Final Project Script Four Reflection

The requirement for this final script was to create a simple pattern search script. This assignment emphasizes the importance of regular expressions and their utility for searching, replacing, and managing large volumes of textual data.

The concept of regular expressions was completely new to me during this course and it took me awhile to determine their significance in scripting and programming in general. Originally, I thought regular expressions were techniques to manipulate normal scripting expressions - taking the “regular expression” term literally – and simplifying them to more readable code. Now I see, however, that regular expressions can be applied to extracting data within a text to reformat it more efficiently, which is important when it comes to managing large, and a variety of data.

The syntax used to implement regular expressions is quite nebulous, in my opinion, because it relies on abbreviated characters within quotes and non-specific termination sequences contained in strings. For example, in this assignment, when the *findall(..)* is called, it is passed in the argument *(r’\W’, lorem\_ipsum)*. In Python, this is a legitimate regular expression argument, but in other programming languages, it is unclear if that is passing a char type or another variable. Therefore, I spent much more time learning and researching exactly how to apply the syntax of regular expressions in order to use the accurately. Due to the fact I was new to regular expressions in this assignment, many of my errors came from syntax errors. An example of this is when I received an error when I typed *re.findall(r’sit-amet or sit:amet’, lorem\_ipsum)*. After further research, I needed to change it to *re.findall(r’sit-amet|sit:amet’, lorem\_ipsum)*. Once I corrected that error, the program worked, and this artifact was complete.