PA 4 Reflection Essay

My biggest problems with this assignment was understanding the starter code, and reading/writing the tree to the file. The starter code was probably confusing to me because I didn’t go to class. But after some time of using the debugger to go step by step, I was able to mostly figure it out. The reading/writing the tree to the file was difficult though because my tree recursion is rusty and I wasn’t sure how to recursively setup each stages children before moving on. Usually when I have done trees I do depth search to create the tree. Eventually though I was able to figure it out.

The rest of the assignment seemed pretty straight forward. Although I did have an issue with trying to use the bigger excel files. It won’t generate the tree for what seems like files bigger than 1000. It says that the maximum recursion depth was exceeded. I looked it up online and it said you can increase it, but every time I attempted to increase it, it didn’t work. I set it to 40000 and it still said recursion exceeded. I was wondering if I should have set this even higher, or just limit the size of the file. But as far as I know python is used for big data problems, so maybe efficiency of the tree builder is the issue?

The only things I can suggest to improve the assignment in the future is to allow the student to write the tree to the file in the order they want. As long as the file will create the same tree. Although I’m glad I had to use a different method for traversing than I am used to, I could see that being a problem if the student is unable to figure out a way to traverse and loses points due to the exact storing method of the tree, rather than the tree serving its purpose.

Some advice I’d give to a future student is to make sure you start early, and go to office hours for whatever you don’t understand. Also go step by step in the debugger to see whats going on.