

Chapter 6: Introduction to Classes and Objects

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Objectives

- ▶ Understand basic concepts of OOP, **classes** and **objects**
- ▶ Learn to **declare** a class and use it to create an object
- ▶ Learn to declare **instance methods** to implement **class behavior**
- ▶ Learn to declare **instance variables** to implement **class attributes**
- ▶ Learn to use a **constructor** to initialize an object when it is created

Object-Oriented Programming

- ▶ Object-oriented programming (OOP) involves programming using **objects** (对象).
- ▶ An object represents an **entity** (实体) in the real world that can be distinctly identified, e.g., a student, a desk, a cat, a button, a book, etc.

Object-Oriented Programming

- ▶ An object has a unique identity, **states**, and **behaviors**.
 - States (properties or attributes): e.g., a cat has its age, weight, color, breed, etc.
 - Behaviors (actions): e.g., a cat can eat, sleep, and jump.
- ▶ Objects can interact with each other for computation.
 - E.g., a student feeds a cat, so that the cat's weight increases.

The Car Driving Analogy

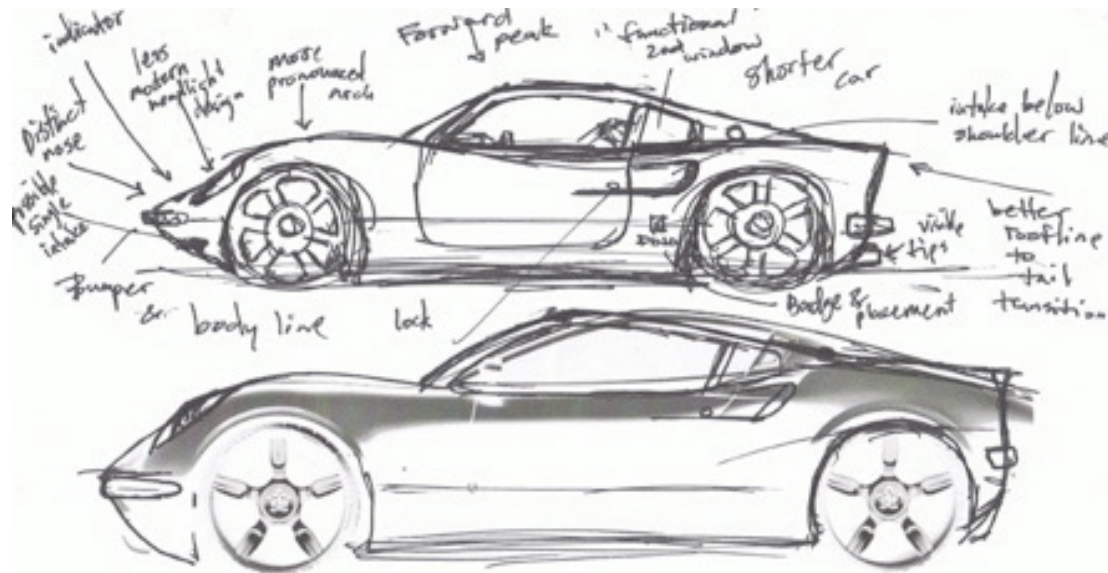
- ▶ Suppose that our computational task is to drive a car and accelerate it by pressing down on its accelerator pedal (油门)



How to make it happen?

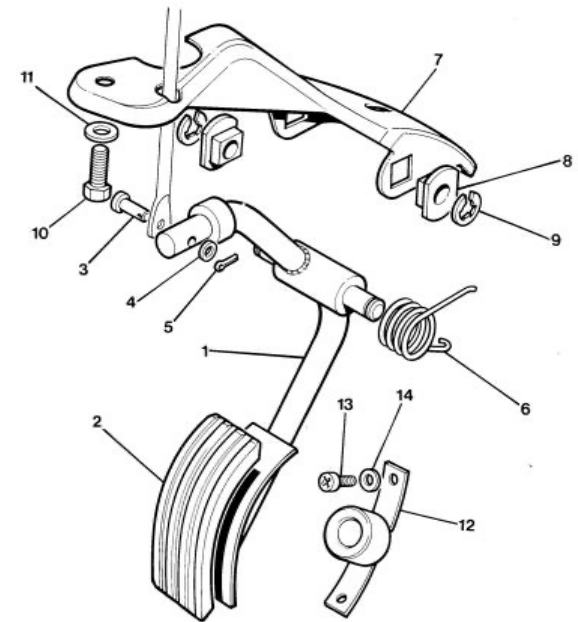
The Car Driving Analogy

- ▶ **The very first step:** Before you can drive a car, someone has to design it (**engineering drawings / blueprints**).



The Car Driving Analogy

- ▶ The car's blueprints should also include the design for an accelerator pedal (油门), the brake pedal (刹车), the steering wheel (方向盘)
- ▶ The behaviors of these components should also be specified, e.g., the car's speed slows down once the brake is pressed.



The Car Driving Analogy

- ▶ We cannot drive a car's **engineering drawings**
- ▶ Before we drive a car, it must be **built from the engineering drawings**
- ▶ Even building a car is not enough, the driver must **press the accelerator pedal** to perform the task of driving the car

The Car Driving Analogy

- ▶ We cannot drive a car's **engineering drawings** **Designing classes**
- ▶ Before we drive a car, it must be **built from the engineering drawings** **Creating concrete instances of a class**
- ▶ Even building a car is not enough, the driver must **press the accelerator pedal** to perform the task of driving the car **Invoking methods for computation**

Programming the Car Driving Scenario

--Design--

- ▶ **Class**: when programming in Java, we begin by creating a program unit (template) called **the Car class**, just like we begin with engineering draws in the driving example.
- ▶ **Method**: In the Car class, we provide one or more *methods* to define a Car's behaviors/actions.
 - speedup()
 - slowdown()
 -

Programming the Car Driving Scenario

--Design--

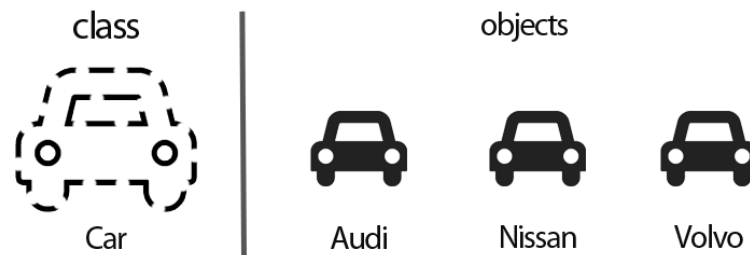
- ▶ **Variables:** Java uses *variables* to define the attributes of a class
 - A car can have many **attributes**: its color, the amount of gas in its tank, its current speed, and the total miles driven
 - These attributes are represented as part of a car's design



Programming the Car Driving Scenario

--Instantiation--

- ▶ We cannot drive a car's engineering drawings. Similarly, we cannot “drive” a class to perform a task
- ▶ Just as we have to build a car from its engineering drawings before driving it, we must build an **instance (object)** of a class before getting the program to perform tasks.



Programming the Car Driving Scenario

--Usage--

- ▶ When driving a car, pressing the accelerator pedal sends a message to the car to perform a task – make the car go faster.
- ▶ Similarly, we send a message to an object by a method call to tell the method of the object to perform its task.
 - A driver instance invokes the speedup() method of a car instance
 - After method invocation, the states (e.g., speed) of the car are updated

The Whole Picture

- ▶ **Class** – a car's engineering drawings (a blueprint/template)
 - **Variable** – to specify the attributes (e.g., color, speed)
 - **Method** – designed to perform tasks (e.g., making a car move)
- ▶ **Instance / Object** – the real car that we drive
- ▶ **Method call** – perform the task (pressing the accelerator pedal)

Objectives

- ▶ Understand basic concepts of OOP, classes and objects
- ▶ Learn to **declare** a class and use it to create an object
- ▶ Learn to declare **instance methods** to implement **class behavior**
- ▶ Learn to declare **instance variables** to implement **class attributes**
- ▶ Learn to use a **constructor** to initialize an object when it is created

Declaring a Class

Every class declaration contains the keyword `class` + the class' name

```
public class GradeBook {  
    // every class' body is enclosed in a pair of  
    // left and right curly braces  
}
```

The **access modifier** `public` indicates that the declared class is visible to all classes everywhere.

Declaring a Method

A class usually consists of one or more methods.

Method = **Method header** + **Method body** (enclosed by {})



```
public class GradeBook {  
    // display welcome message to the user  
    public void displayMessage() {  
        System.out.println("Welcome to the Grade Book!");  
    }  
}
```

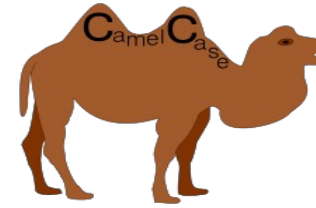
Declaring a Method

The **return type** specifies the type of data the method returns after performing its task, **void** means returning nothing to its calling method.

```
public class GradeBook {  
    // display welcome message to the user  
    public void displayMessage() {  
        System.out.println("Welcome to the Grade Book!");  
    }  
}
```

The **access modifier public** indicates that the method is “available to public”, that is, **can be directly called** from the methods of other classes.

Declaring a Method

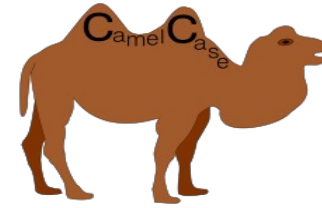


By convention, **method names** are in **Lower Camel Case**: the initial letter is in lower case, subsequent words begin with a capital letter.

```
public class GradeBook {  
    // display welcome message to the user  
    public void displayMessage() {  
        System.out.println("Welcome to the Grade Book!");  
    }  
}
```

Tips: try to **use meaningful names** when declaring a method to make your programs understandable.

Declaring a Method



By convention, **method names** are in **Lower Camel Case** : the initial letter is in lower case, subsequent words begin with a capital letter.

```
public class GradeBook {  
    // display welcome message to the user  
    public void displayMessage() {  
        System.out.println("Welcome to the Grade Book!");  
    }  
}
```

The parentheses enclose the information that the method requires to perform its task. Empty parentheses indicate no information needs.

Declaring a Method

Like class, the method body is also enclosed in {}. The method body contains **statements** that perform the method's task.


```
public class GradeBook {  
    // display welcome message to the user  
    public void displayMessage() {  
        System.out.println("Welcome to the Grade Book!");  
    }  
}
```

Can We Run this Program?

```
public class GradeBook {  
    // display welcome message to the user  
    public void displayMessage() {  
        System.out.println("Welcome to the Grade Book!");  
    }  
}
```


Instantiation and Usage of a Class

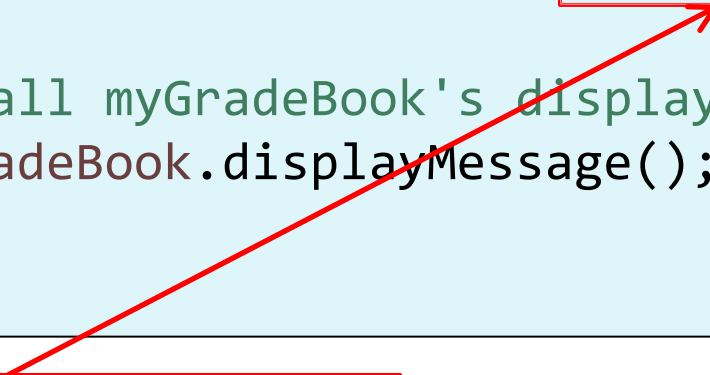
```
public class GradeBookTest {  
    public static void main(String[] args) {  
        // create a GradeBook object  
        // assign it to myGradeBook  
        GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();  
  
        // call myGradeBook's displayMessage method  
        myGradeBook.displayMessage();  
    }  
}
```



Define a variable of the type GradeBook. Note that each new class you create becomes a new data type. Java is an **extensible language**.

Instantiation and Usage of a Class

```
public class GradeBookTest {  
    public static void main(String[] args) {  
        // create a GradeBook object  
        // assign it to myGradeBook  
        GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();  
  
        // call myGradeBook's displayMessage method  
        myGradeBook.displayMessage();  
    }  
}
```



Class instantiation expression. The keyword **new** is used to create a new instance / object of the specified class. Class name + () represent a call to a **constructor** (构造方法, a special method used to initialize the object's data).

Instantiation and Usage of a Class

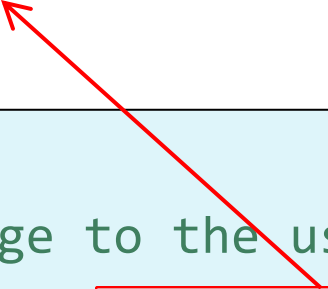
```
public class GradeBookTest {  
    public static void main(String[] args) {  
        // create a GradeBook object  
        // assign it to myGradeBook  
        GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();  
  
        // call myGradeBook's displayMessage method  
        myGradeBook.displayMessage();  
    }  
}
```

Variable myGradeBook is a **reference type** that refers to the created object.

We can use the reference variable myGradeBook to call the method displayMessage() using the **member operator** “.”.

Instantiation and Usage of a Class

- ▶ Sometimes a method needs additional information (messages) to perform its task. **Parameters** are for this purpose.



```
public class GradeBook {  
    // display welcome message to the user  
    public void displayMessage( String courseName ) {  
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the Grade Book for  
        the course%s!\n", courseName);  
    }  
}
```

Instantiation and Usage of a Class

```
public class GradeBookTest {  
    public static void main(String[] args) {  
        GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();  
        myGradeBook.displayMessage("Java Programming");  
    }  
}
```

- Here when calling the method `displayMessage`, we supply a value for the parameter `courseName`. We call such values **arguments**.
- **(Parameter vs. Argument, 形式参数与实际参数)** A parameter is the variable that is part of the method's declaration. An argument is the actual values passed to the method.

Objectives

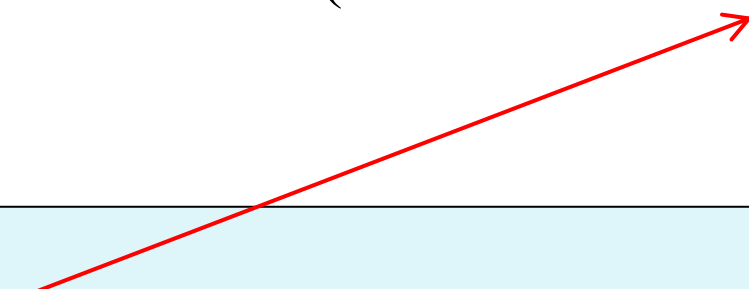
- ▶ Understand basic concepts of OOP, classes and objects
- ▶ Learn to declare a class and use it to create an object
- ▶ Learn to declare instance methods to implement class behavior
- ▶ Learn to declare **instance variables** to implement **class attributes**
- ▶ Learn to use a **constructor** to initialize an object when it is created

Class Attributes

- ▶ An object has **attributes** (e.g., the amount of gas of a car) that are carried with the object as it is used in a program.
- ▶ Such attributes exist before a method is called on an object and after the method completes execution.
 - Lifespan: Object creation → Object destruction
- ▶ A class typically consists of one or more **methods** that **manipulate** (read or write) the **attributes** of a particular object of the class.

Class Attributes

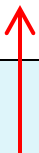
Attributes are represented as variables (also called **fields**, 字段) in a class declaration.



```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
    public void displayMessage( String courseName ) {  
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the Grade Book for  
        the course%s!\n", courseName);  
    }  
}
```

Instance Variables

Each object (instance) of the class has its **own copy** of an attribute in memory, the **field** that represents the attribute is also known as an **instance variable**.



```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
    public void displayMessage( String courseName ) {  
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the Grade Book for  
        the course%s!\n", courseName);  
    }  
}
```

Instance Variables

```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
  
    public void displayMessage( String courseName ) {  
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the Grade Book for  
        the course%s!\n", courseName);  
    }  
}
```



Variables declared in the body of a particular method are known as **local variables** and can be only used in that method.

Instance Variables

```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
  
    public void displayMessage( String courseName ) {  
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the Grade Book for  
        the course%s!\n", courseName);  
    }  
}
```



Instance variables are declared inside a class declaration, but outside the bodies of the class' method declarations.

Instance Variables

```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
  
    public void displayMessage( String courseName ) {  
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the Grade Book for  
        the course%s!\n", courseName);  
    }  
}
```



Most instance variables are declared to be **private** for *data hiding*. Variables (or methods) declared to be private are accessible **only to methods of the class in which they are declared**.

Access Control

- ▶ Suppose that there is a `score` attribute in a `GradeBook` class
- ▶ If `score` can be accessed by anyone, a student can change his score from 60 to 100, an attacker may change everyone's score to 0
- ▶ To avoid this, Java provides the **access control** mechanism to control who can access which attributes or methods, using keywords such as `private` and `public`
- ▶ Most instance variables are declared to be `private`, which can only be accessed by `public` methods

Public Getter and Setter Methods

```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
  
    public void setCourseName(String name) {  
        courseName = name;  
    }  
  
}
```

Update (write)
the data field

Public Getter and Setter Methods

```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
  
    public void setCourseName(String name) {  
        courseName = name;  
    }  
  
    public String getCourseName() {  
        return courseName;  
    }  
  
}
```

Retrieve (read)
the data field

Public Getter and Setter Methods

```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
  
    public void setCourseName(String name) {  
        courseName = name;  
    }  
  
    public String getCourseName() {  
        return courseName;  
    }  
  
    public void displayMessage() {  
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the grade book  
        for\n%s!\n", courseName);  
    }  
}
```

private courseName can be accessed
by methods within its own class

Public Getter and Setter Methods

```
public class GradeBook {  
    private String courseName;  
  
    public void setCourseName(String name) {  
        courseName = name;  
    }  
  
    public String getCourseName() {  
        return courseName;  
    }  
  
    public void displayMessage() {  
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the grade book  
        for\n%s!\n", getCourseName());  
    }  
}
```

Calling public getter method is also okay (recommended)

Public Getter and Setter Methods

```
import java.util.Scanner;
public class GradeBookTest {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();

        Scanner input = new Scanner(System.in);
        myGradeBook.setCourseName(input.nextLine());
        System.out.println(myGradeBook.getCourseName());

        myGradeBook.setCourseName("Java A");
        myGradeBook.displayMessage();
    }
}
```

Objectives

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- ▶ Learn to declare instance variables to implement class attributes
- ▶ Learn to use a **constructor** to initialize an object when it is created

Initializing Objects with Constructors

- ▶ Each class can provide a special method called a **constructor** to be used to **initialize an object of a class when the object is created**
- ▶ Java requires a constructor call for **every** object that is created
- ▶ Keyword **new** instantiates a class (creates an object) by allocating memory for a new object and returning a reference to that memory, then calls the corresponding class's constructor to initialize the object.
 - GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();

Declaration Instantiation & Initialization

Initializing Objects with Constructors

- ▶ The empty parentheses after "`new GradeBook`" indicate a call to the class's constructor without arguments

```
GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();
```

- ▶ Like methods, constructors can be **overloaded** to provide **custom initialization** for objects of your class

```
GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook("Java");
```

```
GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook("Alice", "Java");
```

```
GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook(2022, "Spring", "Java");
```

Example

```
public class GradeBook {  
    public String courseName; // course name for this grade book  
    // constructor initializes courseName with String argument  
    public GradeBook(String name) {  
        courseName = name; // initializes courseName  
    }  
    // method to set the course name  
    public void setCourseName(String name) {  
        courseName = name;  
    }  
    // ...  
}
```


Initializing Objects with Constructors

```
public GradeBook(String name) {  
    courseName = name; // initialize courseName  
}
```

- A constructor **must have the same name** with its class
- Normally, constructors are declared **public**.
- An important difference between constructors and methods is that **constructors cannot return values, so they cannot specify a return type** (not even `void`).

Initializing Objects with Constructors

```
public GradeBook(String name) {  
    courseName = name; // initialize courseName  
}
```

- ▶ Like a method, a constructor's parameter list specifies the data it requires to perform its task.
 - When creating a new object, the data is placed in the parentheses after the class name: `GradeBook book = new GradeBook("CS102A");`
- ▶ A **class instance creation expression** returns a **reference** to the new object (the address to its variables and methods in memory).

Initializing Objects with Constructors

```
public class GradeBookTest {  
    public static void main(String[] args) {  
        // create GradeBook objects  
        GradeBook gradeBook1 = new GradeBook(  
            "CS101 Introduction to Java Programming");  
        GradeBook gradeBook2 = new GradeBook(  
            "CS102 Data Structures in Java");  
        // display initial value of CourseName for each GradeBook  
        System.out.printf("gradeBook1 course name is: %s\n",  
            gradeBook1.getCourseName());  
        System.out.printf("gradeBook2 course name is: %s\n",  
            gradeBook2.getCourseName());  
    }  
}
```

```
gradeBook1 course name is: CS101 Introduction to Java Programming  
gradeBook2 course name is: CS102 Data Structures in Java
```

Default Constructors

- ▶ A class may not have any programmer-written constructor.
- ▶ In this case, the compiler provides a **default constructor** with no parameters
 - When a class has only the default constructor, its instance variables are initialized with default values (e.g., an `int` variable gets the value 0)
- ▶ If programmers explicitly declare any constructors for a class, Java compiler will not create a default constructor for the class.

Default Constructors

```
public class GradeBook { // no constructor provided by the programmer
    private String courseName;
    public void setCourseName(String name) {
        courseName = name;
    }
    public String getCourseName() {
        return courseName;
    }
    public void displayMessage() {
        System.out.printf("Welcome to the grade book for\n%s!\n", getCourseName());
    }
}
```



Can we write the following statement to create a GradeBook object?

```
GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();
```

Yes. Compiler will provide a default constructor with no parameters.

`courseName` is initialized to `null` (default for reference types)

Default Constructors

```
public class GradeBook { // this version has a constructor
    private String courseName;

    public GradeBook(String name) {
        courseName = name;
    }

    public void setCourseName(String name) {
        courseName = name;
    }

    public String getCourseName() {
        return courseName;
    } ...
}
```



Can we write the following statement to create a GradeBook object?

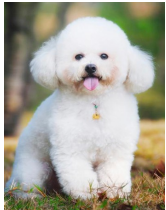
```
GradeBook myGradeBook = new GradeBook();
```

No. Compiler will not provide a default constructor this time. The statement will cause a **compilation error**.

Case Study Time!

Case Study I : Pet Show

- ▶ A happy family has two pets: a poodle (贵宾犬) named “Fluffy”, a hound (猎犬) named “Alfred”.
- ▶ Suppose we want to write a Java program for a pet show: each dog makes a self introduction.



“Hello, my name is **Fluffy**. I am a **poodle**.”



“Hello, my name is **Alfred**. I am a **hound**.”

Program Design

- ▶ Observation 1: The two pets are both dogs. So we can design a Dog class to represent them.

```
public class Dog {  
  
}
```

Program Design

- ▶ **Observation 2:** The two pets have their own names and belong to different breeds (品种). We can define two instance variables to represent such information.

```
public class Dog {  
    private String name;  
    private String breed;  
}
```

Program Design

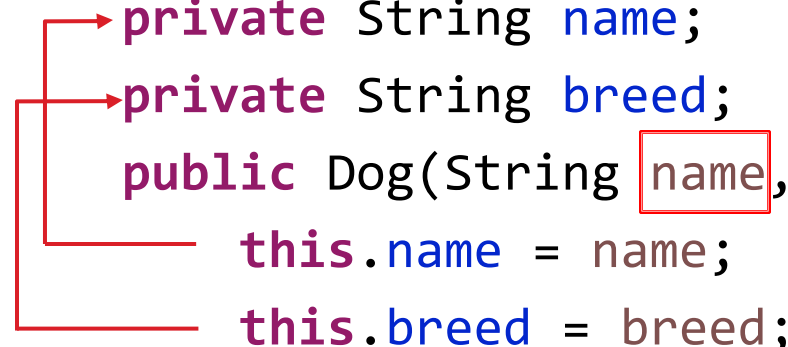
- ▶ In order to create instances of the Dog class, we need to define a constructor. Since each dog has two attributes, we can define a constructor that takes two arguments.

```
public class Dog {  
    private String name;  
    private String breed;  
    public Dog(String name, String breed) {  
        this.name = name;  
        this.breed = breed;  
    }  
}
```

Program Design

- ▶ In order to create instances of the Dog class, we need to define a constructor. Since each dog has two attributes, we can define a constructor that takes two arguments.

```
public class Dog {  
    private String name;  
    private String breed;  
    public Dog(String name, String breed) {  
        this.name = name;  
        this.breed = breed;  
    }  
}
```



The passed arguments will be used to initialize the attributes.

Program Design

- ▶ In order to create instances of the Dog class, we need to define a constructor. Since each dog has two attributes, we can define a constructor that takes two arguments.

```
public class Dog {  
    private String name;  
    private String breed;  
    public Dog(String name, String breed) {  
        this.name = name;  
        this.breed = breed;  
    }  
}
```

The keyword **this** points to the current object. Helps differentiate the method parameters (local variables) and the instance variables with the same name.

Program Design

- ▶ In order to create instances of the Dog class, we need to define a constructor. Since each dog has two attributes, we can define a constructor that takes two arguments.

```
public class Dog {  
    private String name;  
    private String breed;  
    public Dog(String dogName, String dogBreed) {  
        name = dogName;  
        breed = dogBreed;  
    }  
}
```

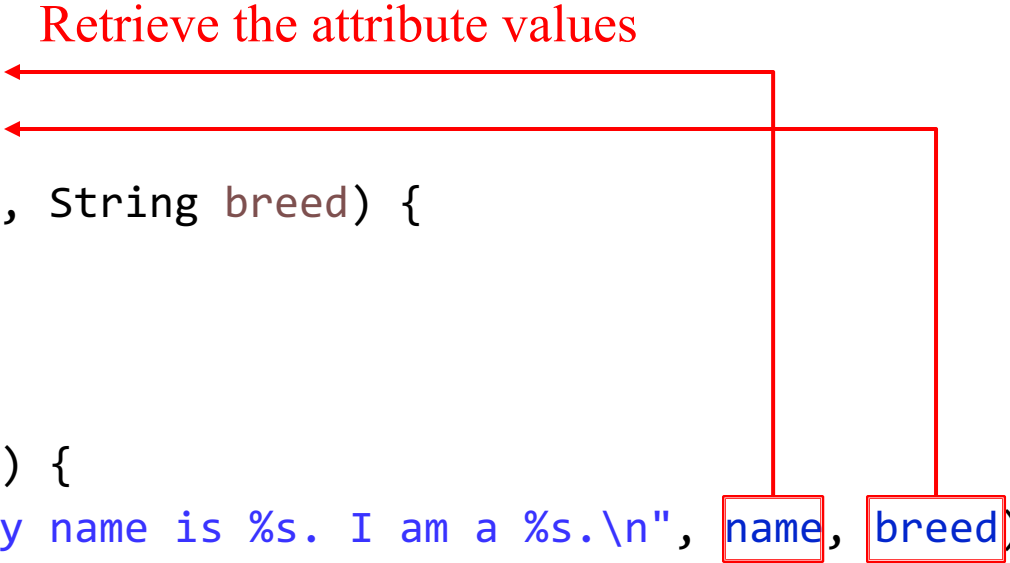
“this” is not compulsory if the parameters and instance variables have different names (no ambiguity).

Program Design

- ▶ The dogs have the ability of making self introductions.

```
public class Dog {  
    private String name;  
    private String breed;  
    public Dog(String name, String breed) {  
        this.name = name;  
        this.breed = breed;  
    }  
    public void selfIntro() {  
        System.out.printf("My name is %s. I am a %s.\n", name, breed);  
    }  
}
```

Retrieve the attribute values



Program Design

- ▶ Finally, we implement the PetShow program with a main method.

```
public class PetShow {  
    public static void main(String[] args) {  
        Dog dog1 = new Dog("Fluffy", "poodle");  
        Dog dog2 = new Dog("Alfred", "hound");  
        dog1.selfIntro();  
        dog2.selfIntro();  
    }  
}
```

Instantiation:

Invoke the constructor to create two dog objects

Program Design

- ▶ Finally, we implement the PetShow program with a main method.

```
public class PetShow {  
    public static void main(String[] args) {  
        Dog dog1 = new Dog("Fluffy", "poodle");  
        Dog dog2 = new Dog("Alfred", "hound");  
        dog1.selfIntro();  
        dog2.selfIntro();  
    }  
}
```

Invoke methods on the two objects.

Object references (or names) are needed to invoke instance methods.

Case Study II: Account Balances

- ▶ Suppose we are asked to design a Java program for managing bank accounts.
- ▶ For simplicity, we assume that the bank only provides two types of services:
 - Adding money to an account (存款)
 - Checking the balance of an account (查询余额)

```
// Account class with a constructor to validate and
// initialize instance variable balance of type double

public class Account {
    // instance variable that stores the balance
    private double balance;

    // constructor
    public Account(double initialBalance) {
        // if initialBalance is not greater than 0.0
        // balance is initialized to the default value 0.0
        if(initialBalance > 0.0) balance = initialBalance;
    }

    // add an amount to the account
    public void deposit(double amount) {
        balance += amount;
    }

    // return the account balance
    public double getBalance() {
        return balance;
    }
}
```

Validating Constructor Arguments

- ▶ It's common for users to open an account to deposit money immediately, so the constructor receives a parameter `initialBalance` of type `double` that represents the initial balance.
 - The constructor ensures that `initialBalance` is greater than `0.0`
 - If so, `initialBalance`'s value is assigned to instance variable `balance`.
 - Otherwise, `balance` remains to be `0.0` (its default initial value).

```
// constructor
public Account(double initialBalance) {
    // if initialBalance is not greater than 0.0
    // balance is initialized to the default value 0.0
    if(initialBalance > 0.0) balance = initialBalance;
}
```

Case Study II: Account Balances

- ▶ We further define a class `AccountTest` that **creates** and **manipulates** two `Account` objects.
- ▶ The two classes `Account` and `AccountTest` can be placed in the same or different directories (packages) from the same project. Method invocation is slightly different for these two cases.
- ▶ For now, let's assume that they are in the same directory.

```
import java.util.Scanner;
public class AccountTest {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        Account account1 = new Account(50.00);
        Account account2 = new Account(-7.53);

        // display initial balance of each object
        System.out.printf("account1 balance: $%.2f\n",
            account1.getBalance());
        System.out.printf("account2 balance: $%.2f\n\n",
            account2.getBalance());

        Scanner input = new Scanner(System.in);
        double depositAmount; // deposit amount read from user
    }
}
```

```
System.out.print("Enter deposit amount for account1: ");  
depositAmount = input.nextDouble();  
System.out.printf("\nadding %.2f to account1 balance\n\n",  
    depositAmount);  
account1.deposit(depositAmount); // add to account1 balance  
  
// display balances  
System.out.printf("account1 balance: $%.2f\n",  
    account1.getBalance());  
System.out.printf("account2 balance: $%.2f\n\n",  
    account2.getBalance());
```

```
System.out.print("Enter deposit amount for account2: ");
depositAmount = input.nextDouble();
System.out.printf("\nadding %.2f to account2 balance\n\n",
    depositAmount);
account2.deposit(depositAmount); // add to account2 balance

//display balances
System.out.printf("account1 balance: $%.2f\n",
    account1.getBalance());
System.out.printf("account2 balance: $%.2f\n\n",
    account2.getBalance());
input.close();
}
}
```


account1 balance: \$50.00

account2 balance: \$0.00

Enter deposit amount for account1: 25.53

adding 25.53 to account1 balance

account1 balance: \$75.53

account2 balance: \$0.00

Enter deposit amount for account2: 123.45

adding 123.45 to account2 balance

account1 balance: \$75.53

account2 balance: \$123.45

Primitive Types vs. Reference Types

- ▶ Java types are divided into two categories: **primitive types** and **reference types**.
- ▶ Primitive types are the basic types of data
 - byte, short, int, long, float, double, boolean, char
 - A primitive-type variable can store one value of its declared type

Type	Description	Default value	Size	Example code
boolean	Truth value	false	1 bit	<code>boolean b = false;</code>
char	Unicode character	<code>\u0000</code>	16 bits	<code>char c = 'z';</code>

Primitive Types vs. Reference Types

- ▶ All non-primitive types are reference types, including **instantiable classes and arrays** (an array is a container object that holds a fixed number of values of a single type)
 - Java Built-in: Scanner, Random, String, String[], int[]
 - User defined: Dog, Account, etc.
- ▶ Reference-type variables **store the memory locations of objects**
 - Dog **dog1** = new Dog("Fluffy", "Poodle");
 - Such a variable is said to **refer to an object** in the program. Objects that are referenced may each contain instance variables of primitive or reference types.

Primitive Types vs. Reference Types

- ▶ Reference-type variables, if not explicitly initialized, are initialized by default to the value **null** (refer to nothing).
- ▶ To call methods of an object, you need to use the reference (**must be non-null**) to the object: `dog1.selfIntro();`
- ▶ Primitive-type variables (e.g., `int` variables) do not refer to objects, so such variables cannot be used to call methods