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Assessment: Designing an online activity

This online activity is address to complete beginners, with no previous knowledge in coding. The goal is for them to get a feel of programming in a short and easy way. The online activity could be open to all freshers, and help curious students decide if they want to undertake a programming module.

The online activity is designed to incite students to play around with code in a safe environment, without pressure from peers or the teacher. They are given simple tools in the video, and then left to explore freely. A quiz is also available to encourage and guide further exploration. For example, in the tutorial video, it is stated that a space is automatically created when multiple variables are printed at once. Later, a plus sign is used in a difference context to print two texts, without a space separating them. The student can therefore explore the combination of both in his/her own time. If the student did not have this idea, it will be asked of him/her in the quiz. If he/she did, he/she will feel smart about knowing the answer through his/her own discovery. It is always more rewarding, stimulating and memorable if the student learns through testing and exploration rather than being told what to do.

Although Panopto probably has a very good video system, I decided to upload my online activity onto GitHub. Indeed, I would like to teach bioinformatics and I believe it is better for my students to get use to GitHub from the beginning. GitHub is commonly utilised to collaborate privately on group projects, but also publicly to share code and resources all over the world. It is also a good way for my students to learn the conventions of how files are organised in repositories.

The online activity can be accessed via the link below (no need to create an account):

https://github.com/madeleine-murray/IntroductionToPython