

## REL A 275: Book of Mormon Project Executive Summary

**Your Name:** Dane Morgan

**Project Title:** Book of Mormon Word Frequency Analysis

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### 1. Project Summary Paragraph

I've often heard that certain words are mentioned more or less in the Book of Mormon, I always thought that the people telling certain numbers were making up these statistics. My project is a program that goes through the text of the Book of Mormon and returns the most frequent words. Additionally, my algorithm can go through and find all occurrences of lists of words and will return how many times each word was used in each Book of Scripture. For example, my algorithm found all references to Jesus Christ and returned how many of those references are in each of the books in the Book of Mormon.

### 2. Which REL A 275 Online course unit(s) did your project relate to?

#### 2.2 Finding Patterns

Under the “Patterns” section, Elder Bednar defined a pattern as “a plan, model, or standard that can be used as a guide for repetitively doing or making something.” My project relates to Elder Bednar’s definition of pattern perfectly – I designed my algorithms to effectively find the words that are repeatedly used in the Book of Mormon and sort them based on their frequency.

#### 3.1 Exegetical Methods

Brother Belnap taught various critical approaches we can use to criticize or evaluate the scriptures. From the approaches Brother Belnap presented, my algorithm likely applies most to *source criticism* of the Book of Mormon. To evaluate the Book of Mormon further, different versions of the Book of Mormon could be run through my algorithm to compare word frequency and usage.

### 3. How did your project help demonstrate each of the following four outcomes?

#### 1. Factual: Know key people, places, events, contexts, revelations, and doctrines related to the Book of Mormon.

My project is based on the actual text in the Book of Mormon, it takes a literally count of each word and analyses it. While my algorithm doesn’t consider the events and context relating to the words in the Book of Mormon, my algorithm takes into account the words that the translators and authors of the Book of Mormon wrote – this helps to understand the overarching themes and doctrines of the Book of Mormon.

#### 2. Conceptual: Analyze and evaluate the validity and reliability of historical and doctrinal source material.

To help me complete my code and tune my algorithm, all outside sources I used were technical guides and programming references, I did not need to use historical or doctrinal references. Each

programming reference listed below is up-to-date, valid, and reliable. APA references listed below:

#### References

Matplotlib Organization. *Pyplot Summary*. n.d. 1 April 2019.

PyPi. *json - JSON encoder and decoder*. 10 April 2019. 10 April 2019.

—. *PipEnv: Python Dev Workflow for Humans*. 26 November 2018. 10 February 2019.

### **3. Spiritual: Learn “by study and also by faith” how to develop greater faith in Jesus Christ through the teachings and doctrines of the Book of Mormon.**

Being able to apply something that I am passionate about, like programming, to the scriptures was great. The Brethren frequently urge us to use technology further the work of the Lord – it was neat and faith-building to be able to follow their guidance and produce something unique and faith-building.

### **4. Application: Connect foundational truths discovered in the Book of Mormon with your efforts to produce something meaningful and relevant to you.**

Again, this was a great chance for me to combine programming with something spiritual, I've never had the chance to do this before. Finding out that the most frequently used word is “god” with 1656 occurrences, then “lord” with 1641 occurrences. Discovering this was meaningful to me and strengthened my testimony of the Book of Mormon as a testament of Christ and God.

### **4. What did you learn about the Book of Mormon while completing this project?**

As previously mentioned, finding out that the most frequently used word is “god” with 1656 occurrences, then “lord” with 1641 occurrences were both new! Additionally, I thought that seeing how often Christ is referenced in each book within the Book of Mormon to be super interesting: Alma has 1454 references, 2 Nephi has 751 references, and Mosiah has 635 references.

### **5. What did you learn about yourself while completing this project?**

I think that I can find joy in applying my technical abilities to the work of the Lord. As I previously mentioned, completing this project showed me that following the advice of the Brethren to use technology to further the work of the Lord can be a joy and a blessing.