

CS 4100, Spring 2012
Assignment 2
Tools, Languages, and Their Effects
Due February 20, 2012

Read chapters 0 and 1 of *MacLennan*. At the end of Chapter 1, in §1.4, MacLennan abstracts one of the levels of meaning that has been implicit in the reading: the interpretation of a programming language as a tool, with ampliative and reductive effects similar to other tools, and the psychological effects the various aspects of tools usage may have on their users.

Think about these aspects of tools. Read and think about Exercises 1-47 through 1-52 beginning on page 35. Then compose and write a short essay in response to one of these exercises. If you choose Exercise 1-47, please limit your consideration to **one** common tool, rather than the several suggested in the textbook, so your essay does not become too long.

Style

In the upper right corner of the first page of your paper state your name, the class name, the assignment number and assignment due date. Your essay need not be titled, but if it is, it should be rendered in a larger font than the body of the paper. Following the title, quote the exercise that you are responding to in italics, with an attribution.

In the essays for this class I will be looking primarily for interesting (and correct!) content, presented in a clearly structured and organized way. I appreciate interesting use of language and style, but those are secondary to having something to say and saying it clearly, compellingly, and concisely. Length for its own sake, and its cousin wordiness, are negatives in this class and in scientific writing in general.

Your Name
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Optional Title Here

Amplificatory extrapolation often reflect our “imagination and desires” for our projects. What do you think are typical “imagination and desires” of programmers? What sort of “trajectories of extrapolation” might they lead to?

--MacLennan, page 35

Essay starts here...