For server code, select the first option, **1. Debug on Server**. This starts the application running on the server. Selecting **1. Debug on Server** will open the dialog box shown below.

2. Debug On Server

Selecting **1. Debug on Server** will open the dialog box shown on the left. Expand the **Apache** folder and select **Tomcat v7.0 Server at localhost** and then select **Finish**. This will run the REST API that you're working on.

3. Debug As Java Application

Right-click on the top folder of the project you're working on to open a sub-menu. Navigate down to **Debug As** and select the third option, **3. Java Application**. This runs the client, and output will be displayed in the **Console** area.

4. View Results in the Console area

Once the results have been output, you will be able to view them in the console areas of Eclipse.
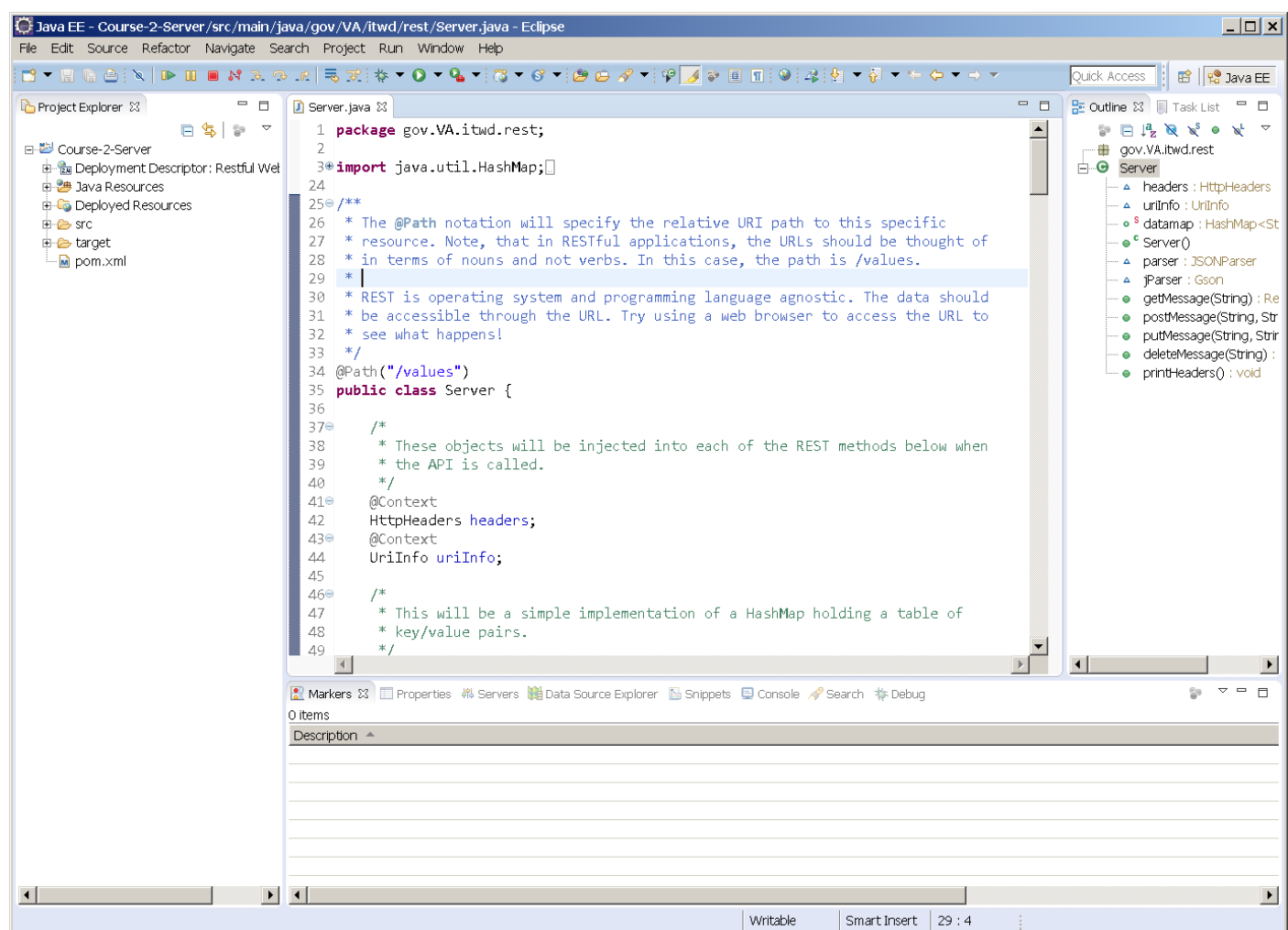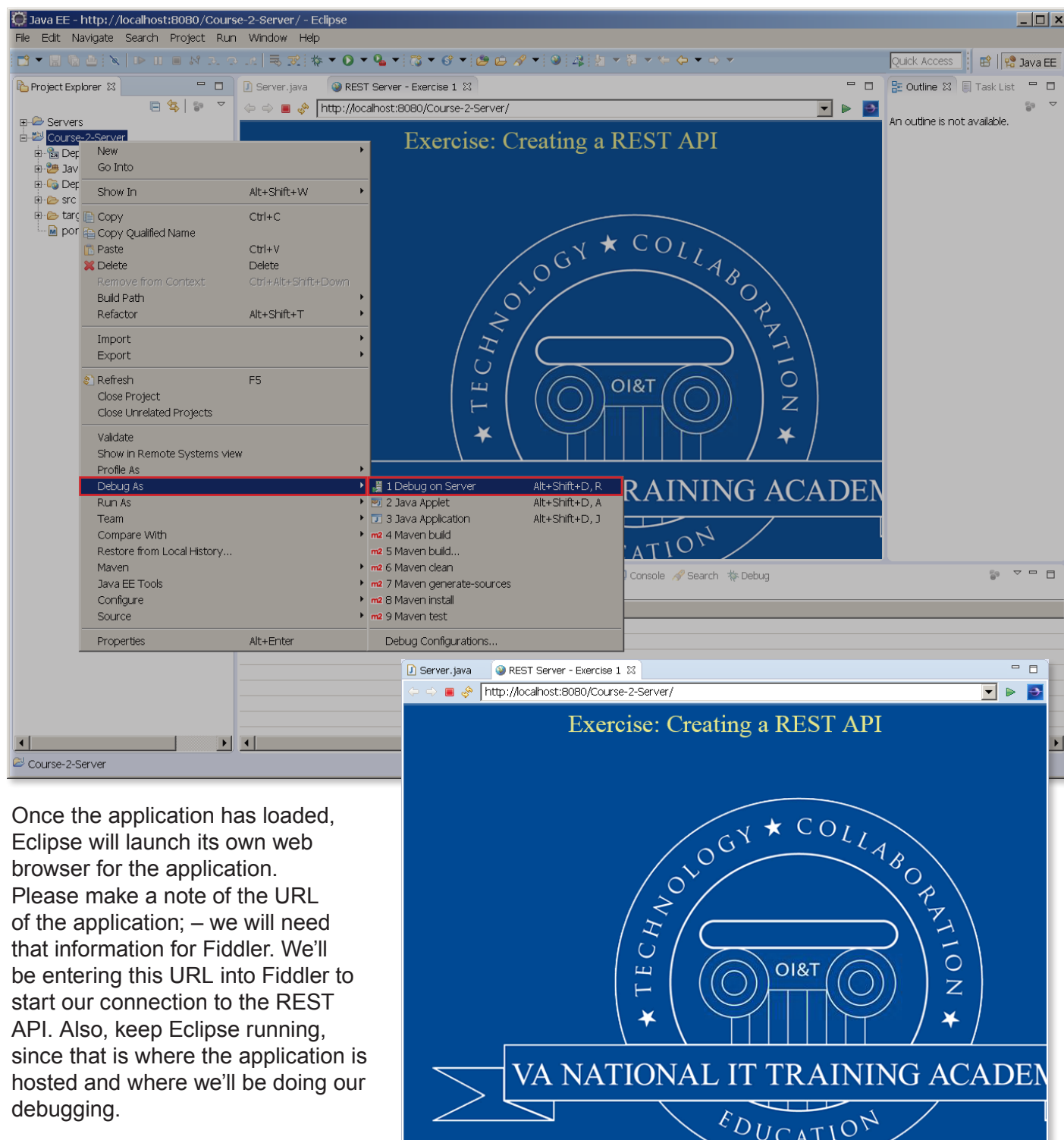
Course 3: REST Exercise

Exercise: Debugging a REST API Using Fiddler

In this third exercise, we're going to ask you to go through some basic debugging steps and Eclipse's debugging capabilities. We're also going to introduce you to Fiddler, a web-debugging proxy. Before you use Fiddler for your exercise, you need to open Eclipse and start the Course 2 exercise application on the Tomcat server. In your previous exercises, a custom client was written to test the REST APIs.

In this exercise, we're going to use Fiddler, an HTTP client to communicate with our API. Please refer to the *Introduction to REST with Java, Beginner Part 2 Guidebook* to set up your project files and run the Course 2 Server Application.

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1. Run the Course 2 Server Application

Once imported, run the Course 2 Server Application by right-clicking on the top project folder, go to **Debug As**, and then **1. Debug on Server**. Follow the prompts discussed in previous exercises, including setting up the Tomcat 7.x runtime, if necessary.

Once the application has loaded, Eclipse will launch its own web browser for the application. Please make a note of the URL of the application; – we will need that information for Fiddler. We'll be entering this URL into Fiddler to start our connection to the REST API. Also, keep Eclipse running, since that is where the application is hosted and where we'll be doing our debugging.

2. Start Fiddler

You can launch Fiddler from the desktop by clicking the shortcut, which is a green rhombus with an F in the middle.

Fiddler will default to the last tab used. If not selected, click on the **Composer** tab to select it. The **Composer** tab is where you create an HTTP message and where you'll be doing a majority of the exercise for this course.

Copy the server URL we previously noted when running the Course 2 Server Application. It should be something like http://localhost:8080/Course-2-Server. Paste the URL in the **Parsed** tab in Fiddler, and click **Execute**. This will execute the default Fiddler action, which is GET, and will return the **base index.htm** file associated with the server.

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Fiddler is an HTTP client and acts just as any web browser might; however, it gives us the ability to control what is sent and inspect what is received. Once the GET is executed, a result will pop up on the left. Double-click that result line (notice how it shows status 200, which we know means OK/Success). Fiddler will show you the text of the response in the **Text View** tab, which is selected by default. You can click the other tabs to see different renderings of the response, such as **Web View**, which should be almost what you would see in a regular web browser. We are now ready to remote control our API!

3. Update the Standardized Action, URL, and Protocol Version

We don't have anything in our database yet, so it would be a good idea to PUT something in it for testing. Specifically, a value named "test." Select **PUT** from the drop-down **Standardized Actions** window. You'll notice that there are several actions, but we're only going to focus on the actions **GET** and **PUT**.

Recall from our deployment descriptor (web.xml) that our API URL pattern is /api/*. Also, recall from the previous exercises that the path (defined by the @Path tag) to the standard actions starts with /values/. So the full URL you will need to use to prefix all of the standardized actions is your base url/api/values/. For the application run from Eclipse using Tomcat, the url should be:

"http://localhost:8080/Course-2-Server/api/values/"

From here, you can add on the additional information to specify the standardized actions. In the URL box, add "/test" at the end of the URL and "/Hello%20World."

Note: All URLs must be escaped. Escaping a URL is taking characters that are invalid for HTTP resources and converting them into an encoded format that is a valid URL. The "%20" in the URL represents a space.

To the right of the **URL** box, you'll see the **Protocol Version** drop-down box. Make sure that **HTTP/1.1** is selected.

Select **Execute**.

4. Select the JSON Tab

Double-click the response at left and then go to the **JSON** tab. Notice how the JSON string you coded is interpreted as a key/value pair. You can select the other tabs to see different renderings of the response. Feel free to experiment with the other view tabs.

5. Open the Statistics Tab

Now that you have executed a **PUT** standardized action, select the **Statistics** tab and open it. Useful performance metrics are shown. On the left, you'll see the **Request Log**. This log shows every HTTP request going in and out of Fiddler. It will also show a status code of your request. You should receive a HTTP response code of 200, which means that the **PUT** request was successful.

6. Add a Breakpoint into the REST API in Eclipse

In order to debug the REST API, you'll need to go back in to Eclipse. It is often useful to add pauses in the code, called **breakpoints**, while debugging. A **breakpoint** is a break in the execution of the application. It is a way to help developers isolate an issue. It stops the application execution when that specific line of code is about to be executed and you can see the state of your application, such as variable values, object references, etc. To add a **breakpoint**, click on the section of the code where you want to add one. Hit **Control-Shift-B** on your keyboard, or right-click on the line number, and select **Toggle Breakpoint**. Your screen should look similar to the screen shown. The blue dot indicates that a **breakpoint** was added. As long as you are running in debug mode, you can add and remove breakpoints without stopping and starting the server. In some circumstances, to catch a line of code that might only run in your application at startup, you would need to stop the server, add your breakpoint, and then restart the server. In our exercises, this will not be necessary.

Tip: You can control displaying line numbers and folding by right-clicking in the white space to the left of your code and accessing the **Context** menu. Here you can turn on line numbers and "fold" (or hide) blocks of code. Folding is an extremely useful feature when you are working with large amounts of code.
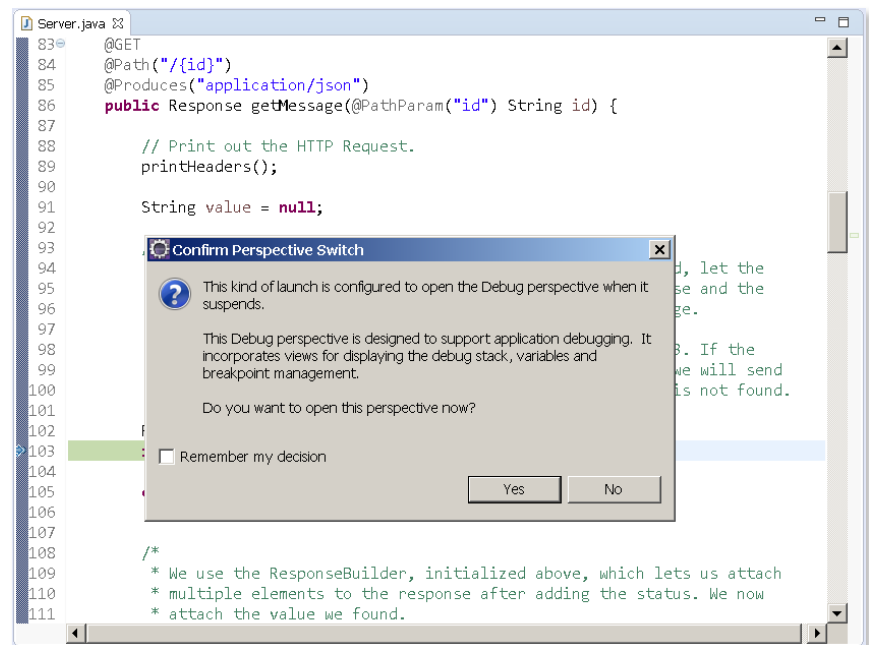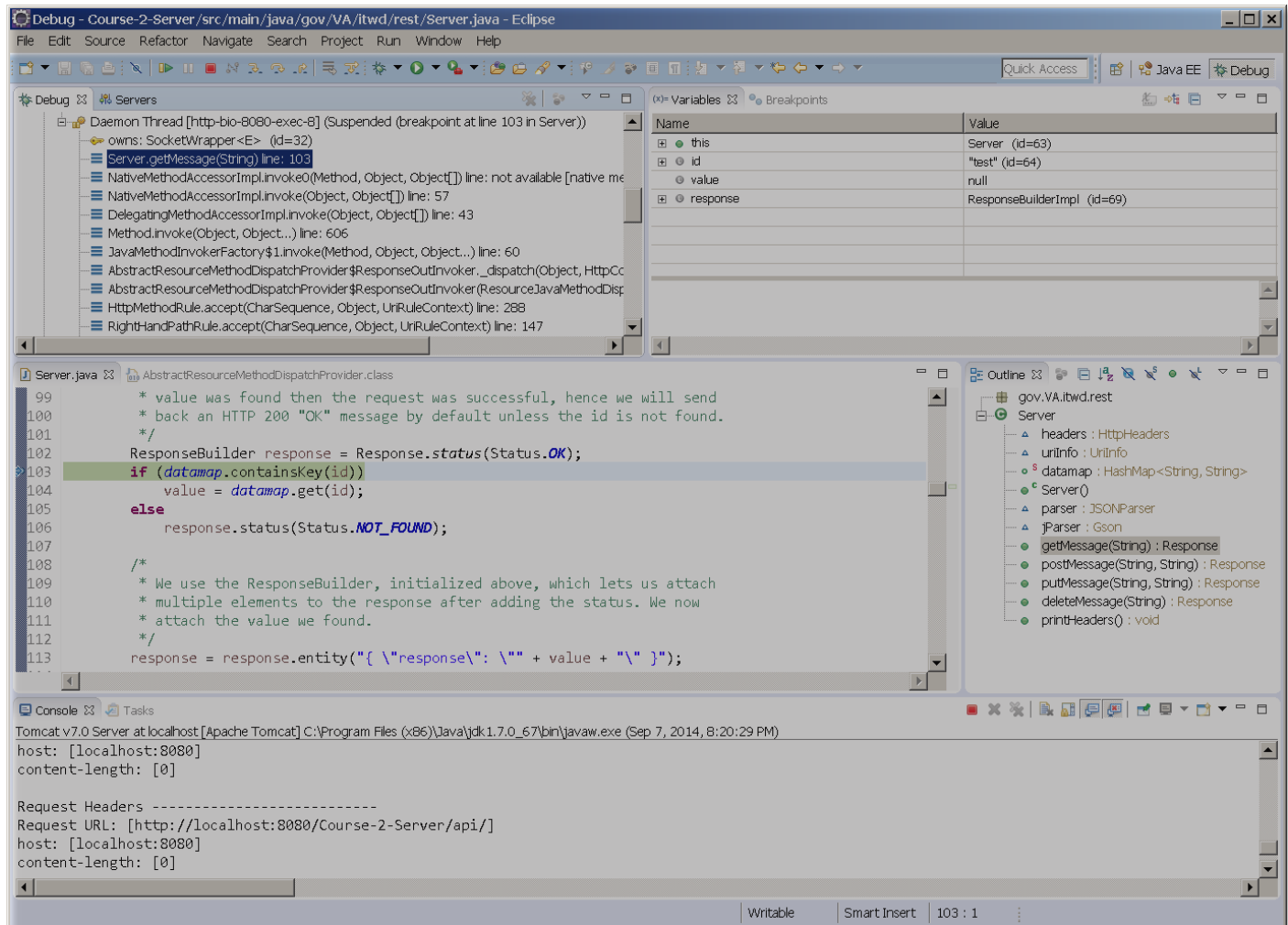
a. Debugging Practice

Feel free to add a breakpoint wherever you'd like. One example, is to add a breakpoint to the GET method in Server.java where the key/value is checked to see if it exists in the datamap. Once you have your breakpoint in, issue the appropriate action in Fiddler to cause the server to execute the code. In this case, send a GET request to the URL: http://localhost:8080/Course-2-Server/api/values/test/, which should return the value we input for test (Hello World), earlier.

Once your breakpoint is reached, execution will stop on the server and Eclipse will ask you if you want to switch to the Debug Perspective. This is a set of screens optimized for walking through and debugging code. All of the tools are available from any of the other perspectives, but this perspective is optimized for debugging. Select **Yes** to continue.

This is what the default debug perspective looks like. Notice how the **Server.java** line 103 breakpoint is highlighted. Click on the line in the top left button to view the associated variables and values for the block.

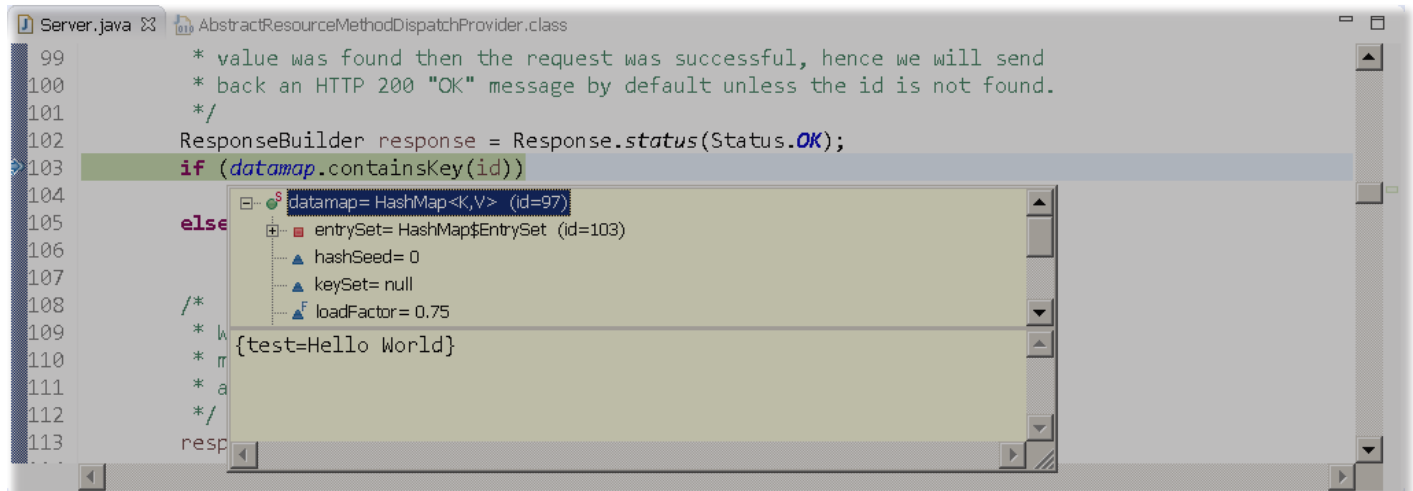### b. Stepping Through Your Code

Depending on the level of debugging you need to do, you can step over, step into, and step out of breakpoints from the debug control menu on the tool bar.

Let's use step over so we don't accidentally start stepping through JRE classes. The step over icon is the second yellow arrow, which looks like an upside down U. You can also use F6 on the keyboard Alternatively, you can stop your program (red square) or resume execution (green arrow).

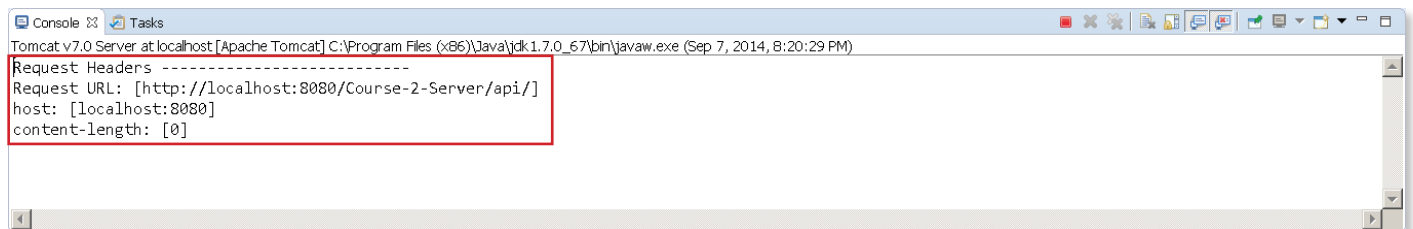Click the step over icon or use keyboard F6 to step through the code.

Tip: You can click and hover over objects and variables to see their values. Notice how the datamap contains our test value of **Hello World**.


```
Server.java      AbstractResourceMethodDispatchProvider.class
 99          * value was found then the request was successful, hence we will send
100          * back an HTTP 200 "OK" message by default unless the id is not found.
101          */
102         ResponseBuilder response = Response.status(Status.OK);
103         if (datamap.containsKey(id))
104             datamap= HashMap<K,V>  (id=97)
105         else   entrySet= HashMap$EntrySet (id=103)
106             hashSeed= 0
107             keySet= null
108         /*  loadFactor= 0.75
109          * w
110          * m   {test=Hello World}
111          * a
112          */
113         resp
```
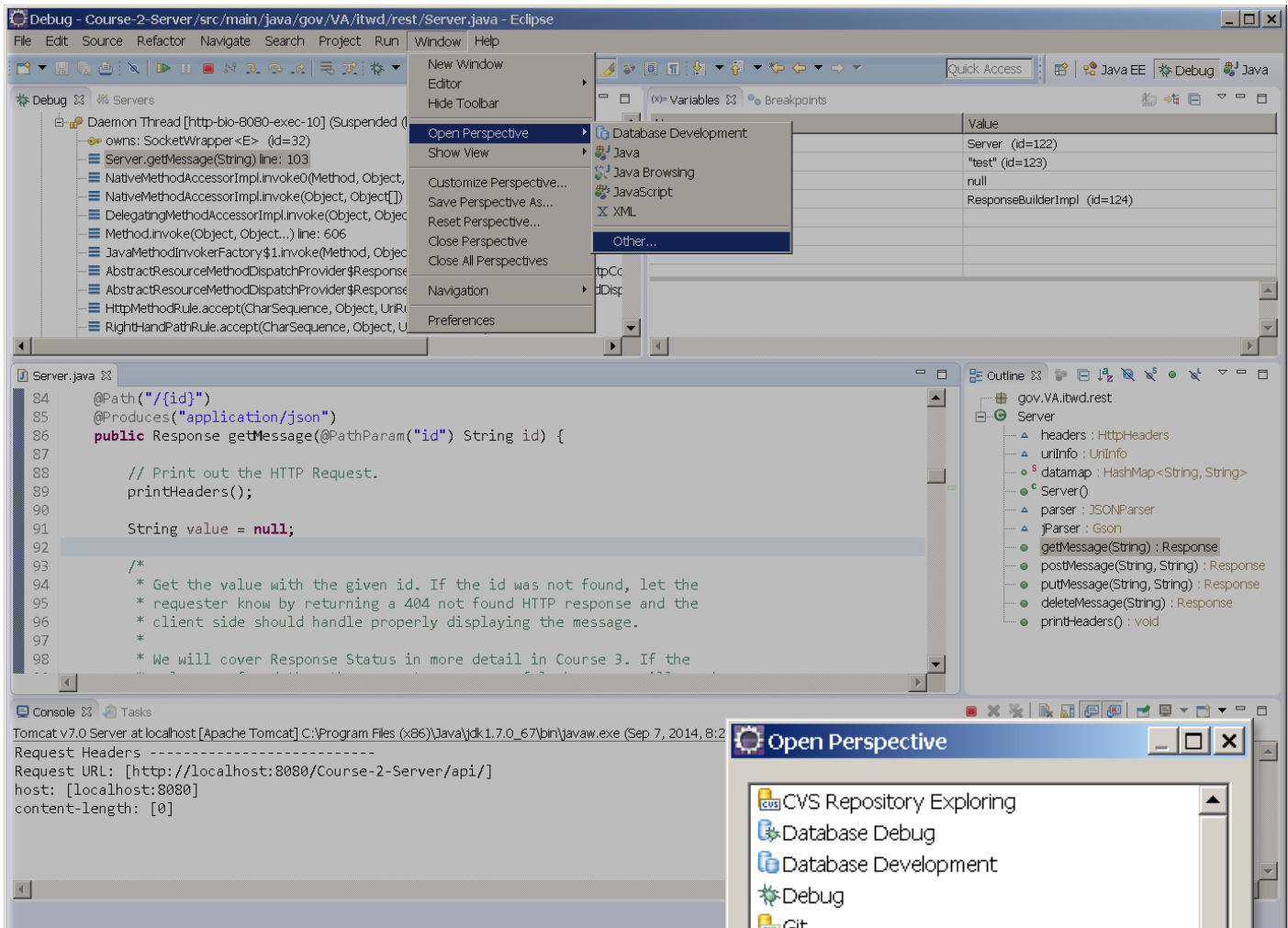
Tip: You can also keep an eye out on the console to see if any messages pop up. If you recall, we had a print headers method in our Server code to print out the headers. Here you can see the headers printed out in the console area.


```
Console    Tasks
Tomcat v7.0 Server at localhost [Apache Tomcat] C:\Program Files (x86)\Java\jdk1.7.0_67\bin\javaw.exe (Sep 7, 2014, 8:20:29 PM)
Request Headers --------------------------
Request URL: [http://localhost:8080/Course-2-Server/api/]
host: [localhost:8080]
content-length: [0]
```

7. Select the Java Perspective

Once you are done with debugging, you can go back to the standard Java EE perspective. To do this, click on **Window** in the menu at the top, go to **Open Perspective**, and select **Other**. The perspective that we've been using is the Java EE perspective, which is optimized for enterprise application development, such as working with RESTful web services. Select Java EE and click **OK** to return to the default view.

Tip: You can customize perspectives and experiment with different ones. If you want to return to the default view, you can always restore the perspective to the original settings from the **Windows** menu by selecting **Restore Perspective**.

Now you have the basic knowledge necessary to debug RESTful applications. Feel free to experiment with Eclipse, Tomcat, and Fiddler doing different combinations and scenarios. Try sending a GET for a value that doesn't exist, or a PUT for a key that exists, or a DELETE on a key that doesn't exist to help you get a better understanding of how these tools can be used to debug applications.

Additional Resources

This section of the guidebook provides you with resources mentioned in the REST course. Several are websites and the others can be found in the Books 24x7 catalog of the Talent Management System (TMS).

Websites

The One-VA Technical Reference Manual (VA TRM)

http://trm.oit.va.gov/TRMHomePage.asp **Note:** This link is only available on VA's Intranet.

Search this site to stay within guidelines for REST vendors and guidelines that have been vetted and approved by VA. This site is also available to search hardware, software, testing tools, applications, etc., to see if that tool is approved, approved with constraints, or unapproved at VA. Do your research here before you start using tools to develop REST APIs.

Eclipse

To download Eclipse to your personal computer visit, https://www.eclipse.org/

Eclipse Reference Websites

Visit these user forums for references on how to use REST with Eclipse:

http://marketplace.eclipse.org/content/rest-client
http://wiki.eclipse.org/EclipseLink/Examples/REST/GettingStarted/RestService

Tomcat 7.0

To download Tomcat 7.0 to your personal computer, visit, http://www.coreservlets.com/Apache-Tomcat-Tutorial/tomcat7-files/tomcat-7.0.34-preconfigured.zip.

1. Unzip the the downloaded file into the root folder of the C drive (C:\apache-tomcat-7.0.34).
2. In Eclipse, go to **Open Window,** down to **Preferences,** and select **Server** and then **Installed Runtimes** to create a Tomcat installed runtime.
3. Click **Add** to open the **New Server Runtime** dialog.
4. Select your runtime under **Apache (v7.0).**
5. Click **Next**.
6. Under **Tomcat Installation Directory,** insert the path to your Tomcat installation (For example: C:\apache-tomcat-7.0.34).
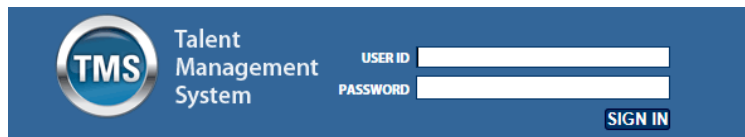7. Click **Finish.**

Books 24x7

There are several electronic books about developing REST APIs available to you in Books 24x7 on the TMS (TMS ID 30086). The list of books includes:

- *Cloud Optimized REST API Automation Framework*
- *The Agile Architecture Revolution: How Cloud Computing, REST-Based SOA, and Mobile Computing Are Changing Enterprise IT*
- *RESTful PHP Web Services: Learn the Basic Architectural Concepts and Steps Through Examples of Consuming and Creating RESTful Web Services in PHP Android Application Development for Dummies*

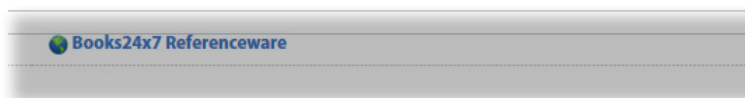**Five Steps for Accessing Books 24x7**

1. Log in to the TMS at https://www.tms.va.gov.

2. Enter TMS ID 30086 in the **Browse** text box and select **Go**.

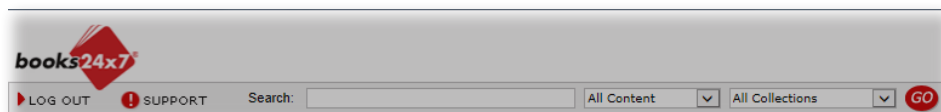**3.** Select the **Books 24x7 Referenceware** title from the Catalog Search Results.

4. Select **Continue Course** (If this is the first time you have accessed Books 24x7, the button will read Start Course).

5. Enter your search terms (e.g., "REST, API") in the **Search** text box and select the **Go** button.