**20.3**

**Explain in brief Writable and Writable Comparable in Hadoop with an example.**

**WRITABLE:**

Writable is an interface in Hadoop. Writable in [Hadoop](https://acadgild.com/big-data/big-data-development-training-certification) acts as a wrapper class to almost all the primitive data type of Java.

Writables are used for creating serialized data types in Hadoop.

Hadoop frame work definitely needs Writable type of interface to perform the following tasks:

* Implement serialization
* Transfer data between clusters and networks
* Store the de serialized data in the local disk of the system

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Implementation of writable is similar to implementation of interface in Java. It can be done by simply writing the keyword ‘implements’ and overriding the default writable method.

Writable is a strong interface in Hadoop which while serializing the data, reduces the data size enormously, so that data can be exchanged easily within the networks.

**WHY DOES HADOOP USE WRITABLE(S)?**

Data needs to be transmitted between different nodes in a distributed computing environment.

This requires serialization and deserialization of data to convert the data that is in structured format to byte stream and vice-versa.

Hadoop therefore uses simple and efficient serialization protocol to serialize data between map and reduce phase and these are called Writable(s).

Some of the examples of writables are IntWritable, LongWritable, BooleanWritable and FloatWritable.

Thus we can create our custom Writables in a way similar to custom types in Java but with two additional methods, write and readFields. The custom writable can travel through networks and can reside in other systems.

This custom type cannot be compared with each other by default, so again we need to make them comparable with each other. This is a disadvantage with the writable.

**WRITABLE COMPARABLE:**

A [Writable](https://hadoop.apache.org/docs/r2.6.1/api/org/apache/hadoop/io/Writable.html) which is also [Comparable](http://download.oracle.com/javase/7/docs/api/java/lang/Comparable.html?is-external=true). Writable Comparable can be compared to each other, typically via Comparators.

Any type which is to be used as a key in the Hadoop Map-Reduce framework should implement this interface.

**WritableComparable** interface is just a sub interface of the Writable and java.lang.Comparable interfaces. For implementing a Writable Comparable we must have compareTo method apart from read Fields and write methods.

we need a custom Writable comparable if our custom data type is going to be used as key rather that the value. We then need the class to implement WritableComparable interface. The WritableComparable interface extends from the Writable interface and the Compararble interface.

**METHODS IN WRITABLE COMPARABLE:**

* Write (DataOutput out) – It is used to serialize the fields of the object to ‘out’.
* readFields (DataInput in) – It is used to de serialize the fields of the object from ‘in’.
* compareTo (WritableComparable o) – It is inherited from Comparable interface and it allows Hadoop to sort the keys in the sort and shuffle phase. Compares this object with the specified object for order. Returns a negative integer, zero, or a positive integer as this object is less than, equal to, or greater than the specified object.

If you want to change the way the output should be displayed, you can override tostring method.