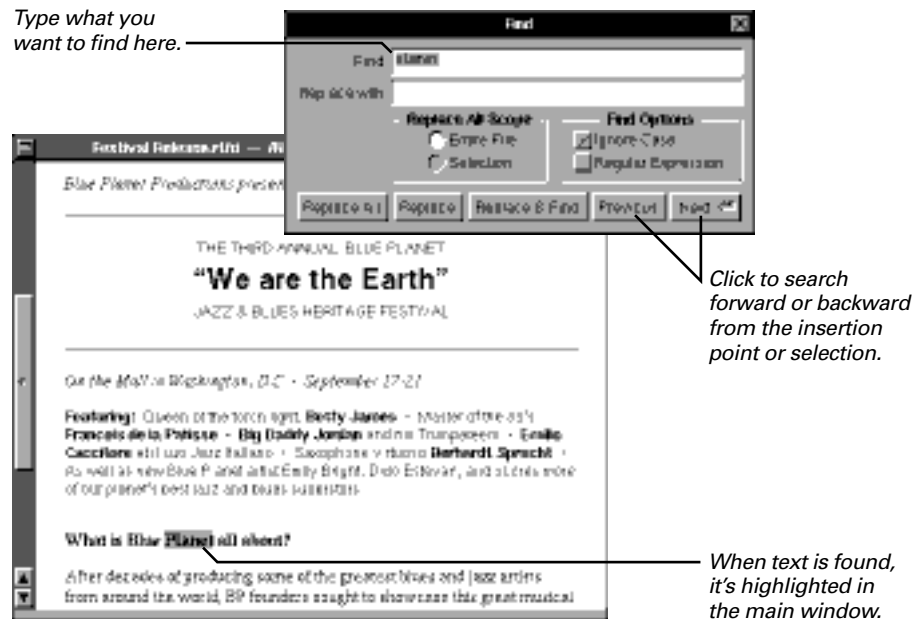


# Replacing words with pictures

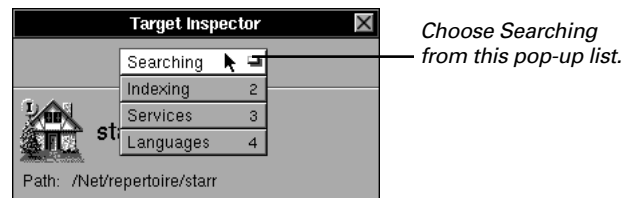
- ▶ **Illustrate the subject of each task.**
- ▶ **Illustrate a sequence of events.**
- ▶ **Illustrate concepts.**

Show what you're talking about with illustrations. If the task focuses on a part of the interface, like the Font Panel, show the Font Panel in an illustration. If there's not enough room to describe a window or panel in one illustration, you might show only a part of the panel at a time.

You can also use an illustration to tell a story. When the task involves several objects in the interface, try to show their interaction. For example:



Don't use words if you can show it in an illustration. For example, instead of describing where a pop-up list is and how to use it, show it in action:

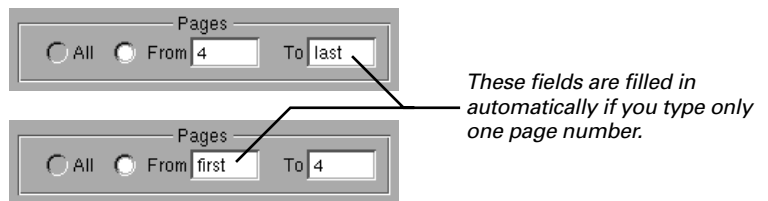


For information on using illustrations and writing callouts in the book design, see “Using Callouts” in Chapter 6.

People can often learn more quickly from a picture than from a description.  
For example:

**Instead of** You can type a range of pages in the From and To fields. If you type a starting page number, the To field automatically changes to **last** and the file prints from your starting page to the end. If you type an ending page number, the From field automatically changes to **first** and the file prints from the beginning to your ending page.

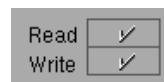
**Try this** You can type a range of pages.



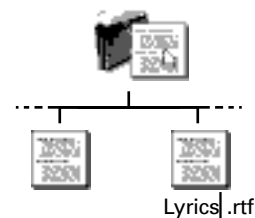
Notice how in this illustration, the words *first* and *last* speak for themselves.

You can even illustrate difficult concepts. Be creative. For example, instead of trying to explain read and write permissions in prose, show some basic ways it can apply to the reader's experience. The reader can take it from there.

*When you have write permission for a folder or file, you can change its contents:*



*You write in a folder, for example, when you rename a file in it or add a file to it.*



*You write in a file when you save changes to it.*



Avoid showing art, such as buttons and icons, in headings or in prose. Instead, show exploded views of them in an illustration. Exceptions include small images, like a cursor or a submenu symbol.