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CS 1210 Metacognition Essay #1

Prompt: Imagination

Learning computer science has really helped develop my problem-solving skills. When I think back to the beginning of the semester, I had a harder time conceptualizing how to approach homework problems or lab assignments. I have previously learned Python in high school, so the problem for me wasn’t necessarily syntax or specific coding concepts like loops, booleans, etc., but rather how do I efficiently approach a given problem with knowledge of Python that I have. Now, about halfway through the semester, I have become way better at this. When I read a lab or homework problem my brain now just knows how to break the problem down into segments, and how to “translate” those segments into Python syntax. In doing this, I have a broad idea of how I’m going to tackle the problem before I’ve actually written any code. The best example of this for me is out turtle labs, labs three and seven. I struggled with lab three, specifically the last exercise of drawing the star. I didn’t really think about what exactly needed to be done (when to turn, by how much, how many times to do so, etc.) and it took me nearly the entire period to get it done. Last week in lab seven, however, I was able to, in my head, break down each function I needed to define into steps and only thought about one step at a time. In doing this, I was able to breeze through the lab and help others sitting around me understand my thought process and how to get turtle to do what you want it to. I think that part is the most beneficial for learning, when you are able to explain to someone else how you approached a problem and help them through it as well.