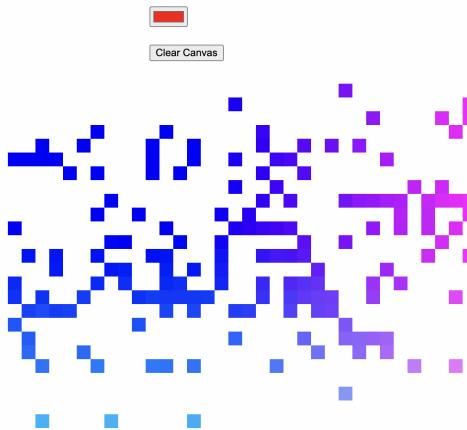


Post Reflection Essay
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At the start of my journey in CART 215, I felt as if I was not going to fit into this class because of my lack of coding skills. In high school I was in two coding classes, introduction to computer science software, for grades 11 and 12. These classes helped me to learn the basics of Java, but I didn't have enough knowledge to make anything impressive. At first I enjoyed software and learning Java because it felt easy, but as more and more was taught every day I started to feel overwhelmed by just how much a person can do to solve the same problem or create something. It felt like every day I was learning something brand new that had no correlation to my previous topics. In this course, the progression was the same, I felt like it was easy to learn these new ways of writing javascript with p5, so I didn't commit as much effort as I should have because I thought it was going to be similar to the java I learned in highschool. This made me fall behind in the start, and comparing my works to others I always felt like mine was lackluster.



First Project: Art Jam

As the term progressed, I started to understand this form of coding, making sure that I followed the guidelines and to heavily emphasize my own creativity in my projects. When I created the Mod Jam, I felt as if my time had been invested wisely, because this game works and had my own unique mark on it, unlike any other game because of how bizarre it became. My hardest challenges were getting over that threshold of creative limiting, because in the past I tried my best to follow all the instructions and do whatever the teacher would tell me to do in order to get the best mark, but here I feel I can grasp a bit more freedom when it comes to projects and having the ability to make what I want to make and being rewarded for that creativity. My knowledge of p5 has improved over the term due to my professor's teachings, and from me just experimenting and researching with the p5 library. Having this knowledge that I can create

whatever I want with enough time and effort, putting my imagination to reality with this more artistic java, p5, makes my thoughts run free and think of things I could make and what I should try to achieve and how to achieve it, etc. I think having known Java beforehand allowed me to surpass the coding expectations set for me, making the classes seem a little less informative, but learning on my own helped me to understand and go beyond what was taught in class and piece together a better understanding of what p5 can offer. As an artist who can code, my realm of possibilities and potential seems a little bit bigger because of this ability to create shapes and colours and animations out of nothing but numbers and words. This digital realm of art has so many possibilities like being able to have the observers interact with your creations and feel more immersed emotions. Continuing on my journey and currently working on the Variation Jam, I think I am a lot more confident in using my coding skills for creative purposes.



Final Project: Variation Jam, No.2

Looking forward, I feel a lot closer to becoming a creative coder or something of that style, not only from this class but because I realized while working on these projects, just how much I like designing what will be included and seeing those designs function like I intended them to. My technical knowledge has improved because now I can confidently remember that for-loops are to repeat certain elements and if statements are to introduce choices and randomness to your projects. I feel that I no longer look at coding as a technical process anymore, I see it in a new light, a creative one, one where I can add my design and taste to what I do and make it more or less complex to fit the ideas I have in my mind. An example of making it more complex to my taste, would be, using conditionals in my games to create an immersive environment that allows the user to make their own decisions of what's to happen. I'm also finding that my creativity has become more free, I can think of 20 different things and it doesn't matter which one I go with because they all seem so good to me. Whereas before I felt as if I had to follow the best path and stick to the rules set down by the institution and teachers. Challenges like debugging or

understanding complex interactions between different elements of my code used to discourage me, but now they feel like opportunities to me, ones where I can refine and tweak my ideas so that it fits with what I have got. Sometimes those ideas that I develop when tweaking and refining, end up fitting better to my theme and feel like an overall better creative approach than the one I was attempting to go after. One area I am still trying to improve on is making my coding structure efficient. As I keep building more and more complex projects, I want them to look cleaner and more optimized because I have been having harder times finding where is where due to this lack of organization. I want to learn a lot more about abstraction and how to create modular code that's easier to maintain and expand. This could help a lot for future projects and games. Looking in the future, I am excited to continue learning more and more about the coding world, while implementing my own digital creative touches. One of my favourite things about evolving technology right now is AI generative art, because I just can't understand how algorithms can produce such visually stunning works. In my Variation Jam project I used only GenAI art because of its free licensing and because of how, after a few attempts, you can actually get some very nice images that suit almost the exact look you were aiming for.



Gen AI from Pixlr

In conclusion, I now see coding as both a technical skill and an artistic medium in its own way. It's no longer just about getting the program to work and following instructions exactly, it's now about creating experiences, telling stories, and making something that everyone can connect with in its own unique, digital way. As I continue to grow as an artist who codes, I am eager to see where I will end up with these skills and what future projects await me.