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Reflective Paper

Over the past several weeks, I worked with multiple people. Some weeks I had to fill in for another person but for about 3 to 4 sessions I worked with our main student, Frances. Frances is a wonderful person and she was very interested and excited to be working with us. She told us that she had a vision problem called macular degeneration and she would need a special program to see the monitor clearly. We said that it would not be a problem and began working with her.

The first thing that we had to do was work with a program called ZoomText. It magnified the screen so that Frances was able to see everything clearly. Once we found a comfortable magnification for her, we began working on basic skills such as clicking and dragging icons around the screen. We found a few games for her that would build these skills. She began to learn fairly quickly and each time we went back we would teach her something new. We taught her how to access different programs on the computer such as Microsoft Word, ZoomText and Internet Explorer.

Once we arrived at the internet, I believe it changed her whole experience. I believe it changed her experience because everyone uses the internet every day and it is one of the ways that the world functions. The first thing we explained to her was Google. We started with this because it would allow her to look up almost anything that she would ever need on the internet. We spent a decent amount of time on this so that she would be very comfortable accessing and using the search engine. Also, even if she was unable to understand more complicated things she would at least understand Google. Being the most widely known search engine, she could even teach herself new things.

As for the other people that I worked with, everyone was at different skill levels when using a computer. I met with many people that were already emailing and searching the internet for things that interested them. One lady that sticks out in my mind had recently bought a Mac because she felt that the computer was much better than a PC and she liked the way it looked and operated. She needed me to walk her through the steps of finding all the controls and anything else that she had used on her PC. I had never used a Mac before but I decided to give it a try. I figured that it would not be that difficult and I would get some experience out of it. I found most of the controls and functions for her after a few tries and she said that I had helped her more than any other person that she had dealt with in the past. I felt pretty good after she had said that because I knew that I had truly helped her.

Overall, I this experience really opened my eyes to a situation I never gave much thought. I never thought about the situation of older adults and many seem to want to learn more about technology and computers. I feel that this course is able to cater to those older adults’ interests and needs. By having students go to these places and teach older adults about technology, the students are helping them in so many ways and they are also are able to experience working with older adults. I am glad that I was able to work with these older adults and teach them something that that they may be able to teach others.