Learning the Foundations of JavaScript

For those of you who don’t already know, JavaScript is a very powerful and useful programming language. Because it is an object-oriented programming language, it allows its users to create dynamic and complex content on web pages that other programming languages couldn’t. A part of what makes JavaScript so powerful and easy to use is its vast collection of API’s, or Application Programming Interfaces. These interfaces contain pre-written code that allows users to perform many useful and convenient tasks. These are just a few of the cool facts that I’ve learned from my first time working with JavaScript.

After familiarizing myself with the inner workings of JavaScript, I realized the similarities it has to regular Java programming. Java is also object-oriented and it includes a vast API library as well. Even compared to the other programming languages I have learned, such as C, C++, Python, and a few others, JavaScript basically writes very similar to these. For example, the syntax for making a for-loop in JavaScript is the same as in C++ and Java. The main thing that separates JavaScript from Java is that Java is a programming language, whereas JavaScript is a scripting language. What I like about JavaScript being a scripting language is that it does not have to be compiled to be run. This makes writing code in JavaScript much easier because it just has to be interpreted by a web browser when it is run.

My initial introduction to JavaScript was through a series of basic JavaScript exercises at *www.CodeCamp.com.* These exercises proved to be relatively easy, but time consuming. They helped me to learn the basics of JavaScript syntax and build a solid foundation for my continued learning. The biggest change for me when learning JavaScript compared to other programming languages was the use of ‘let’ and ‘const’ to declare variables instead of ‘int’, ‘var’ ‘double’, etc. But after getting used to this new style of variable declaration, I started to get the hang of coding in JavaScript. My favorite thing about learning JavaScript so far has been the timed coding challenges that I have been given in my Software Engineering class. I feel like these challenges are a good way to test my knowledge of coding and to force me to get better at it. Anyone can do good on a coding assignment out of class, but doing well on a timed coding assignment in class really proves how good you actually are at coding. The pressure to complete the coding assignment fast and without error is good practice for future job interviews in which you might be asked to write code on the spot.

Overall, I am having a great time learning JavaScript so far. The familiarity of it and the vast amount of possible implementations that it provides is what makes it such a fun language to learn. The practice coding projects given to me in my Software Engineering class are also very useful to learning JavaScript and preparing myself to write code for the newly learned implementations. As I continue to learn JavaScript, I hope to better take advantage of its API collection to discover new and interesting uses for JavaScript.