



Scripting Languages

Module 5

Regular Expressions, Redirection, Piping and Grep



Contents

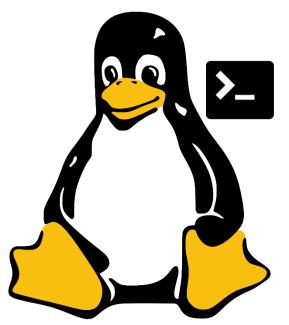
- Regular Expressions
- Regular Expression Engines
- Grep and Regex
- Anchors and Wildcards
- Extended RegEx Engine
- ERE Repetition and Optionality
- OR and Expression Grouping
- Common Grep Options
- Piping and Redirection



Learning Objectives

After completing this module, you should be able to work with:

- Regular Expressions
- Regular Expression Engines
- Grep and Regex
- Anchors and Wildcards
- Extended RegEx Engine
- ERE Repetition and Optionality
- OR and Expression Grouping
- Common Grep Options
- Piping and Redirection



> Regular Expressions





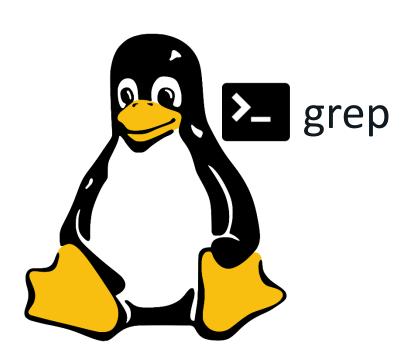
Regular Expressions

- Regular Expressions, more commonly referred to as regex, are used to match patterns in text
- A regex text pattern is provided to a regex engine to allow it to find a match
- Once a match is found, other commands and utilities can then be called upon to interact with the matched data in some way



Regex engines

- There are two regular expression engines supported by bash commands
 - Basic Regular Expression Engine (BRE)
 - Extended Regular Expression Engine (ERE)
- These are supported by several commands and utilities, in particular grep, sed and awk
- BRE and ERE are also regularly used for data validation purposes as well
- The remainder of this module will examine regex as used with grep

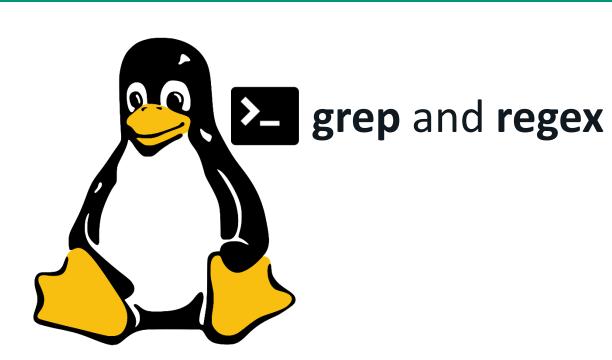






What is grep?

- grep stands for Global Regular Expression Print
- grep searches through stipulated input files for lines containing a match to a regex pattern
- When a match is found in a line, grep copies the line to standard output by default, or another output if stipulated by options or piping
- grep is highly integrated with BRE and ERE to perform the tasks it is designed to do





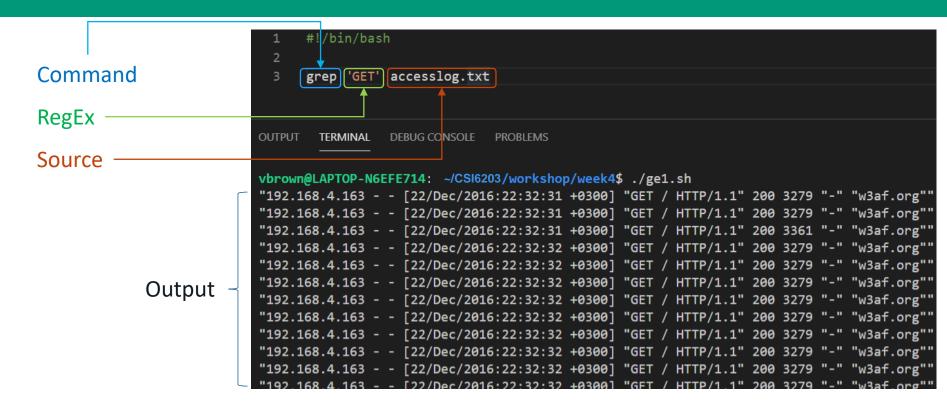
Sample Data Set

 The following grep and regex examples are based on an access log data set acquired from https://github.com/ocatak/apache-http-logs/blob/master/w3af.txt (06/07/2020)

```
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /DVWA/dvwa/css/login.css HTTP/1.1" 200 668 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /DVWA/dvwa/images/login_logo.png HTTP/1.1" 200 13161 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /images/joomla_black.gif HTTP/1.1" 200 4030 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /index.php/component/users/?view=reset HTTP/1.1" 200 3023 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /index.php?format=feed&type=rss HTTP/1.1" 200 1803 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /templates/beez_20/css/epsrnola.css HTTP/1.1" 200 1803 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /templates/beez_20/css/general.css HTTP/1.1" 200 1441 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /templates/beez_20/css/opisitno.css HTTP/1.1" 200 452 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /templates/beez_20/images/minus.png HTTP/1.1" 200 452 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /templates/beez_20/images/plus.png HTTP/1.1" 200 454 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /templates/beez_20/javascript/md_stylechanger.js HTTP/1.1" 200 1111 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /templates/beez_20/javascript/md_stylechanger.js HTTP/1.1" 200 1111 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /templates/beez_20/javascript/md_stylechanger.js HTTP/1.1" 200 1111 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:42 +0300] "GET /DVWA/dvwa/dvwa/ HTTP/1.1" 200 755 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
"192.168.4.163 - [22/Dec/2016:22:35:43 +0300] "GET /DVWA/dvwa/dvwa/ HT
```



Simple BRE matching





Wildcards





Anchor characters

- Regex patterns can use special characters called anchor points to represent specific locations within the text
- The two most common anchor points are
 - The start of the line 'A'
 (The ^ symbol is the circum accent, or circum for short)
 - The end of the line '\$'



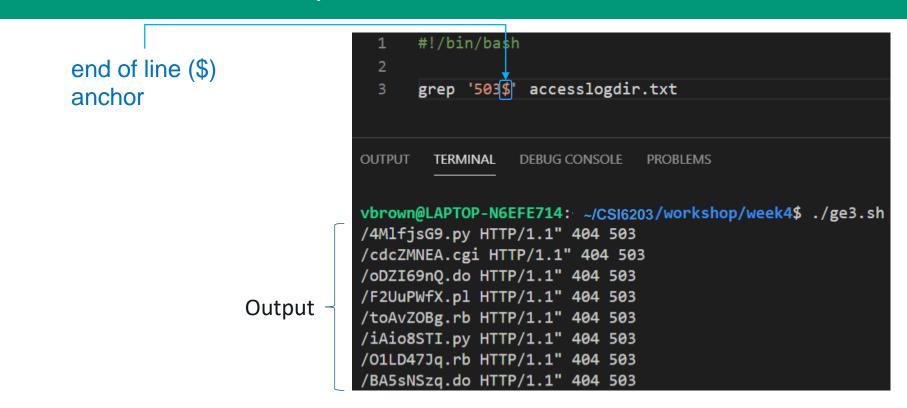
Start of line anchor ^

```
#!/bin/bash
start of line (circum)
                                        grep '^/DVWA' accesslogdir.txt
anchor
                                  OUTPUT
                                          TERMINAL
                                                    DEBUG CONSOLE
                                                                  PROBLEMS
                                  vbrown@LAPTOP-N6EFE714: ~/CSI6203/workshop/week4$ ./ge2.sh
                                  /DVWA HTTP/1.1" 301 573 "-" "w3af.org""
                                   /DVWA/ HTTP/1.1" 302 469 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
                                  /DVWA/ HTTP/1.1" 302 384 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
                                   /DVWA/ HTTP/1.1" 302 384 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
                                   /DVWA/dvwa/css/login.css HTTP/1.1" 200 668 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
                                   /DVWA/dvwa/css/olign.css HTTP/1.1" 404 514 "-" "w3af.org""
                 Output
                                   /DVWA/dvwa/images/login_logo.png HTTP/1.1" 200 13161 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
                                   /DVWA/dvwa/images/olign_olog.png HTTP/1.1" 404 522 "-" "w3af.org""
                                   /DVWA/login.php HTTP/1.1" 200 986 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
                                   /DVWA/login.php HTTP/1.1" 200 986 "http://192.168.4.161/" "w3af.org""
                                   /DVWA/olign.php HTTP/1.1" 404 505 "-" "w3af.org""
```





End of line anchor \$

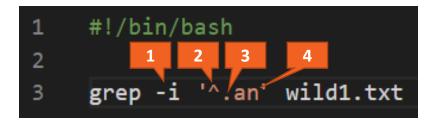






Wildcard characters

- Wildcards are characters that could match a range of characters
- In regex, the most common wildcard is dot '.'
- The dot character can be used to represent any character, e.g. find lines that start with a string ending in an



- 1. Make match case insensitive
- 2. Must occur at start of line
- 3. Any character acceptable
- 4. String must end in *an*

vbrown@LAPTOP-N6EFE714: ~/CSI6203/workshop/week4\$./ge4.sh
ban: to prevent or forbid such as an event or practice

tan: a colour or to darken with sunlight

ran: simple past tense of run



Wildcard characters

```
ram: any of various devices for battering, crushing, driving, or forcing
something, especially a battering ram
ban: to prevent or forbid such as an event or practice
ear: human organ for hearing
rat: any of several long-tailed rodents of the family Muridae, of the genus
Rattus and related genera, distinguished from the mouse by being larger
tan: a colour or to darken with sunlight
ran: simple past tense of run
rap: to strike, especially with a quick, smart, or light blow
car: a form of motor vehicle for personal transport
                                                                   #!/bin/bash
raw: not having undergone processes of preparing, dressing
or manufacture
                                                                   grep -i '^.an' wild1.txt
bar: a long, cylindrical object used for a wide range of p
ebb: to fade away, to recede
                                                                     TERMINAL
                                                                                 DEBUG CONSOLE
                                                           OUTPUT
                                                                                                  PROBLEMS.
```



Classed wildcards

- Square brackets [] are used to restrict a wildcard to be only one of a set of values
- In this example, find lines contain a string starting with R/r followed by any single instance of a vowel and ending with d



- 1. Make match case insensitive
- 2. String must start with R/r
- 3. Followed by any single vowel instance
- 4. String must end in a d





Specify allowable range with []

- Square brackets [] can also specify a range of allowable potential characters
- A string example would be grep "[A-Z]" text.txt, i.e
 look for lines that contain capital letters from A to Z inclusive
- A numeric example would be grep "[0-9]" text.txt,
 i.e look for lines that contain a number

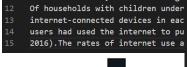


[] example - string

The organisation conducted the survey in 2017 in response to a gap in the
literature about how professionals in this sector were using digital technology for their work
This study was primarily intended to inform the development of CFCA publications and resources
for the sector. An earlier version of these findings was presented at the Family and Relationship
Services Australia (FRSA) conference in November 2017.
Australian families are increasingly using the internet to procure goods and services but
anecdotal reports suggest social services have been slow to take up digital technology

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research conducted during 2014 and 2015 found that 85% of Australians were internet users, with this figure highest in the 15-17 years age ground lowest in the over-65 years age group (51%) (ABS, 2016). People aged 15-17 years

Find all lines that start with a capital letter between A and Z inclusive



most time online, with an average

grep '^[A-Z]' art.txt

#!/bin/bash

OUTPUT TERMINAL DEBUG CONSOLE PROBLEMS

vbrown@LAPTOP-N6EFE714: ~/CSI6203/workshop/week4\$./ge6.sh

The organisation conducted the survey in 2017 in response to a gap in the This study was primarily intended to inform the development of CFCA publications and resources Services Australia (FRSA) conference in November 2017.

Australian families are increasingly using the internet to procure goods and services but Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research conducted during 2014 and 2015 found that 85% Of households with children under 15, 97% had access to the internet, with an average of seven



[] example - numeric

The organisation conducted the survey in 2017 in response to a gap in the literature about how professionals in this sector were using digital technology for their work This study was primarily intended to inform the development of CFCA publications and resources for the sector. An earlier version of these findings was presented at the Family and Relationship

Find all lines that a number

Services Australia (FRSA) conference in November 2017. Australian families are increasingly using the internet to procure goods and services but anecdotal reports suggest social services have been slow to take up digital technology Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research conducted during 2014 and 2015 found that 85%

grep '[1-9]' art.txt

#!/bin/bash

users had used the internet to purchase or c 2016). The rates of internet use among Austra

of Australians were internet users, with thi

and lowest in the over-65 years age group (5 most time online, with an average of 18 hour Of households with children under 15, 97% ha

internet-connected devices in each household

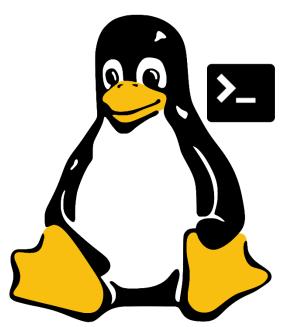
DEBUG CONSOLE **PROBLEMS** OUTPUT TERMINAL

vbrown@LAPTOP-N6EFE714: ~/CSI6203./workshop/week4\$./ge7.sh

The organisation conducted the survey in 2017 in response to a gap in the

Services Australia (FRSA) conference in November 2017. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research conducted during 2014 and 2015 found that 85% of Australians were internet users, with this figure highest in the 15-17 years age group (99%), and lowest in the over-65 years age group (51%) (ABS, 2016). People aged 15-17 years spent the most time online, with an average of 18 hours spent online for personal use each week (ABS, 2016). Of households with children under 15, 97% had access to the internet, with an average of seven internet-connected devices in each household (ABS, 2016). Almost two-thirds (61%) of all internet

2016). The rates of internet use among Australians have been consistently increasing.



Extended RegEx Engine



Extended Regex

ERE can also match with several other collections of classes

Pattern	Effect
[[:alpha:]]	Alphabetical character A-z, a-z
[[:alnum:]]	Alphanumeric character A-z, a-z, 0-9
[[:digit:]]	Digit 0-9
[[:upper:]]	Uppercase A-Z
[[:lower:]]	Lowercase a-z
[[:space:]]	Any whitespace character (space tab newline)
[[:blank:]]	Space or tab
[[:punct:]]	Punctuation character e.g. "!,.;"



Example ERE class - [[:digit:]]

```
#!/bin/bash
      grep -e '[[:digit:]]' art.txt
OUTPUT
        TERMINAL
                 DEBUG CONSOLE
                               PROBLEMS
vbrown@LAPTOP-N6EFE714: ~/CSI6203/workshop/week4$ ./ge10.sh
The organisation conducted the survey in 2017 in response to a gap in the
Services Australia (FRSA) conference in November 2017.
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research conducted during 2014 and 2015 found that 85%
of Australians were internet users, with this figure highest in the 15-17 years age group (99%),
and lowest in the over-65 years age group (51%) (ABS, 2016). People aged 15-17 years spent the
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internet-connected devices in each household (ABS, 2016). Almost two-thirds (61%) of all internet
2016). The rates of internet use among Australians have been consistently increasing.
```



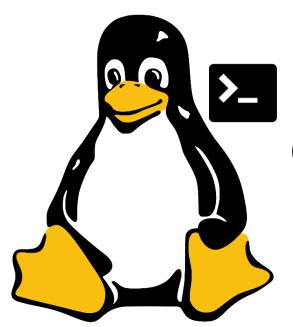
Example ERE class - [[:upper:]]

```
#!/bin/bash
      grep -e '^[[:upper:]]' art.txt
OUTPUT
        TERMINAL
                 DEBUG CONSOLE
                               PROBLEMS
vbrown@LAPTOP-N6EFE714: ~/CSI6203/workshop/week4$ ./ge10.sh
The organisation conducted the survey in 2017 in response to a gap in the
This study was primarily intended to inform the development of CFCA publications and resources
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Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research conducted during 2014 and 2015 found that 85%
Of households with children under 15, 97% had access to the internet, with an average of seven
```



Example ERE class - [[:punct:]]

```
#!/bin/bash
      grep -e '[[:punct:]]' art.txt
OUTPUT
        TERMINAL
                 DEBUG CONSOLE
                               PROBLEMS.
vbrown@LAPTOP-N6EFE714: ~/CSI6203/workshop/week4$ ./ge10.sh
for the sector. An earlier version of these findings was presented at the Family and Relationship
Services Australia (FRSA) conference in November 2017.
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research conducted during 2014 and 2015 found that 85%
of Australians were internet users, with this figure highest in the 15-17 years age group (99%),
and lowest in the over-65 years age group (51%) (ABS, 2016). People aged 15-17 years spent the
most time online, with an average of 18 hours spent online for personal use each week (ABS, 2016).
Of households with children under 15, 97% had access to the internet, with an average of seven
internet-connected devices in each household (ABS, 2016). Almost two-thirds (61%) of all internet
users had used the internet to purchase or order goods or services in the last three months (ABS,
2016). The rates of internet use among Australians have been consistently increasing.
```



ERE Repetition and Optionality





The Asterisk Wildcard

- In regex, the asterisk can be used to repeat the previous part of the pattern 0 or more times
- For example, the grep regex on the right Would find the strings yes, yees and yeees

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 grep 'ye*s' text.txt
```





The Asterisk Wildcard

- The asterisk wildcard can also be used with other regex characters too
- For example, the grep pattern search to the right would find the strings yes, yees, yas and yaas

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 grep 'y[ea]*s' text.txt
```





ERE

In the ERE syntax, there are even more useful and versatile pattern matching operators including:

- +
- ?
- {}
- •
- ()





ERE Plus +

- The Plus character "+" acts similarly to the asterisk "*" except instead of 0 or more repetitions, there must be at least one or more repetitions
- For example, the grep pattern search to the right would return the strings yes, yees, yas and yaas, but not ys

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 grep 'y[ea]\+s' text.txt
```



Question Mark?

- The question mark character
 "?" acts as an optionality operator, meaning that the preceding character may or may not be present in the pattern being sought
- For example, the grep search to the right would find both bash and ash

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 grep 'b?ash' text.txt
```

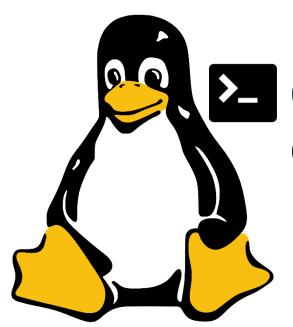




Curly Braces { }

- Braces { } are used to specify a specific number of repetitions of a character or sequence
- For example, the grep pattern search to the right will return Robert, Rabbit and Rupert, but not Rivet

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 grep 'R.{4}t' text.txt
```



OR and Expression Grouping





Expression Grouping

- Using parentheses () regex patterns can be grouped together to allow for more complex search patterns to be constructed
- In the example below, (very) must be present positionally at least once and the + indicates what follows must also be positionally present
- Note: grep -E escapes traditional usage of special characters. For example, the command grep -E '{1' searches for the two-character string {1 instead of reporting a syntax error in the regular expression

```
#!/bin/bash
grep -E '^regex can be (very)+ confusing' text.txt
```





Expression Grouping

```
#!/bin/bash
grep -E '^regex can be (very)+ confusing' text.txt
```

Potential Matches:

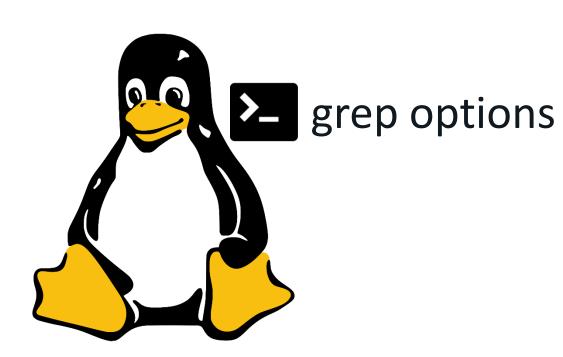
```
regex can be very confusing
regex can be very very confusing
regex can be very very very very confusing
```



OR |

- In bash, the pipe operator "|" is usually used to redirecting the output of one script or command to the input of another
- Within the context of a regular expression however, it takes on the functionality of or
- For example, in the grep pattern search to the right, lines will be returned that <u>end</u> with either the string bash or the string fish

```
#!/bin/bash
grep -E '(bash$)|(fish$)' text.txt
```

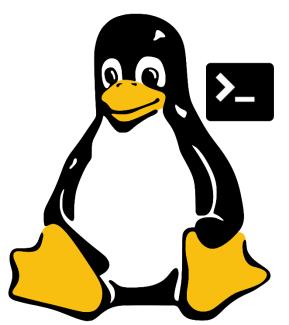


Common grep options

Option	Description
-с	Suppress normal output; instead print a count of matching lines for each input file
-Е	Interpret PATTERN as an extended regular expression.
-i	Ignore case distinctions in both the PATTERN and the input files.
-m NUM	Stop reading a file after NUM matching lines.
-n	Prefix each line of output with the line number within its input file.
-0	Show only the part of a matching line that matches PATTERN.
-v	Invert the sense of matching, to select non-matching lines
-W	Select only those lines containing matches that form whole words

grep Options Example

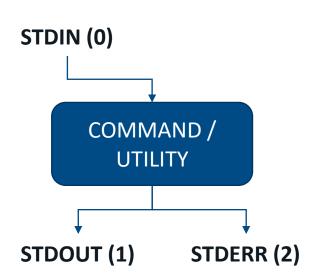
```
The organisation conducted the survey in 2017 in response to a gap in the
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of Australians were internet users, with this figure highest in the 15-17 years age group (99%),
and lowest in the over-65 years age group (51%) (ABS,
                                                             #!/bin/bash
most time online, with an average of 18 hours spent on
                                                                                   Make case insensitive
Of households with children under 15, 97% had access t
internet connected devices in each household (ABS, 201
                                                             grep -wci 'internet' art.txt
users had used the internet to purchase or order goods
2016). The rates of internet use among Australians have
                                                       Whole word
                                                                             Count matching lines
                                                      matches only
                                                                             DEBUG CONSOLE
                                                                                                PROBLEMS
                                                     vbrown@LAPTOP-N6EFE714: ~/CSI6203/workshop/week4$ ./ge10.sh
                                                     6
```



Piping and Redirection

Bash Data Streams

- As discussed in Module 2, bash commands and utilities have automatic access to three (3) data streams:
 - STDIN (0) Standard Input, this is the stream that feeds data into a command or utility
 - STDOUT (1) Standard Output, this is the stream that outputs data from the command or utility; the terminal by default
 - STDERR (2) Standard Error, this is for error messages; also defaults to the terminal)

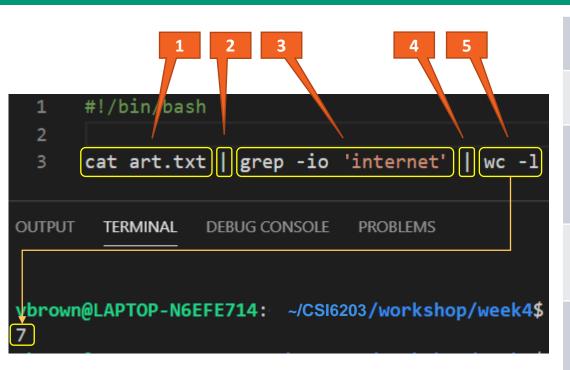


Bash Data Streams

- Bash pipes and redirection allows streams between command, utilities and files to be connected in specific sequence to manipulate data in useful and flexible ways
- In the example below, three (3) commands are used to count the number of instances of a whole string in a file

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 cat art.txt | grep -io 'internet' | wc -l
```

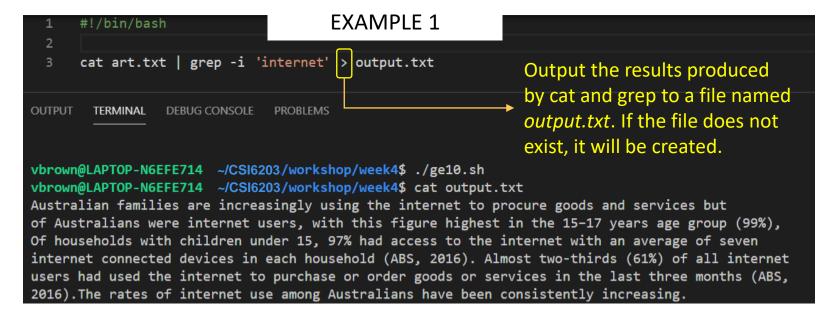
Example Deconstructed



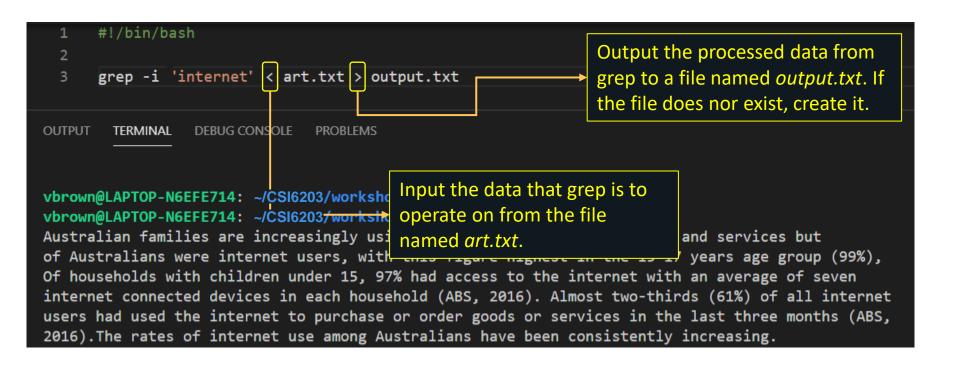
- **1** The **cat** command makes a copy of the file named *art.txt*
- Pipes the data acquired by **cat** to the **STDIN** of the next command (*grep*)
- The grep command retrieves lines of data it receives for each instance of the whole string *internet* in a case-insensitive mode
- Pipes the data acquired by grep to the STDIN of the next command (Word Count)
- The Word Count command will count all instances of the string *internet* in the data received line by line

Redirection

 The standard input and standard output can be redirected to use files instead using the redirection operators < and >



Redirection Example 2





Summary

Terms to Know

- Regular Expressions
- Regular Expression Engines
- Grep and Regex
- Anchors and Wildcards
- Extended RegEx Engine
- ERE Repetition and Optionality
- OR and Expression Grouping
- Common Grep Options
- Piping and Redirection





References and Further Reading

- Ebrahim, M. & Mallet, A. (2018). *Mastering Linux Based Scripting* (2nd Ed), Chapter 11, pp 194-215.
- http://regular-expressions.info/engine.html
- http://tldp.org/LDP/Bash-Beginners-Guide/html/chap_04.html
- https://regexr.com/
- https://regex101.com/