Small Group Report Katy, Sheri, Donna

Reflection #1

Question 1 - What were the elements of programming that you learned in your FOP course?

When we started the Fundamentals of Programming (FOP) course, we used the program Scratch. Scratch is very easy to get into and learn how to use. In Scratch, we used block-style coding to make different animations and games. Scratch is very colorful and eye catching which makes it easier for the teacher and students to learn how coding works. While using Scratch we wrote different programs such as; a nursery rhyme, a game, and we told a story. We concentrated on animations and making the Sprites interact with one another. Scratch also has several help tutorials on YouTube if you need help understanding the functions you are trying to use or really anything else you may want to learn about Scratch. After wrapping up the Scratch unit, we switched to Python. We had very little experience with python before this class. Python, at first was similar to Scratch, we just had to type the program where Scratch would use clicking and dragging the command into place. We started out with basic calculations, which then progressed to get more complicated. We learned about variables, Boolean operations, loops, and creating functions. That part of learning Python was much like the Scratch unit we just completed. We felt like looping was more difficult to gain an easy understanding of. After learning basic Python, we learned about Input and Output with CSV files which are files of data in a big list or Excel file. We worked with Lists and Dictionaries last. The concepts are fairly easy to grasp, but we felt like the programming was hard. It seemed easy to understand while watching the lecture videos, but when we started to write the program, taking the information learned from the lecture to Python to write the program is where there was some disconnect. It seemed like more check points throughout the program were needed because if there was an error and the program didn’t run successfully it was difficult finding the error and AutoLab did not always give detailed feedback where to look to find the error. If we had to choose between Scratch and Python in our classrooms we would definitely use Scratch because it was easier to understand the ins and outs of it and we believe the learning curve is smaller in Scratch than it is in Python.