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# CMSC 115 Reading Guide

Please enter your responses in red.

# 6.1 What is a file Read

1. What is the difference between a binary and a text file? Text files are human readable files that can be displayed in a text editor or browser, while binary files are all other files that use some other coding scheme beside ASCII and Unicode.

# 6.2 Accessing Files: Reading Text Files Re-read

1. What is a *pipe*? A pipe is a connection between the Python shell and the file residing on the disk and is the file object created when that connection is established.
2. How can a for loop access the lines in a file object? A for loop can iterate through the file contents line by line.

## Section 6.2.1 Reread

1. The original architects of the old Unix operating system choose vocabulary like “streams”, “pipes”, and “buffers” to describe moving bytes between disk, memory, and the program. Do you think they had a background in plumbing that caused these words to seem like the right ones? Have you noticed any other plumbing-related vocabulary in programming? (For example, and I am not making this up, sometimes a *buffer overflow* can result from not *flushing* the *stream* frequently enough.) Sometimes you will hear experienced software engineers are known as plumber programmers.

# 6.3 Accessing Files: Writing Re-read

1. How can you make the print function write to a file instead of to the screen? You can write to a file by using the “w” instead of the “r” value in the open command and can subsequently use the print command to write to the file.

# 6.4 Reading and Writing Text Files Read

# 6.5 File Creation and Overwriting Re-read

f. What is the difference between opening a file for writing where it clears the file and where it appends to the end of the file? The difference is that you can add to the end of the file by using “a” or “a+” to write to the end of the file, while “w” or “w+” will delete the file if it exists and start over.

## Section 6.5.1 Skim