Activity: Get help in the command line

Scenario

In this scenario, you have to find more information about commands that you need to use. You also need to discover which command to use to perform a certain task.

Here's how you'll do this task: **First**, you'll explore a few commands you can use in the shell to learn more about other commands. **Next**, you'll find an option you need to add to a command. **Third**, you'll use a command to get a brief description of commands so you can identify their differences. **Finally**, you'll identify the command you need to perform a task.

Task 1. Learn more about commands

1. Run the **whatis** command to get a short description of cat.

```
analyst@ad8d930088ef:~$ whatis cat
cat (1)                 - concatenate files and print on the standard output
```

2. Use the **man** command to get more details about cat.

```
analyst@ad8d930088ef:~$ man cat
CAT(1)                          User Commands                          CAT(1)

NAME
       cat - concatenate files and print on the standard output

SYNOPSIS
       cat [OPTION]... [FILE]...

DESCRIPTION
       Concatenate FILE(s) to standard output.

       With no FILE, or when FILE is -, read standard input.

       -A, --show-all
              equivalent to -vET

       -b, --number-nonblank
              number nonempty output lines, overrides -n

       -e     equivalent to -vE

       -E, --show-ends
              display $ at end of each line

       -n, --number
              number all output lines

       -s, --squeeze-blank
              suppress repeated empty output lines

       -t     equivalent to -vT

       -T, --show-tabs
              display TAB characters as ^I

       -u     (ignored)

       -v, --show-nonprinting
              use ^ and M- notation, except for LFD and TAB

       --help display this help and exit

       --version
              output version information and exit
```

3. Press **Q** to exit this manual page.

Now, imagine you've remembered there's a command that prints just the first part of a file, but you can't remember the exact command. The apropos command is useful in these instances. You can use keywords with apropos to find a command.

4. Use **apropos** to find a command that returns the first part of a file:

```
analyst@ad8d930088ef:~$ apropos -a first part file
head (1)                  - output the first part of files
```

Task 2. Explore the useradd command

1. Use the most appropriate Linux command to get help on the **useradd** command and learn more about all of its options.

```
analyst@ad8d930088ef:~$ man useradd
USERADD(8)                     System Management Commands                     USERADD(8)

NAME
       useradd - create a new user or update default new user information

SYNOPSIS
       useradd [options] LOGIN

       useradd -D

       useradd -D [options]

DESCRIPTION
       useradd is a low level utility for adding users. On Debian, administrators
       should usually use adduser(8) instead.

       When invoked without the -D option, the useradd command creates a new user
       account using the values specified on the command line plus the default
       values from the system. Depending on command line options, the useradd
       command will update system files and may also create the new user's home
       directory and copy initial files.

       By default, a group will also be created for the new user (see -g, -N, -U,
       and USERGROUPS_ENAB).

OPTIONS
       The options which apply to the useradd command are:

       -b, --base-dir BASE_DIR
           The default base directory for the system if -d HOME_DIR is not
           specified.  BASE_DIR is concatenated with the account name to define the
           home directory. If the -m option is not used, BASE_DIR must exist.

           If this option is not specified, useradd will use the base directory
           specified by the HOME variable in /etc/default/useradd, or /home by
           default.

       -c, --comment COMMENT
           Any text string. It is generally a short description of the login, and is
           currently used as the field for the user's full name.

       -d, --home-dir HOME_DIR
           The new user will be created using HOME_DIR as the value for the user's
           login directory. The default is to append the LOGIN name to BASE_DIR and
           use that as the login directory name. The directory HOME_DIR does not
           have to exist but will not be created if it is missing.
```

2. Press **Q** to exit this manual page.

Task 3. Explore the rm and rmdir commands

- Use the most appropriate Linux command to quickly remind yourself what each command does.

```
analyst@ad8d930088ef:~$ man rmdir
```

```
analyst@ad8d930088ef:~$ whatis rm
rm (1)                  - remove files or directories
analyst@ad8d930088ef:~$ whatis rmdir
rmdir (1)               - remove empty directories
rmdir (2)               - delete a directory
```

Task 4. Determine which command to use

In this task, imagine that you need to create a new group but you can't remember what command to use. You need to identify a command that will do this by searching for it through keywords. In this case, use the keywords **create new group**.

- Use the most appropriate Linux command with these keywords to identify what command to use.

```
analyst@ad8d930088ef:~$ apropos -a create new group
groupadd (8)            - create a new group
```