Reflection Essay: The Meaning of Meno

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In Plato's Meno, the central question is how we come to know what we know and how we realize that we need to keep learning. Socrates helps Meno see that knowledge is not just about memorizing facts but about realizing when we don't know something and seeking out the answer. This idea of learning through questioning and discovery is something I found true in my experience with the Game Programming with Python course during my first year. In this essay, I will reflect on the lessons I learned from this course, the challenges I faced, how I knew I was learning something new, and what I still need to learn.

What I Learned Through the Theme of My Year One Course, Game Programming with Python

In the Game Programming with Python course, I learned how to write code using Python, starting with the basics of programming. One of the key things I learned was how to create a simple "Number Guesser" game. Through this, I learned about variables, loops, conditionals, and functions—each of which is important for building a program. At first, I didn't understand how all these pieces worked together, but as the course progressed, I began to see how each part of the program fit into the bigger picture.

Another important lesson was learning to use Google Colab, which allowed me to write and run Python code online. This was a useful tool for me because it helped me focus on writing and testing my code without needing to worry about setting up a development environment. While I was learning Python, I also realized that programming is not just about writing code, but about solving problems. Programming requires logical thinking and breaking down tasks into smaller steps, something that was new and exciting for me.

When I Experienced Growing Pains in Learning Something New

Learning something new often comes with challenges, and I experienced these "growing pains" in both reading Meno and learning Python. In Meno, Socrates helps Meno realize that there are many things he doesn't know. This reminds me of my experience in the Python course, especially when I first started learning programming. At the beginning, I didn't know how to approach coding, and I often felt stuck or confused. For example, when trying to build the "Number Guesser" game, I ran into

many problems that I couldn't immediately fix. I would get error messages that didn't make sense, or the game wouldn't work as expected.

I remember feeling frustrated and wondering if I was capable of learning how to code. This was like Meno's experience, where he realized that he had more to learn. However, these frustrations were also important because they showed me that I needed to slow down and really understand the concepts before moving forward. Each time I faced a challenge and worked through it, I realized I was growing, even though it was uncomfortable at the time.

How I Knew That I Learned Something New
I realized that I was learning something new when I was able to fix my code on my own. At the start, I had to follow every step in the instructions carefully and often needed help when I made mistakes. But as I worked on the game, I started to understand how different parts of the code worked together. I could identify problems in my code and fix them without needing help, which made me feel more confident in my abilities.

A clear moment when I knew I had learned something was when I added new features to the "Number Guesser" game. For example, I changed the game so that it would ask the player if they wanted to play again after guessing the number. Being able to modify the code on my own showed me that I understood the logic behind it, not just the steps I was following. This was a sign that I had moved from memorizing instructions to really understanding how the program worked.

What Learning I Have Left to Do About Game Programming with Python
While I've learned the basics of Python, I know there's still a lot more to explore. For example, I want to learn about object-oriented programming (OOP), which would allow me to write more complex programs. In OOP, I would learn how to create classes and objects, which are helpful for organizing large programs. Right now, I still feel limited by what I know, and I am eager to learn more advanced concepts.

Another area where I know I have room for growth is in debugging. Although I can fix simple errors, I still struggle with more complicated bugs. Sometimes when my program doesn't work, I don't know where to begin troubleshooting. This shows me that I need to improve my problem-solving skills and become more comfortable finding and fixing issues on my own.

How I Would Know That I Still Have Something to Learn
I would know that I still have something to learn when I encounter challenges that I don't know how to solve. For example, when I try to work on a more complex project or use an advanced feature of Python that I haven't learned yet, I might get stuck. These moments will remind me that I don't have all the knowledge I need and that there is still

more to discover. Also, when I find myself looking up solutions online or asking for help more often, it's a sign that I need to keep learning.

In many ways, this is like how Meno realizes that he has more to learn about virtue. Just like him, I can recognize when I don't have enough knowledge to move forward, and that's when I need to keep pushing myself to learn. Every challenge and every moment when I don't know how to solve a problem tells me that I still have something to learn.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my experience in the Game Programming with Python course has taught me that learning is not just about gaining knowledge, but about recognizing when I don't know something and working to fill that gap. I've made progress in learning Python, but I know there's still much more for me to discover. As I continue practicing and facing new challenges, I will keep learning and improving my programming skills. Just like in Meno, the process of learning is never complete, and I'm excited to continue my journey of discovery.