WEB 125 – Lesson 6

 Describe your design choices in the context of responsiveness as well as your experience using responsive design.

I feel like I am becoming more comfortable within a responsive design framework. Media queries are fairly straightforward, but I did have to deal with a few issues of inheritance and problem solving for ways to minimize the amount of code to accomplish my design goals. I still haven’t gotten that last part down yet, but I have had the opportunity with this project to see just how much designing from a “mobile-first” strategy can potentially lead to its own sort-of code overload. Using a combination of max-width and min-width queries was a conscious decision to see if it could bring my code size down or if it could give me better control over my design. Since I also consciously decided to keep the page at the barest minimum for this assignment, it is hard to determine how this would play out for larger sites. I did start my design without the use of a <div> block, but ultimately decided they are the bees knees for responsive design, so that made quick work of things.

As for other elements, I made one of my main links inside an inline element larger for mobile devices so it was an easier target to hit (fat-fingers). I also made the links in my list look more like buttons for better visibility on a mobile device. I kept that style intact even when I re-aligned the page for larger viewports up to XL tablet types since most of those devices would most likely still be touchscreen. I did my final break at 1000px because that’s about where smaller netbooks with the use of cursors start to come into play and it also made sense visually. A user on a non-touch device is going to be more accustomed to seeing links that look like traditional links, so I returned the <li> styles to their more standard appearance. I tried to ensure there was decent line spacing to improve readability in the text heavy portions without being overly large. I like a narrower typeface. I also tried to make sure to make good use of margins and padding to account for visual appeal as well as account for how a user on a touch device might interact with the space without wasting space because space is at a premium on those devices as well.

Addendum #1: I decided to run a check on Safari and IE, two browsers I am notoriously bad about checking, and discovered that my margin values had not been inherited. I had to spend more time than I care to have spent reworking my HTML and my CSS to get these elements to respond properly without compromising the design in Firefox, Chrome, and Edge. Interestingly enough, I ran my responsive simulations with various mobile devices in Chrome and they were fine. It was just browser issues.

Addendum #2: I originally wrote my code using a float for the responsive elements but decided to go back and write it in a flexbox, so I could gain more experience using that technique. Once again, I ran into issues with Safari. This time around I ran into a few articles stating that testing Safari on a PC was a waste of time because it did not render properly, so trying to fix an issue might ultimately create bigger problems. I opted to leave the flex box code in place.