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CART 263 A
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Getting There but Assistance is Needed:
A Reflective Essay on my Past, Present and Potential Future Relationship to Programming

At the beginning of this course the only previous knowledge I had on programming was from the semester prior where I learned the basics of JavaScript. I finished that class with knowledge of how to program basic shapes and movements with interesting interactions I could have with these shapes. I felt my strongest points were making beginning and ending scenes as well as using object-oriented programming. However, I struggled a lot with understanding arrays and parameters to clean up my code and make it a lot easier to work with. Thus, going into this course and continuing with my JavaScript knowledge, I feel like I was still just as fresh to all the information. I did remember how to start out programs with the basics as well as had an easier time when I could see that I would be using object-oriented programming, but I still needed guidance from my professor and TA. I am really grateful for all the help I did get in this class because it has been the biggest reason why I enjoyed the class so much. Therefore, while I feel like I was in a way just as lost with JavaScript as last semester, I grasped onto new concepts easier this semester like voice recognition with Pippin's example of "Variables in Commands" on the p5.js Web Editor. This is because last semester taught me the basics so that when I read his code, I knew what elements of code I wanted to use in mine, to give myself a base to work from.

I enjoyed each lesson and I feel like I learned a lot of possibilities that JavaScript has when it comes to different libraries. I truly enjoyed the Phaser 3 library the most, specifically because it allowed me to use my skills with object-oriented programming. I feel like for me my personal approach to creativity for now is to be able to create programs that reflect concepts and less physical events. By having my programs reflect concepts that I am facing, they allow me to put my feelings into visuals that I can best describe how I am facing these concepts. I have always loved creating analogies and then turning those analogies into physical art pieces, so I want to continue my form of art with a more digitized method such as programming. Phaser 3 has really helped me create all these concepts into a program because I can include endings which are a lot easier with Phaser 3 to just call a new class instead of using vignettes to change the class like I did last year for my final project. But because vignettes in p5 work the same way as Phaser 3 class changes, it was familiar to me. I am a lot more comfortable with object-oriented programming because I used that model for my "Project 2" in CART 253 last semester, which gave me the upperhand to be able to look at that code and understand how to use functions and call functions within a class for my final project that is a formal version of my "Game Engine Jam" prototype. I do struggle a lot with arrays and parameters still, for example in my final project in CART 263 I was told to use parameters in order to not repeat code on the movement of my coyote and sheep. I was advised to have one animation with general variables so that I can set values for those variables for the coyote and sheep separately. While I find myself now knowing when I should be using arrays and parameters, I do not feel like I know how to write them and for them to work without assistance. Therefore, I feel like I am definitely seeing an improvement within myself which will help with my more conceptual programs, but I definitely still need guidance and a lot of assistance to truly make my code work.

At the moment I do not truly have a big idea that I am interested in exploring in my future because a part of me has gotten a little insecure with my ability to become a videogame designer since I am in a classroom full of students all wanting to become video game designers with a lot more experience than me. But I know that as long as I keep trying I can become just as good as the students around me and be just as qualified as they are in the future. Which is why for now my big idea that I would like to explore is to find more classes within Concordia University that continue my knowledge with JavaScript so that I can feel a lot more confident programming on my own. I also hope to at one point do an internship of sorts that would involve programming so that I can have more working experience with JavaScript. However, I would need to further look into internships for Computation Arts Specialization. I feel that with my knowledge of the basics in JavaScript and more working practice, I can produce more of my type of art showcased in different ways as I branch off from basic p5.js to more complex libraries. Hopefully if I do become successful in an internship I am in, perhaps I would even be able to find myself a job. Therefore, it is important for me to keep finding programming courses at Concordia as well as practice making new programs over the summer and teach myself DOM through the videos provided to improve on my knowledge already.