

# Functions

## Content Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, students should be able to:

- Explain the meaning and purpose of a function that does not return a value
- Explain the meaning and purpose of a value returning function
- Recognize a function definition, function header, and function call in a program
- Explain programs that use the same function multiple times

## Process Skill Goals

- Write code that includes function definitions and functions calls
- Write programs that incorporate functions and if/else statements

## Part 1: Functions

- A **function** is a segment of code that performs a single task
- **Functions** allow for code reusability while saving space in your program

Parts of a Function:

- A **function definition** is the segment of code that creates the function and tells the program what to do when the function is called
- The line that has the function definition is known as the **function header**
- A **function call** uses the function name outside of the function to direct Python to the function

```
In [ ]: def printRain(): #Function Definition
        #A function definition creates the function
        #by specifying a function name

        #Whatever the function does is indented just like if statements
        #Function Body
        print(' (                )')
        print(' (                )')
        print(' (_____ )')
        print(' ///////////////')
        print(' /It is Raining/')
        print(' ///////////////')

def main(): #Function Definition

    printRain() #Function Call
    #This directs Python to the function to do whatever
    #the function specifies

main() #Function Call
```

Look at the code above and answer the questions below.

1. What Python **keyword** is used to indicate that a code segment is a **function definition**?
2. What are the two **function headers** in the Python code?

3. The name of the functions are in the ***function headers***. What are the ***function names***?
4. Add the code to a new Python file and run it. What is the output?
5. What line of code would you add to print another cloud?
6. Where would you add the line?

## Part 2: Functions with Arguments

So far we have three parts of a function: function definition, function header, and function call. Now we'll be looking at ***function arguments/parameters***.

***Function arguments/parameters*** allow for variables outside the scope of a function to be used in the function.

Look at the functions below then answer the questions.

```
In [ ]: def FahrenheitToCelsius(tempF): #Function Definition
        #This function calculates the temperature in Celsius
        #given a Fahrenheit temperature
        tempC = (tempF - 32) * 5/9
        print(tempC, "C")

def CelsiusToFahrenheit(tempC): #Function Definition
    #This function calculates the temperature in Fahrenheit
    #given a Celsius temperature
    tempF = tempC*9/5 + 32
    print(tempF, "F")

def main():
    tempF = int(input("Enter a Fahrenheit temperature: "))
    FahrenheitToCelsius(tempF) #Function Call
    tempC = int(input("Enter a Celsius temperature: "))

main()
```

The function call and the function definition for **FahrenheitToCelsius** each include a variable within the parentheses. The variable in the function call is known as an **argument**. The variable in the function definition is called a **parameter**.

7. What is the parameter in the **FahrenheitToCelsius()** function definition?

8. What is the purpose of a parameter?

- Page 5 of 8

13. Create a new function called ***feetToKilometers()*** which takes ***feet*** as a parameter. The conversion from feet to kilometers is  $\text{kilometers} = \text{feet} / 3281$ .
14. Add another line of code in the ***main()*** function that calls the function created in question 13. Paste the line in the textbox below.
15. Try calling the ***feetToKilometers()*** function with no argument. Does it work? If not, what do you need to add to make it work?

## Part 3: Value Returning Functions

Some functions do not send back any information to the line that called the function. This is called a ***void function***. Functions that do send back information are called ***value returning functions***.

Now we have four parts of a function: function definitions, function headers, function calls, and function arguments/parameters. We will be adding one last part, ***function returns***.

```
In [ ]: def kilometersToFeet(km):  
        #add conversion  
        feet = km * 3281  
        return feet  
  
def main():  
    feet_distance = kilometersToFeet()  
  
main()
```

16. What is the new keyword used in the function body?

17. What does this new keyword tell the program to do?

18. What line of code calls the function ***kilometersToFeet()***?

19. What is different about this line compared to previous void function calls?

20. Why is the function call on the right side of an assignment statement?

## Part 4: Write Your Own Function

The best way to learn something is through practice. For this you will be creating a function called ***distanceConversion()*** that can convert between distance units.

***distanceConversion()*** shall:

- have three parameters ***dist*** (int), ***start\_unit*** (str), and ***end\_unit*** (str)
- convert from kilometers to feet
- convert from kilometers to miles
- convert from feet to kilometers
- convert from feet to miles
- convert from miles to kilometers
- convert from miles to feet
- use if/else statements
- return the converted distance, ***end\_value***