Introduction to Programming/ Week 6: Documenting your program / Documentation

Documentation

A related concept to commenting is documentation. While comments are for people viewing your code, documentation is written for users of it.

In IDLE, navigate to the Python shell (i.e. not the interface for writing a program). Here, enter help(float). You should see the documentation for float. (You might like to read about float. You might also like to try running help() on some other objects you have encountered.)

You can add documentation to your script. Copy the following code into a blank Python file in IDLE and save it as 'hello.py'. Now run the file to get it active in the shell window. Now type import hello followed by help (hello). You should find yourself looking at a documentation output for this script.

```
"""
A simple script.
When run, it simply prints out "Hello World!"
"""
print("Hello World!")
```

Notice that the relevant documentation for this script is contained in the string at the top of the file contained between three double quote marks ("""). This is called a string literal and it differs from a string in that unescaped new lines and quotes are allowed, except that three unescaped double quotes in a row terminates the string literal.

Try to write and view some documentation for another program you have

Peter Rowlett 1

written in this module.

As well as documentation for whole scripts (programs), you can add documentation to functions and objects, which we haven't met yet.

Peter Rowlett 2