

# Recommendations for the Twitter Assignment

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## Overall:

- There are 11 steps the students have to work through in order to verify that their program is linked to their Twitter account, providing several opportunities for students to misread or skip an important direction. Since the main point of the assignment does not deal with getting Twitter up and running, I try to provide as much support as needed to get the students to the programming part as quickly as possible.
- Many high schools do not permit teachers to require students to make social media accounts outside the ones provided or supported by the school district. If a student does not want to make their own Twitter account, I provide a flat file of tweets from a public Twitter feed they choose which they can use as an input file. Students are still working with real Twitter data and are able to benefit from the assignment like their peers.
- Twitter might be blocked on student workstations. If so, I tell the students they can either work on the assignment at home or they can use the flat file that I described above.
- Even if students have written their output to a file before, some students find toggling between sending output to the screen or a file challenging.

## Part II and Part III

- In Part II, students are asked to determine the most frequent non-common word that a person has tweeted in their last 2,000 tweets. While Part II is the main part of the assignment, Part III is really where the gold is. In Part III, students are asked to devise their own query to investigate something they find interesting using Twitter feeds. They are to examine the Twitter 4J API to see what methods are available to them and then program their own query. Examples include, but most definitely are not limited to:
  - Filter your home timeline (these are all the tweets from people you follow) to avoid a particular term. For instance, if you are an Android fan, you could filter out all tweets with Apple in them.
  - Count the number of tweets originating from your zip code that contain the word "flu" during a particular timeframe to see if a flu outbreak is happening in your area.
  - Send tweets every 10 minutes to your friend on his/her birthday. Use a timer.
  - Search for tweets in your zip code on a particular Sunday to count how many tweets there are containing the names of NFL teams to see which teams are most popular with residents in your zip code.