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ENG 311

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Due: 12/13

UnEssay Project Reflection

For my UnEssay project, I decided to make a GUI (generated user interface) application that focused on a make-your-own choice version of the *Beowulf* story. This project had MANY large steps to overcome. First being the main outline of the game. Before designing or programming anything, I needed to choose how many endings to the story there would be, and where the player choices in the story would occur at. This took a great deal of time, perhaps 1/4th of the entire project in just planning. This action gave me a lot of experience on what it would be like to work on a large programming project and just how much work goes into each step. My main outline was eventually re-designed 3-4 times throughout the process to accommodate different things, and I also drew 2 separate story diagrams to aid in this as well.

Once my main outline was set, I got to the point of research and programming. I don’t feel the need to set these steps as two separate things, since they both tend to come hand-in-hand in my experience. There were many functions that I was unfamiliar with since I am not accustomed to creating GUIs, and there were many things that I had to teach myself how to do since they were completely new. Overall, I learned many new things about programming and how large-scale projects are made (I know it’s not big, but for a single person in such a short time frame it was difficult).

Once the main framework for the GUI was built, buttons, button function, textboxes, etc. I had to input the story content and ending content into the programming. This step was less difficult, but it took a lot of time to do, and several hours to format the text to fit correctly. Furthermore, I had to do this step several times over.

Finally, I had to do the testing process. This process took the most time, as I had to run through my program multiple times to check for spelling errors, function errors, and general issues. This took a lot of patience, and I had to redesign things multiple times.

To sum up the technical details, I learned that working on larger projects is not a linear process. There are multiple ways to do things, and multiple ways things can be changed. Changes throughout the process are not only necessary but should be accepted. I learned a lot about both programming and how to develop a storyline.

I think that this project has a large impact on learning about British Literature. While my project did not focus on the informative aspects of British literature, it is a creative way to allow people to learn about the story of *Beowulf and* get a general knowledge about the subject. Games are becoming more and more popular, and I believe that having a story be interactive rather than static is much better for the person learning about it. It also creates a level of intimacy between the player and the story, allowing that player to become a vital part of the story.

Overall, I am extremely happy with the amount of work I got done within the timeframe. If I had more time, I would have done more with the story and added more elements to it. I believe that I put well over 12 hours into this project, just on the application, and I think that it is a great start for my programming career and English development.