Week 1 Reflection

This week the course material was easy to comprehend and get a handle on. Coming from a C++/JavaScript background there are a couple things that I’m already a bit lost on mostly dealing with syntax and structure of Java. I posted some of the questions in the discussion board the other day, but haven’t seen a response. My questions are:

1. For those that have experience with other languages, I can piece together that "methods" in Java are analogous to functions in other languages (C++, JavaScript,etc.) and I know classes exist in C++ and Java but is there role in Java expanded? I remember in the C++ classes I've taken classes (at least at the beginning) were largely optional, whereas in Java it's said by the book that they are required.
2. Is the variable type/parameter given in the examples only needed to declare the return value variable type? (ie. much like in C++ one would declare a function like this:
   1. int function(var1)  
      return var1 \* 8;

I’m sure we’ll get to those answers in time but just to increase my own understanding by relating to concepts that I’m already familiar, I would find answers to these question quite helpful.

Other than that, the only other difficulty I’ve had is just the standard beginning-of-the-semester disorientation and shuffle to try and find/get the rhythm of each of my classes together.