Lecture Set #18: Collections

1. New Looping construct
   1. for each loop
2. Collections
   1. Stack
   2. ArrayList

Collections in Java

- Arrays are collections
  - Arrays are objects
  - Arrays are sequences of elements in base type
  - These elements are collected together in one object: the array
- Java includes many other collection mechanisms
  - Arrays good for some applications (fixed-length sequences), not others (varying-length sequences)
  - Other collections tuned for different purposes
- General observation holds, however:
  - Collections are objects ...
  - ... that contain other objects in a given type
- We’ll study two (more in CMSC132): Stack, ArrayList

for … each … in

- New construct available in Java 1.5 (not available in older versions of Java)
- Use with arrays
- Use with any iterable collection
- Limitations:
  - Modifications limited
  - Can’t add items to the list being iterated over
  - Can’t remove items from the list being iterated over
  - Can’t replace items in the list being iterated over
  - Can’t access only one
  - Can’t traverse the list in the reverse order
  - Can’t go to every other element or any variation
Stacks in Java

- Recalling: a stack is a data structure ("device" for holding values) – FILO (First In, Last Out)
- Typical operations on a stack
  - push: add a new value into the stack
  - pop: remove the most recently added value still in stack
  - top: return the most recently added value in stack
  - is empty: returns true if the stack is currently empty or false otherwise

Example of stack concept (not Java specific)

Stack s
- s.isEmpty() == ?? true
- s.push (3); s.isEmpty() == ?? false
- s.peek == ?? 4
- s.pop (); s.push (5);
- s.peek == ?? 5

Stacks in Java (cont.)

- Java includes a generic class for stack objects
  - Stack objects contain other objects
  - All objects in stack must have same type
  - Only objects may be stored in stacks (no primitive-type values)
- Syntax: Stack<E>
  - Stack<E> is a generic class
  - E is a class variable representing the base type
  - Replace c by a specific type to get a stack of that type of elements
  - Class is in java.util package
- Documentation:
  - http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.5.0/docs/api/java/util/Stack.html
- See example: StackExample.java
  - Stack<String> stack = new Stack<String>();
    Creates a stack of strings
    extend this to be stack of cats
    extend this to be stack of integer values
ArrayList Collection

- Like arrays ... but support for inserting/deleting new elements
- Sequences of elements
- All elements must be in same (base) type
- Syntax: ArrayList<E>
- Documentation: http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.5.0/docs/api/java/util/ArrayList.html
- See example: ArrayListExample.java
- ArrayList<String> a = new ArrayList<String>();
- Collections.sort may be used on ArrayList<String> objects?
- Reason
  - String implements Comparable interface
  - ArrayList<E> implements List<E> interface

Mutable Strings

- Strings are immutable
  - Once a String object is created, it cannot be altered
  - For String objects, reference = shallow = deep copying (why?)
- Sometimes mutable strings would be handy
  - Sometimes a small change needs to be made to a string (e.g. misspelled name)
  - Don't want to create a whole new String object in this case
- StringBuffer: Java's class for mutable Strings

StringBuffer Basics

- See documentation at: http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.5.0/docs/api/java/lang/StringBuffer.html
- Main methods
  - append: add characters to end
  - insert: add characters in middle
  - delete: remove characters
- Note
  - append, insert return object of type StringBuffer
  - This is alias to object that the methods belong to!
- See StringBufferExample.java