NO BS AI

CLASS MATERIALS

Week 5: The Map

(Class Session Transcript)

Pilot Class // April 2026

Instructor: RJ // Platform: Rippily

The Goblin Mining Cave

"Let the code talk to the code.
That's what the goblins are best at."

-- RJ, Week 5: The Map

DO NOT LICK THE TRANSCRIPTS

DEEPER INTO THE MINE WE GO

SECTION 1: WELCOME — AND THE MAP

Why We're Here Today

RJ started this session differently. Last week, a student named Laurel said: "I just do good with a map. When I can see the destination, when I can get a picture in my head of where we're going."

So RJ made a map.

This week's class is a walkthrough of the entire Goblin Cave — every room, every tool, every connection. Some of this you've heard before. That's intentional.

"I'm not attempting to insult your massive intelligence. What I'm doing is trying to help you put the pieces together in the right place, so that things start cementing in."

The four rooms of the cave (the tools you're learning to use):

- **Claude Code** — where you talk to your AI and direct work
- **MCPs** — the pipe connectors that let Claude reach into other tools
- **N8N** — the automation junction that works while you sleep
- **Cloudflare** — where you ship everything, for free

Airtable and Google Sheets are the memory systems that hold everything your AI needs to remember.

SECTION 2: JAMIE'S WORLD ANVIL MCP STORY

A Master Class in Resilience

Jaime Buckley came to class with a story — and it turned into a five-minute tutorial on exactly what it takes to succeed with AI tools.

Jaime connected Claude Code to World Anvil via MCP. She didn't do it alone — her friend Lisa sent her a link to the MCP file, and Jaime followed the setup instructions. When it didn't connect immediately, she didn't stop. She asked Claude what to do next. Claude walked her through several steps. Something was missing on her Mac. She downloaded it. The connection snapped into place.

"Are you really connected? He says — dare me. Ask me how many worlds you have."

Jaime thought she had three worlds in World Anvil. She had four. She'd forgotten about the D&D world she gave her son.

Once connected, Jaime asked Claude to write a World Anvil article — full BB code formatting, correct heading styles, drop caps, the character icons World Anvil uses for sections. She gave it two template links and said: *use what you want from this one, and what you want from that one, but put my information in the right place.*

It worked. Perfectly formatted. The information was placeholder content, but the structure was exactly right.

"I got to get back to work because I will just live here."

The Real Lesson

What Jaime demonstrated without meaning to: creativity, resourcefulness, and resilience. Those are the foundational stones the cave is built on. Not prior coding knowledge. Not technical fluency. Just the willingness to try again with different information.

SECTION 3: DELAINA'S FINANCIAL MCP

Building Something Nobody Else Built

Deleyna came in quietly and dropped news: she built her own MCP.

It connects Claude to her financial records — stored locally on her machine in FileMaker, not connected to the internet, not linked to any bank.

"Security is an issue for me. I'm highly sensitive to how vulnerable that kind of thing is."

What it can do so far:

- Search her database for a specific string she puts in financial records when something is business-related
- Summarize outstanding transactions that need to be matched
- Pull up her records for review

What she's working toward:

- It runs the search, matches transactions automatically, shows her results to verify, and asks for confirmation before any entries are made. She never has to open the database manually again.

"Baby steps. Baby steps."

The Kaizen Principle

This is Kaizen — a Japanese principle RJ loves: every time you do something, make it a little better.

In AI terms: you don't have to build the whole system on day one. You build what you can build today. You make it slightly better tomorrow. Eventually the thing you wanted is done and you barely noticed the work.

"Every time that I do something — I want to make it a little bit better."

SECTION 4: THE MEMORY VAULT AND THE SCRIPTORIUM

Two Places, Two Purposes

Everything Claude needs to remember — character profiles, world lore, business rules, writing styles, system architecture — lives in one of two places:

The Memory Vault (spreadsheets: Airtable or Google Sheets)

For information with structure. Repeating parts. Fields that stay the same from record to record.

The Scriptorium (documents: Claude.md, system.md, any text file)

For information that reads like prose. Backstories. Rules. Instructions that need context and nuance.

"When I have questions like that — secret tip — I just say: Claude, give me the pros and cons of both and give me a recommendation."

Structured Memory: The Recipe Analogy

A recipe has the same parts every time: title, description, prep time, ingredients, instructions. When Claude needs "what are the ingredients for this coffee recipe," it can go directly to the ingredients column without reading everything else. That's efficient. That uses fewer tokens.

This is why RJ stores her coffee recipes, character profiles, and business data in Airtable. It's not just organization — it's speed and cost.

"It knows exactly — third column, third box down — boom, we've got the information."

Unstructured Memory: When Documents Win

Some things don't fit in a spreadsheet. A character backstory. A set of rules for how your AI should behave. The architecture of your whole bot system.

RJ has documents for all of this: a Claude.md that teaches Claude how to work with her, a system.md that explains how her chatbot infrastructure is built, and 50-line summary documents at the end of every working session.

"I have a little process. I type a little thing and it wraps everything up for me and it saves everything everywhere it needs to go."

The Choice Is Personal

Both formats work. Some people put everything in documents. Some lean into spreadsheets. The honest answer: if the information is structured and repeating, the spreadsheet uses fewer tokens. If it's prose and context-heavy, use a document.

When in doubt: load it into Claude and ask *"If you were going to put this in a spreadsheet, what would it look like?"* Let Claude do the structuring work.

SECTION 5: CLAUDE CHAT, CODE, AND CO-WORK

Three Modes, Three Jobs

Chat is the right brain. Brainstorming, creativity, "what if" questions. The conversational side.

Code is the left brain. Get it done. Build the thing. This is where MCPs live and where the actual construction happens. It's RJ's home base because this is where you connect to Airtable, N8N, Cloudflare — all of it.

Co-work is the middle. It talks to you like a colleague: "what are we doing today, what do we need to build?" Some people really like it. RJ hasn't used it heavily but it's worth exploring.

"Code is your get-it-done space."

SECTION 6: MCPS — THE PIPE CONNECTORS

What An MCP Actually Is

Model Context Protocol. The computer people named it. The name doesn't help.

"Half the people who say MCP don't know what it means either."

What it does: it's a pipe connector between Claude and another service. Not just one function of that service — an entire workshop of functions that Claude can use at will. Send a message. Create a record. Read a file. Update a document. Build an article. One pipe, hundreds of tools inside.

"It's like putting a bunch of tiny goblins in a pneumatic tube with sandwiches."

Finding MCPs

Three places to look:

1. Claude's built-in connectors — Go to Settings → Connectors. Browse by name or category. Zoom, Slack, Airtable, GitHub, Uber Eats (apparently), and many more. If it's here, connecting takes two minutes.

2. Smithery.ai — The MCP directory. Over 7,500 connectors. Searchable by tool name. When you find one, check the quality before you trust it: how many tools does it have, how many people use it per month, what's the uptime percentage, does it need a local install?

3. GitHub — Some MCPs live in GitHub repos. Do your due diligence: how many times has this person built MCPs before? Is it well-rated? Is it well-used?

Due Diligence Checklist

Before installing any MCP:

- **Usage** — thousands of tool calls per month means real people trust it
- **Uptime** — anything under 90% is a yellow flag
- **Tool count** — more tools means more things Claude can do
- **Remote vs. local** — remote is easier; local gives you more control but more setup

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SECTION 7: SKILLS AND SLASH COMMANDS

The Hidden Power of /

Inside Claude Code, typing */* reveals a list of skills — small programs that do specific jobs when called.

RJ uses one every day: */wrap-up*. At the end of a working session, it checks everything that was done, updates documentation, logs progress, and makes sure nothing falls through the cracks. One command. The goblins handle the rest.

She also has */bug* — finds a problem, types a description, and it gets logged to her issue tracker automatically. No copying, no pasting, no "wait what was that bug again."

"Creating skills, skills is just a list of things that get done when something happens."

You can create skills for anything that happens repeatedly. Slash commands are reusable, chainable, and they don't care what project you're working on.

SECTION 8: THE N8N JUNCTION

What N8N Is

N8N is the automation engine. It runs processes without you. It triggers things on schedules. It connects apps together in workflows. It's the part of the cave where the hands work while you sleep.

"The room where it happens — without you asking."

RJ's infrastructure check workflow: every five minutes, it pings every service she runs to check if it's alive. If something goes down, she knows before her clients do. This workflow runs constantly, without her touching it, and logs everything to Airtable.

She didn't build it by writing code. She explained to Claude what she needed. Claude asked clarifying questions. Claude built a first version. They refined it until it worked.

What an Execution Is

This is the question that trips everyone up coming from Zapier or Pabbly: what do they actually charge you for?

In N8N: **one full workflow run = one execution.** No matter how many steps are inside. A 30-step workflow that fires once is one execution. A 3-step workflow that fires 1,000 times is 1,000 executions.

Zapier charges per step, per zap, in ways that are genuinely hard to predict. N8N does not.

Pricing

Cloud (hosted by N8N):

- Starter: ~$20/month, 2,500 executions, unlimited steps
- Pro: ~$50/month, 10,000 executions
- Most people starting out: Starter is plenty

Self-hosted:

- Host N8N on your own server (one-click install on most hosts)
- Pay only for the hosting (~$20-25/month)
- Unlimited executions
- RJ's choice — she runs well over 50,000 executions per month

"If you really want to build some cool craziness — get ahold of it."

When You Need N8N

You don't need N8N for everything. You need it when:

- You need to process information automatically
- You need to do math or comparisons without being present
- You need an AI to read, analyze, and respond without you triggering it manually
- You're building a chatbot that needs to answer questions on its own

If you're just building widgets and pages with Claude, you might not need it yet. But you will.

Zapier: The Honest Take

"If you've got stuff on Zapier — try this: say 'I've got some stuff on Zapier. I want to totally transfer it somewhere else.' And it will say, okay, where do you want to put that?"

Zapier is expensive for what it does. N8N does the same things for a fraction of the price, with more flexibility.

SECTION 9: CLOUDFLARE — FREE FROM ZERO TO LIVE

What Cloudflare Is (and Isn't)

Cloudflare is not a website builder. You can't drag and drop there. You build your page somewhere (or with Claude) and you host it there.

What it gives you for free:

- **Static site hosting** — HTML, CSS, JavaScript pages, live on the internet
- **DNS management** — point your domain here, it handles everything
- **SSL certificates** — the https:// that browsers require
- **CDN** — your pages load fast everywhere in the world
- **R2** — object storage for images and files

"I've put my main Black Belt Bots website on there. It is awesome and it is free."

Adding Your Domain

Go to cloudflare.com. Add domain. It imports DNS records automatically. Choose the free plan. That's it.

Worth noting: Cloudflare is not your registrar. You keep your domain wherever you bought it (GoDaddy, Namecheap, Google Domains) — you just update the nameservers to point at Cloudflare. They handle the rest.

Wrangler: The Deploy Tool

Wrangler is Cloudflare's command-line deployment tool. You don't have to understand it. Claude understands it and will run the commands for you through the MCP.

The short version of what happens:

1. You have an HTML file (Claude built it)
2. You tell Claude to deploy it
3. Claude uses Wrangler to push it to Cloudflare's network
4. You get a live URL within seconds

Live Demo: Hermi's Migration

In class today, Hermi moved a website from Wix to Cloudflare live. Here's what happened:

1. RJ pasted Hermi's Wix page URL into Claude
2. Claude read the page and rebuilt it as HTML
3. Claude deployed it using Wrangler through the Cloudflare MCP
4. The URL wasn't showing because the workers.dev subdomain hadn't been activated
5. Claude diagnosed the problem through the MCP, found the missing toggle, and instructed exactly where to click
6. 90 seconds of certificate propagation
7. The Young Mystics Club was live on Cloudflare. Free.

"Let the code talk to the code. That's what the goblins are best at."

The Deeper Point

Every drag-and-drop website builder is a translator between you and HTML. Wix, Squarespace, Webflow — they all take your clicks and convert them into code. The problem is that translator has its own opinion about how things should be organized, and that opinion costs you time and money every month.

With Claude and Cloudflare:

- Claude reads any existing page
- Claude writes the HTML directly
- Claude deploys it
- You say "make the heading bigger" and it just happens

You're no longer working through a translator. The code talks to the code. You're the director.

SECTION 10: HOSTING OPTIONS

Where to Host N8N (and What Happened With Hostinger)

A few weeks ago, RJ's entire infrastructure went down for seven hours on a Sunday. Not her fault. Hostinger's fault. She was on the phone, in chat, being handed off like a library book. Ten days later: no response.

"What does that tell me? That tells me: don't hang out with these people."

RJ's current investigation:

- **Vultr** (like "vulture" but fewer vowels) — one-click N8N install, good reputation
- **Azure** — virtual machine option, more control, "it's your own machine"

Hard no's:

- Hostinger (see above)
- Bluehost, GoDaddy, anything Newfold-owned
- Wix (not a host, but also: no)

Fine if you're happy:

- Bluehost (some class members use it without issues — stay if it's working)

RJ will share exactly where she lands when the migration is complete.