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When I first started learning programming, especially p5.js, my understanding felt small but eager to learn. Back then I only knew the basics, like variables, simple functions, and maybe a loop, but I didn't really fully understand how they all connected or how I could make code that could actually turn creative ideas into something unique. In the beginning, programming felt like a strict language with rules I barely understood, and every error message felt like a reminder of how much I still didn't know. I spent a lot of time confused, wondering why something is not working or why the browser wasn't giving me the result I expected. Now that I look back, the biggest change isn't just the new technical skills I've gained though they definitely matter. The most meaningful shift has been in how I see programming as a creative tool instead of something intimidating or out of reach.

As the semester went on, p5.js started to feel easy to understand. The more I used it, the more everything began to click. I started noticing patterns how functions talk to each other, how objects help organize information, and how the browser visually reacts to the code I write. Instead of trying to memorize every little thing, I learned to pay attention to how the logic flows from line to line and function to function. That shift has been one of the most important parts of my creative growth. Suddenly, code didn't feel separate from art anymore; it felt like another medium I could shape, just like visuals, sounds, or concepts. It stopped being about typing the "right answer" and became more about exploring what's possible.

There are some core ideas I've gotten much more comfortable with variables, functions, drawing shapes, building interactions, and experimenting with movement and randomness. But there are also areas I want to push further, especially when it comes to structuring my projects in a cleaner and more organized way. I want to continue to improve at thinking modularly and writing code that can grow without getting messy. Those challenges became especially obvious during the Art Jam, Mod Jam and the recent Variation Jam projects this semester. I had to rely on everything I'd learned from simple animation to arrays. Arrays were something I'd never fully understood before, but using them to create a variety of win/loss messages finally helped me understand how they store information and how they can be used creatively. It was exciting to finally feel something click that used to confuse me.

Research also became a huge part of my process. Googling examples, reading documentation, and testing different snippets from the p5 reference site helped me understand not just how something works, but why it works. Every little success whether it was getting an interaction to respond correctly or making a shape move exactly how I wanted boosted my confidence and made me want to keep learning. Coding still challenges me, but instead of feeling discouraged, I feel motivated to incorporate these skills into my work and gradually build more complex projects.

Of course, there's still a lot I don't fully understand yet. More complex logic can feel overwhelming, especially when multiple functions or arrays interact in ways that are hard to track. Sometimes one tiny mistake breaks everything, and it takes forever to figure out why but utilizing the developer tools to debug helps a lot. Still I'm learning to slow down and break problems into smaller pieces. One long-term goal I have is to improve at structuring larger projects so they stay organized. I also want to explore sound, data, APIs, and more advanced

algorithms like procedural generation systems that feel challenging but really inspiring. They spark my imagination because of the possible experimental and unique works I could create with. Coding doesn't just let me build visuals; it lets me build systems, and that's one of the most exciting things about continuing in this field.

As I move forward in Computation Arts, I'm excited about how much more I can grow. My understanding of creative coding has shifted from simply trying to "make something work" to thinking about how systems, randomness, aesthetics, and logic all shape an experience. I'm looking forward to exploring more complex techniques, experimenting with data-driven art, and building projects that feel responsive, alive, and expressive. Especially JavaScript coming up later in the winter semester, I'm curious to see how it differs from p5.js and what new creative directions it might open for me.

More than anything, I'm excited to reach a point where I can confidently build larger-scale interactive pieces that truly reflect my artistic vision. There's still so much I don't know, but I finally feel like I'm moving in the right direction. I'm no longer at the very beginning anymore. I'm always constantly learning, exploring, and becoming more confident with every project I come across. Each line of code, each bug I solve, and each creative experiment brings me closer to becoming a better technical and artistic person.