Chris, I really like your point about the fact that in our industry, there are many ways to “skin a cat” when writing code. As you know, you cannot learn programming by watching an instructor at the front of the class. You need to actually write the code yourself and experiment. By giving these informal assessments, it allows the student to experiment and spend more time using the trial and error approach when learning a new topic, without fear of negatively affecting their final grade. It also allows us as instructors to provide constant feedback, which specifically tells them what they are doing right or wrong. I know when I am writing code, I sometimes have certain ideas in my head of what may or may not work or what may be the best way to approach something, and it is nice to have someone provide feedback and assurance to me throughout the process.