

CS0: Flowchart Programming

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Overview

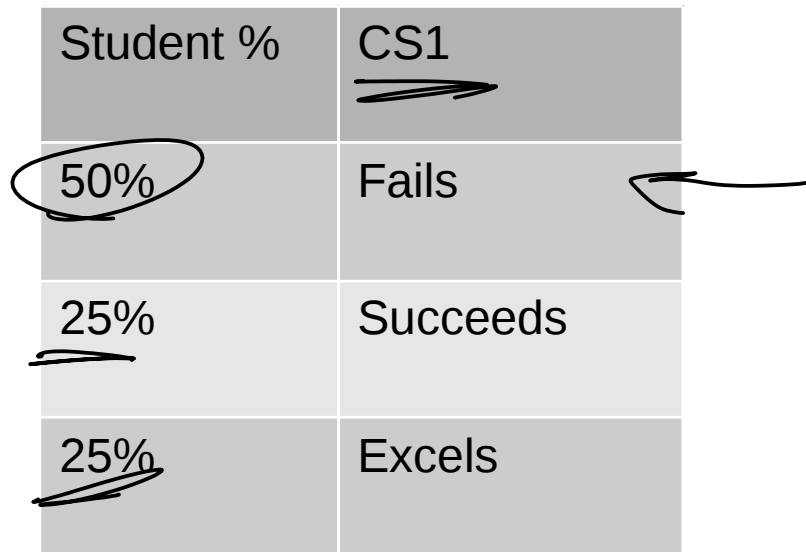
- The aim of the project is to make learning to program easier and more enjoyable for students at all different skill levels
- In this talk I will cover:
 - ✓ – **Why** learn to program with Flowcharts?
 - **What** is programming with flowcharts?
 - **How** does it work?
 - **Results** so far, and **ideas** for the future

WHY

Flowchart Programming

Original Motivation

Student %	CS1
50%	Fails
25%	Succeeds
25%	Excels



Addition of CS0

- What exactly to do?
 - Problem Solving?!
- How / What? What kinds of Tools?
 - ~~✗~~ Raptor
 - Google Blockly (maze) ✓
 - Online materials / courses
 - Scratch

Addition of CS0

Student %	CS0	CS1
50%	Struggles ? ? ?	Fails
25%	Challenged	Succeeds
25%	Bored	Excels

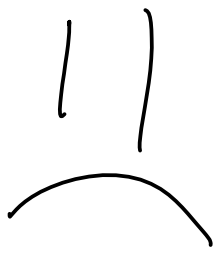
Why do students Fail / Succeed?

- Not sure...
- Some of the students that I was able to save
 - Hadn't understood the flow of execution
 - Trouble with loops and if statements
- Idea:
 - Make everything clearer
 - Show more clearly how things work

Bored Students

- Special Projects
 - Depends on student interest / motivation
 - Requires a lot of faculty creativity / overhead
- Project Euler
 - Great problems, starts easy, gets hard
 - Lots and lots of problems

Scratch

- Great tool
 - lets students quickly create visual / fun things
- Limitations 
 - No functions (plugins?)
 - Data types are mostly abstracted away
 - Not easy to do project euler problems 

Raptor

- Started thinking about raptor again
 - A more traditional programming model + ✓
 - Limited to windows only -
 - Max amount of params per function -
 - No return from functions (out params) -
- Why not build my own? ✓
 - Web based
 - Without these limitations ✓

Section: Why

- Lower half struggles and fails
 - Not clear why they fail
 - Can we reduce the amount that fails?
- A certain amount is challenged
 - But at the lower end seems to need more clarity
- A certain amount is bored
 - Need something useful to do while others struggle

WHAT

Flowchart Programming

Web-Raptor

Flow Chart - Mozilla Firefox

Flow Chart

localhost/html/web-raptor/project/19

Search

Hi Michael! logout users

Flowchart Example

Variables:
string

+ main

```
graph TD; A((number main())) --> B((return 0));
```

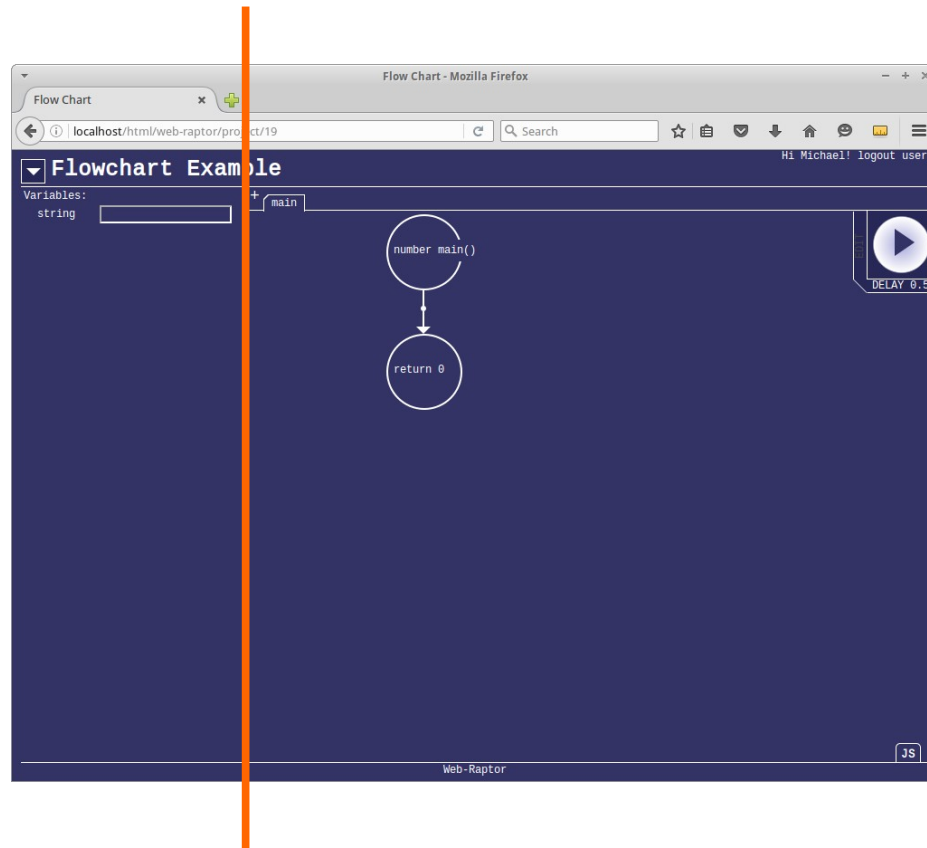
DELAY 0.5

JS

Web-Raptor

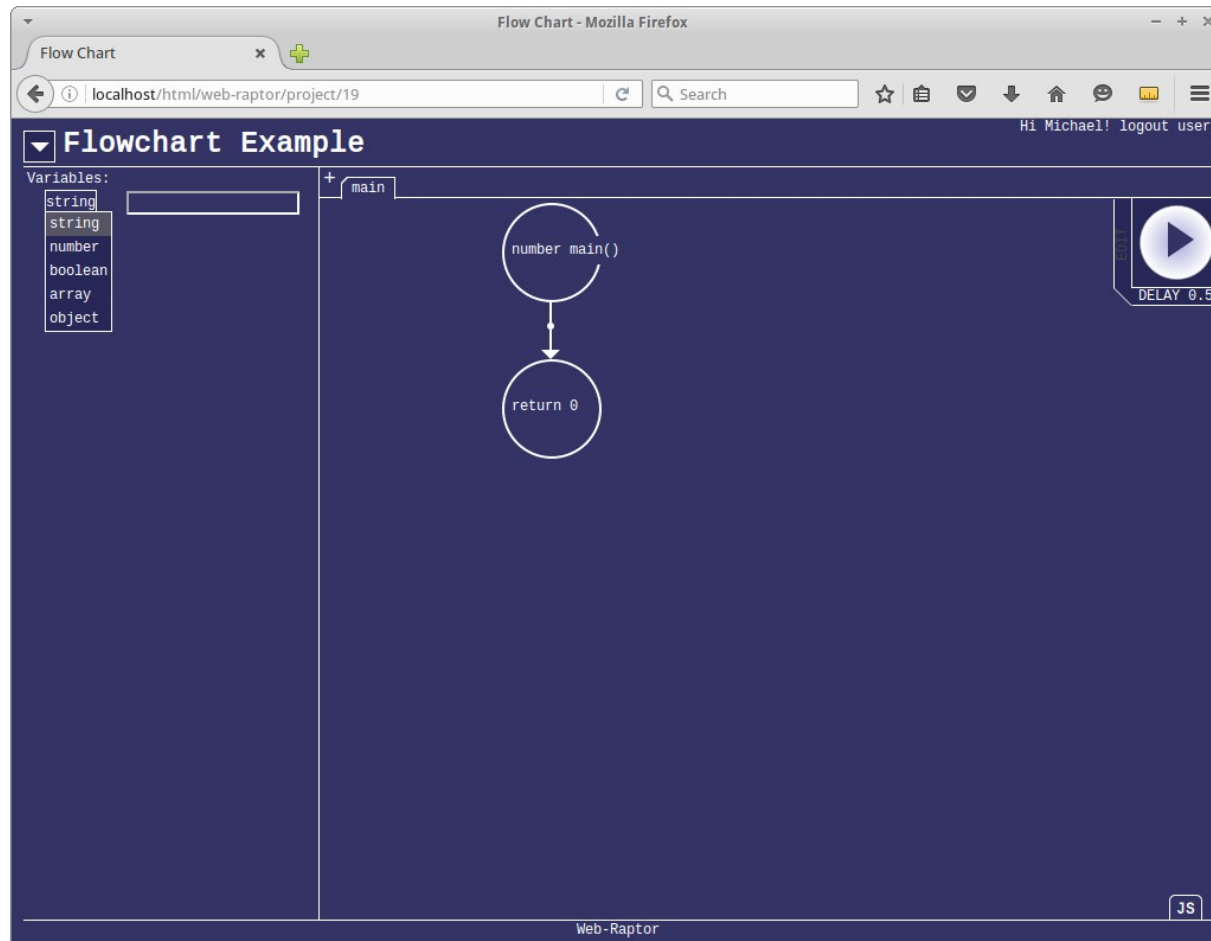
Separation of data and instructions

- Often found students stuck trying to add instruction(s) when needing to add variable(s)
 - When stuck, try adding something to the other side



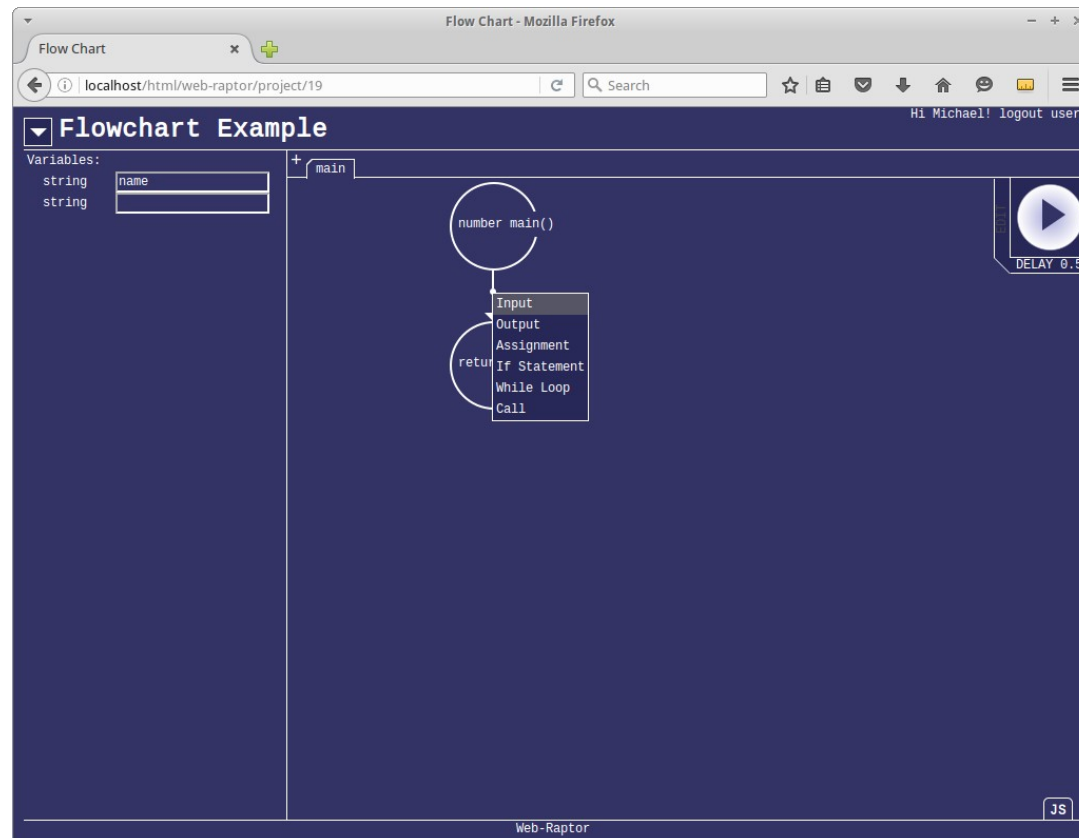
Data Types

- Start thinking about the reality of types early on
 - Going to have to deal with it sooner than later



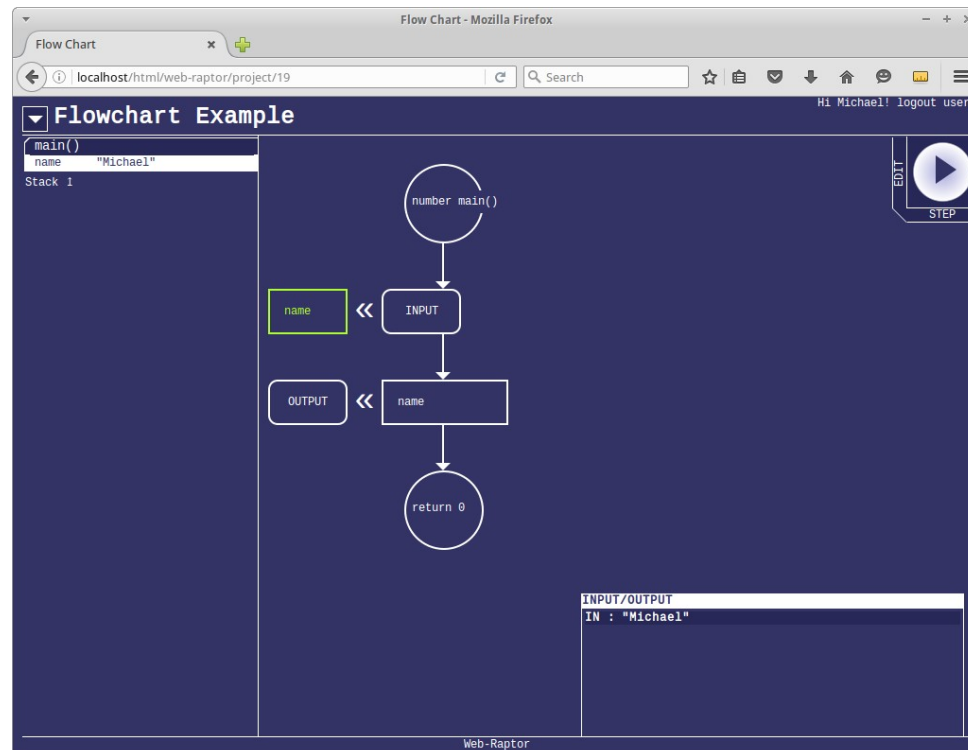
Basic Instructions

- Clearly indicated where they can be added
 - Programming reduced to 5 options
 - Plus one piece of syntactic sugar (call)



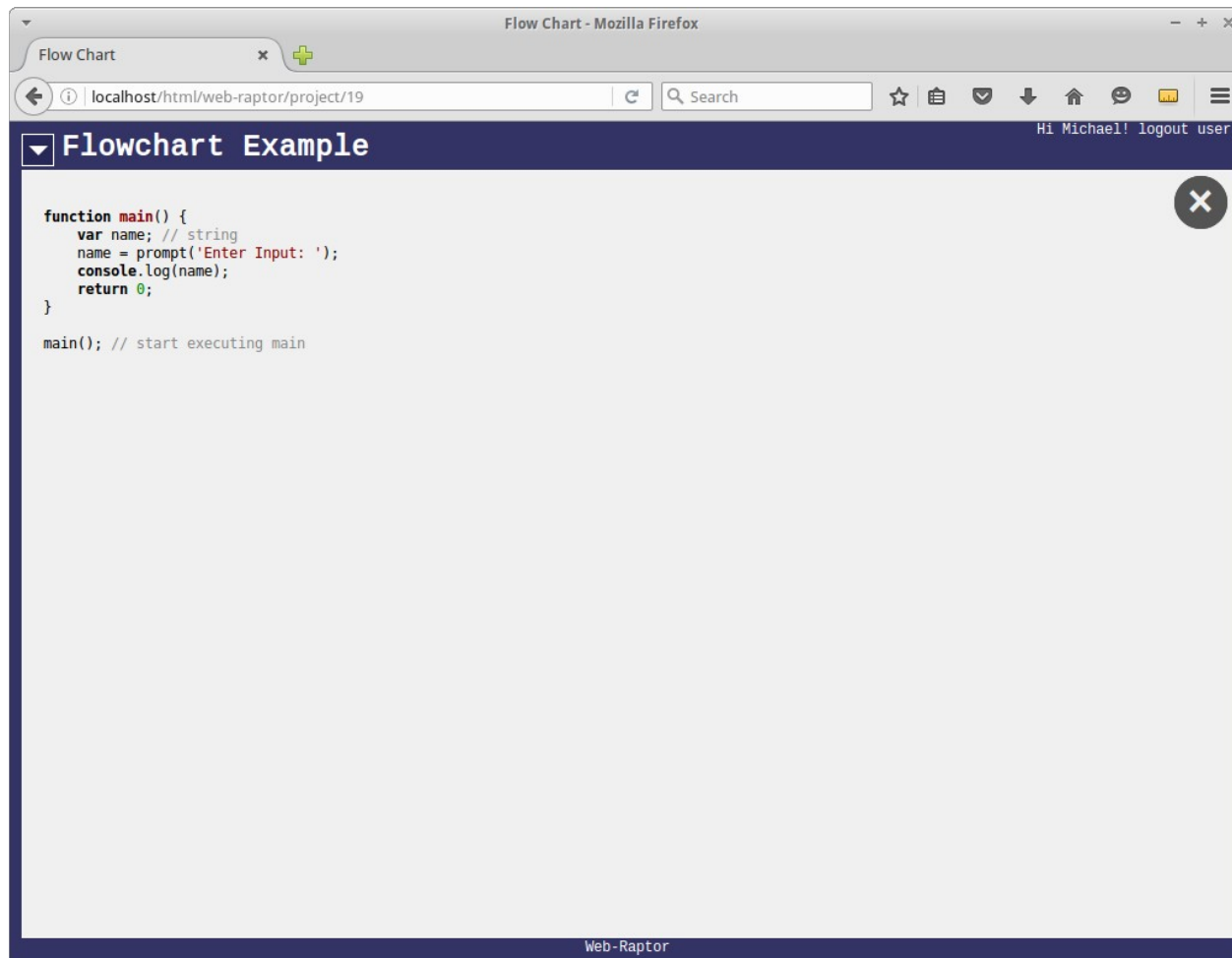
Debugger Like Execution

- Lets make a “hello world” with name input ✓
 - See it running, step by step
 - Assigning values to variables
 - Evaluating expressions



Code Generation

- To prepare them for the eventual reality
 - Hand in assignments in code, not as flowchart



The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window with the title "Flow Chart - Mozilla Firefox". The address bar displays "localhost/html/web-raptor/project/19". The page has a dark blue header with the text "Flowchart Example" and a user greeting "Hi Michael! logout users". The main content area is a light gray code editor containing the following JavaScript code:

```
function main() {  
  var name; // string  
  name = prompt('Enter Input: ');  
  console.log(name);  
  return 0;  
}  
  
main(); // start executing main
```

The browser's status bar at the bottom indicates "Web-Raptor".

Code Execution

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window titled "Flow Chart - Mozilla Firefox". The address bar displays "localhost/html/web-raptor//project/19". The page content is titled "Flowchart Example" and includes a code editor with the following JavaScript code:

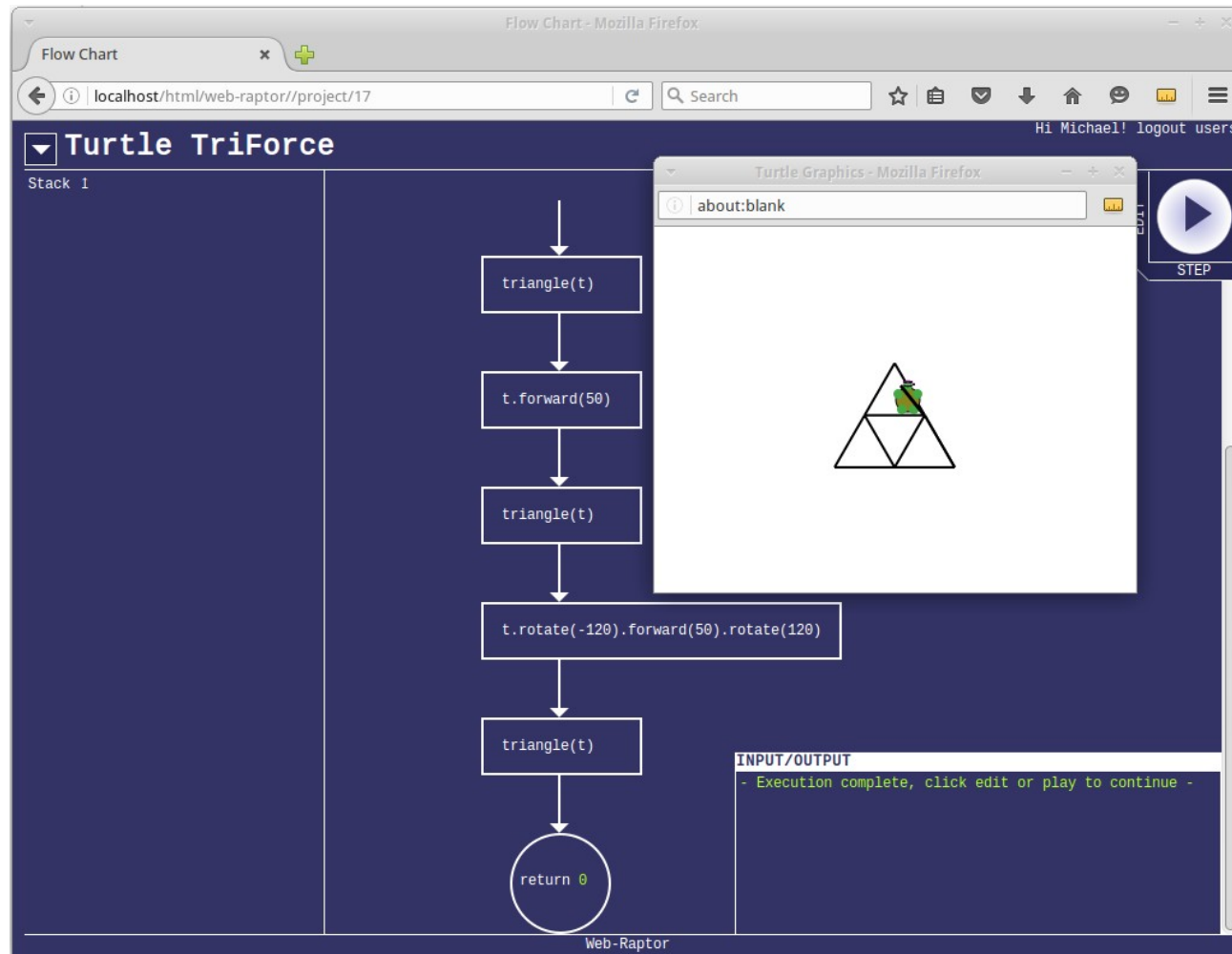
```
function main() {  
  var name; // string  
  name = prompt('Enter Input: ');  
  console.log(name);  
  return 0;  
}  
  
main(); // start executing main
```

A modal dialog box is displayed in the center of the page, titled "Enter Input:". It contains a text input field and two buttons: "Cancel" and "OK".

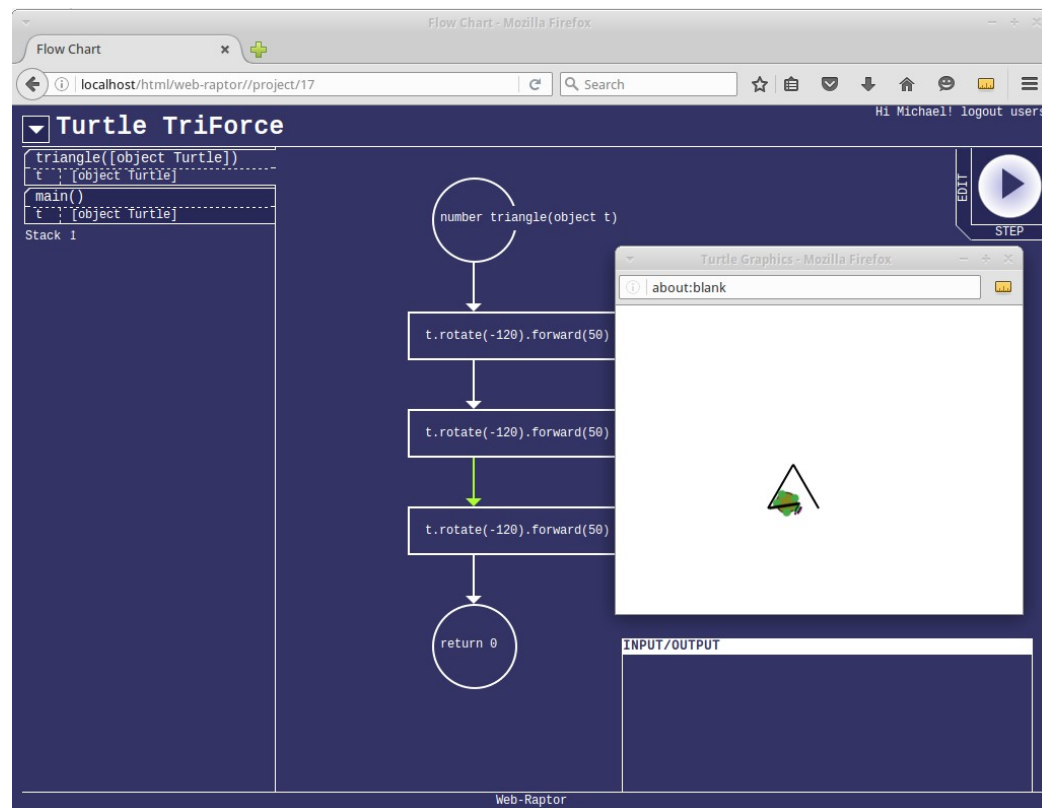
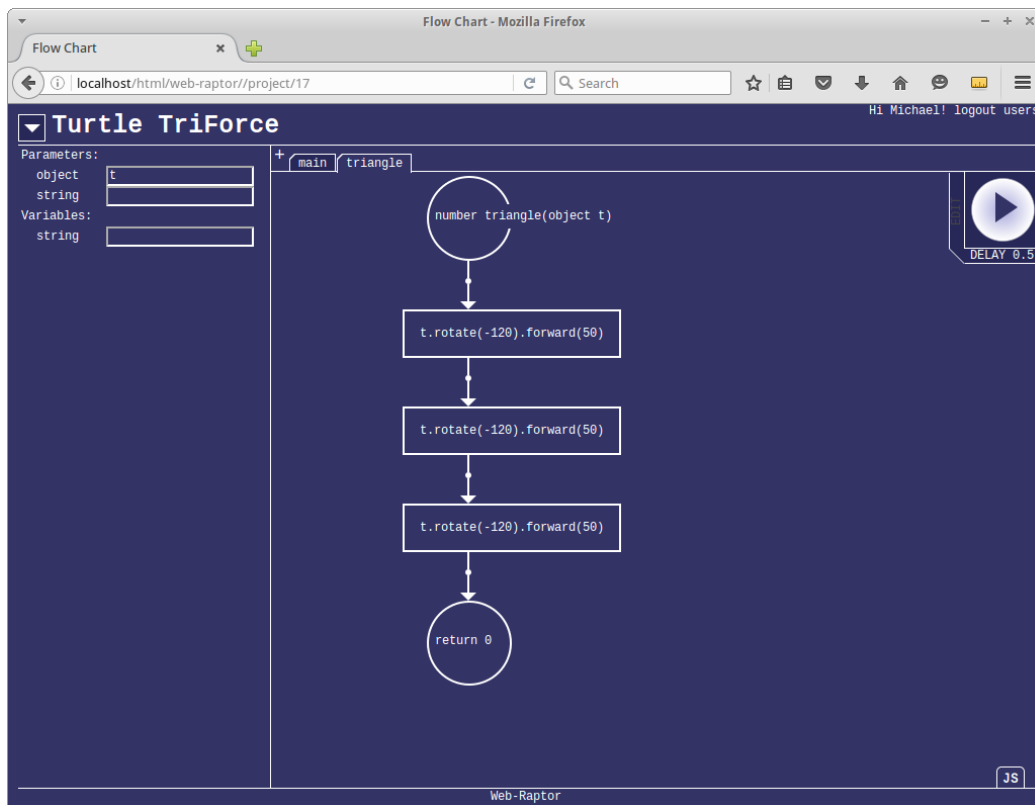
The bottom of the browser window shows the "Web-Raptor" interface with a toolbar containing "Inspector", "Console", "Debugger", "Style Editor", "Performance", and "Network". The "Console" tab is active, showing the following output:

```
>> function main() {  
  var name; // string  
  name = prompt('Enter Input: ');  
  console.log(name);  
  return 0;  
}  
  
main(); // start executing main
```

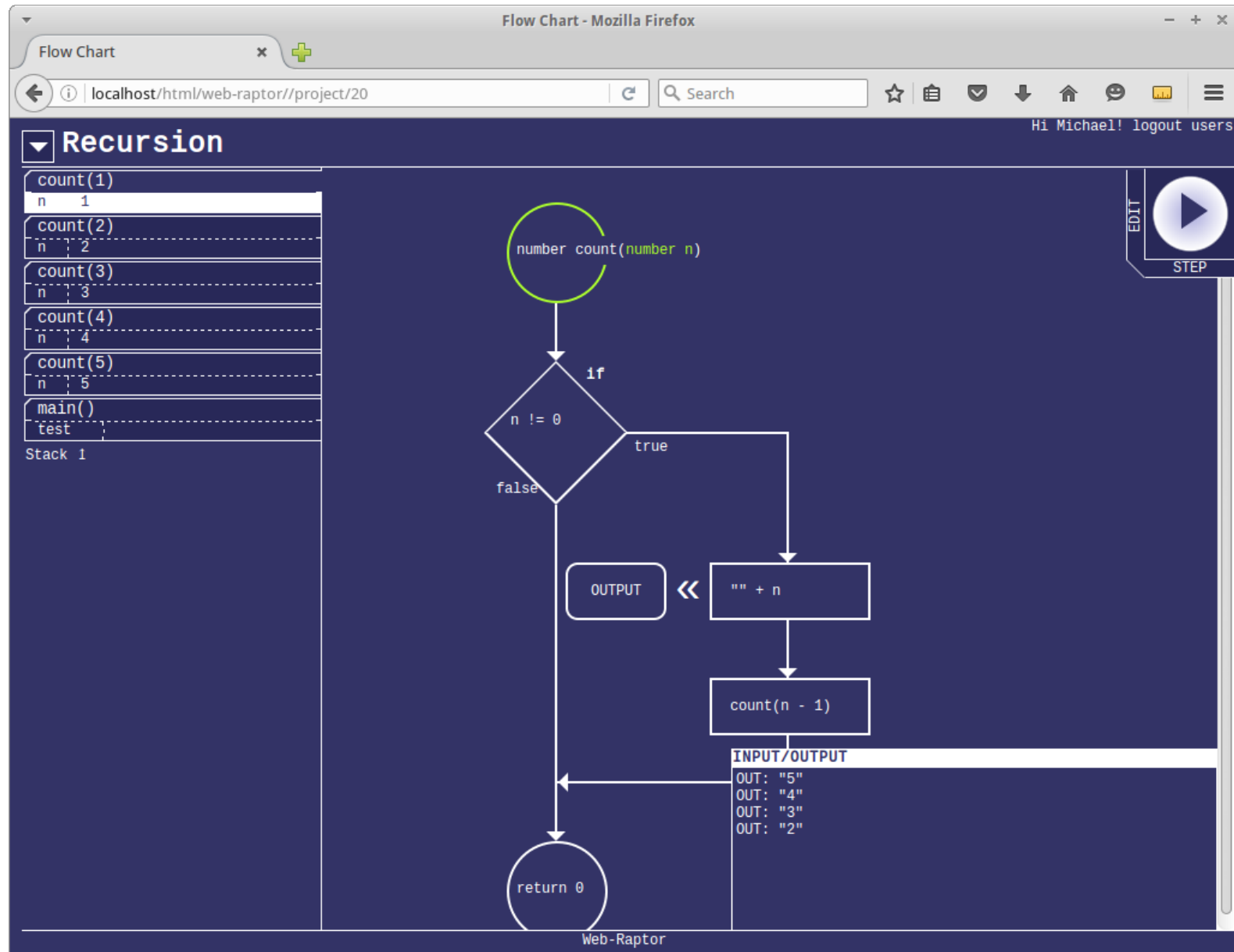
Turtle Graphics



Functions and the Stack



Recursion



Section: What

- web-based tool for programming with flowcharts
 - Simple instructions and data types ✓
 - Debugger like execution, stepping through code ✓
 - Code generation and code execution *more to 1*
come ✓
 - Turtle graphics module ✓
 - Functions and recursion ✓

HOW

Flowchart Programming

CSS, JavaScript, PHP

- 1205 lines of Sass CSS

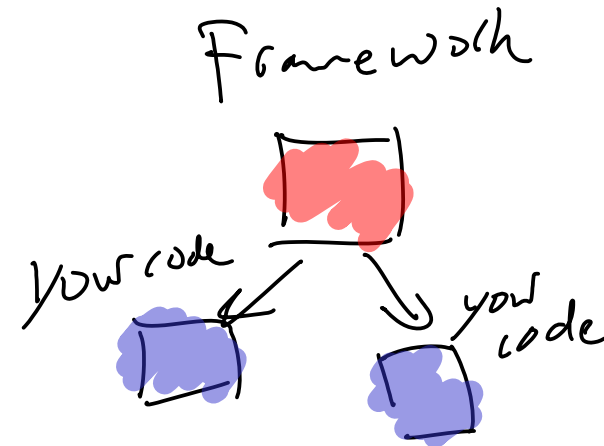
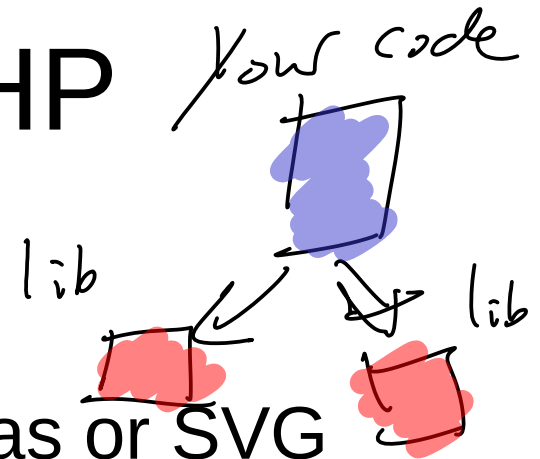
- HTML and CSS a better fit than canvas or SVG

- 2739 lines of JS (using jQuery)

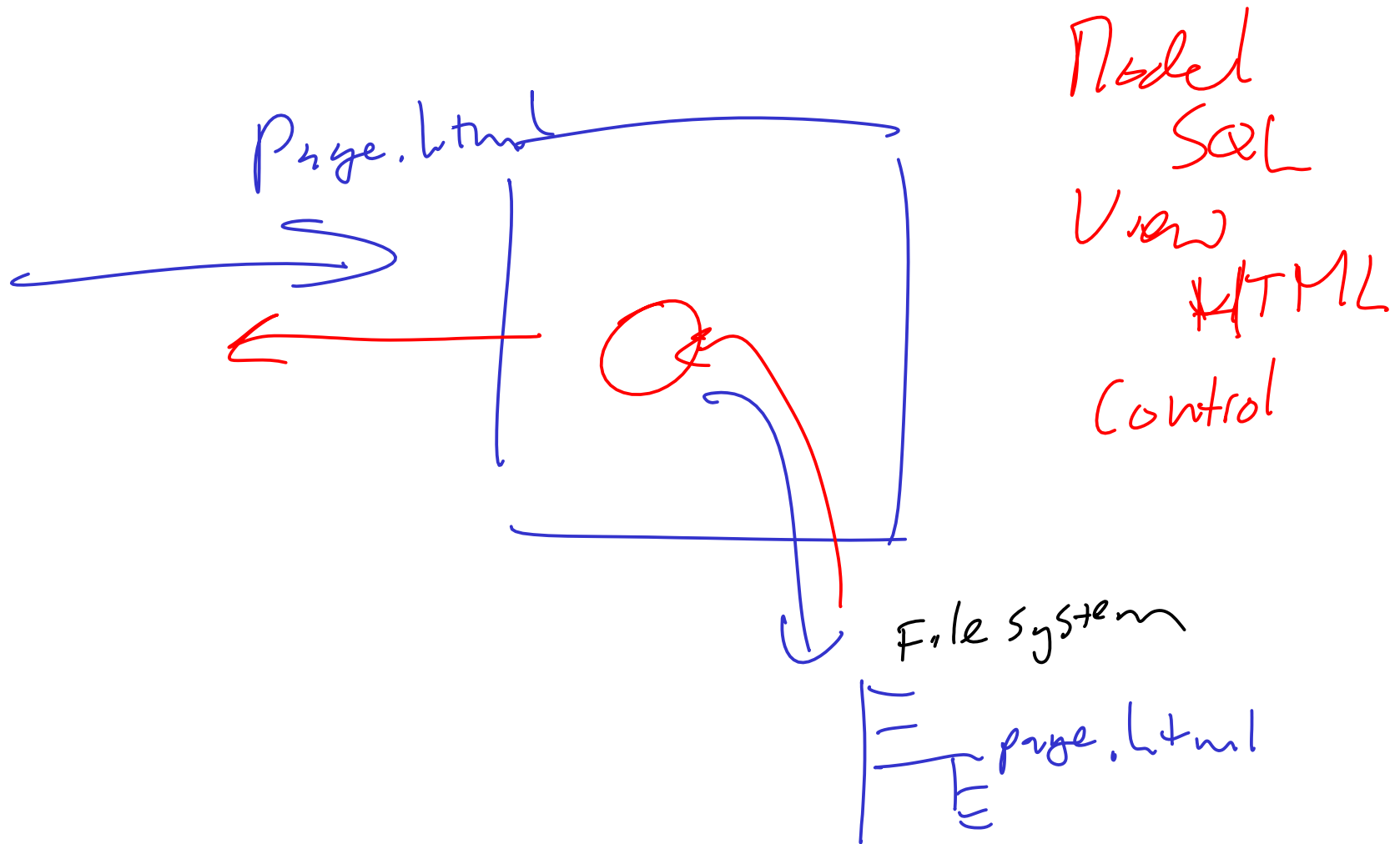
- I do not actually parse expressions
 - Exec them inside a sandbox

- 1381 lines of PHP / SQL / HTML

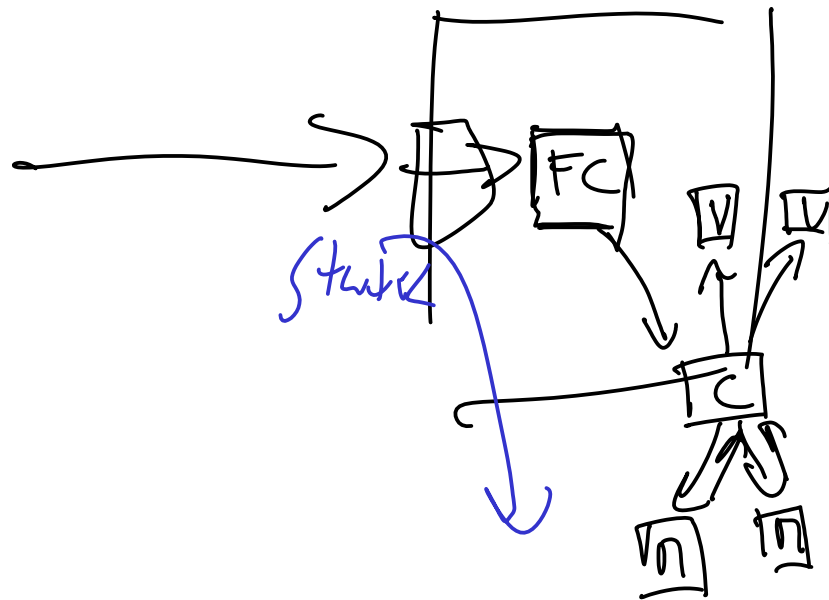
- I built a little IOC framework for MVC separation



Normal web server



Web Development with a Framework using a Front Controller (FC)



GitHub

mzijlstra/web-raptor: Aims to become a web based implementation of the Raptor programming learning tool - Mozilla Firefox

mzijlstra/web-raptor: Ai... x

GitHub, Inc. (US) | https://github.com/mzijlstra/web-raptor

Search

This repository Search Pull requests Issues Gist

mzijlstra / web-raptor

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Aims to become a web based implementation of the Raptor programming learning tool — Edit

239 commits 2 branches 2 releases 2 contributors

Branch: master New pull request New file Upload files Find file SSH git@github.com:mzijlstra/w Download ZIP

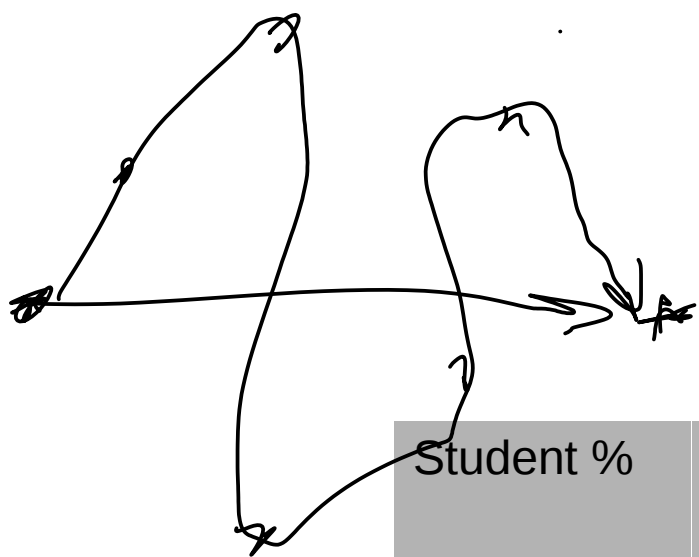
mzijlstra Black on White CSS Latest commit b756d39 an hour ago

control	made projects retrieval DESC by default	5 months ago
model	updated function table instructions column data type to longtext	5 months ago
res	Black on White CSS	an hour ago
view	fixed create project not working on enter key problem	5 months ago
.gitignore	refactored directory structure	8 months ago
.htaccess	refactored directory structure	8 months ago
LICENSE	Initial commit	2 years ago
README.md	Initial commit	2 years ago
context.php	a variety of bug fixes and updates for regular user accounts	9 months ago
frontController.php	login redirects back to requested URL	10 months ago

Results / Future

Flowchart Programming

Results



Student %	CS0	CS1
<u>50%</u>	Struggles	Still Fails? (new theories)
<u>25%</u>	<u>More clarity</u>	<u>Succeeds</u>
<u>25%</u>	Engaged, great output	Excels ✓

The video
I mentioned about machine learning and novelty search:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXQPL9GooyI>

Future

- Fix Bugs:
 - While making this presentation I even found that I broke passing objects (turtle) into functions
 - Bugs related to side effects
- Features:
 - Image manipulation (canvas) ✓
 - Drag and Drop editing ✓
 - Code editing & easier code execution