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1  // Lecture 64 – Operator Overloading V (Smart
  •   Pointers)
2
3  #include "Integer.h"
4  #include <iostream>
5  #include <memory>
6  // In main.cpp
7  void CreateInteger(){
8      Integer *p = new Integer; // create an integer
  •   object on heap
9      p->SetValue(3); // set some value in the integer
  •   object
10     std::cout << p->GetValue() << std::endl; //
  •   display it in the console.
11     delete p;
12 }
13 int main(){
14     // Invoke function on main()
15     CreateInteger();
16     return 0;
17 }
18 // When you have large programs, it is not always
  •   possible to remember to call delete on the
  •   pointers, so that will lead to massive memory leaks
  •   in the program. There are a lot of tools out there
  •   to detect memory leaks in your program – and visual
  •   studio has a built in library that helps you detect
  •   a memory leak. Instead of using those tools, we can
  •   prevent memory leaks outright, and that is possible
  •   using an idiom called as
19 //             RESOURCE ACQUISITION IS
  •   INITIALISATION
20 // this idiom was created by Bjarne Stroustrup and is
  •   also popular in some other languages . With this
  •   idiom, the lifetime of a resource is bound to a
  •   local object – so twhen the local object is
  •   destroyed, in its destructor it'll automatically
  •   release the resource. We can apply this idiom for
  •   the memory that we have allocated on the heap.
21
22 // We can create a class called IntPtr in main.cpp
  •   and we'll put a pointer of Integer object into it,

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- which will be initialised through the constructor
- of IntPtr and the destructor will free the memory.

```

23 class IntPtr{
24     Integer *m_p;
25 public:
26     IntPtr (Integer *p) : m_p(p){
27     }
28     ~IntPtr(){
29         delete m_p;
30     }
31 };
32
33 void CreateInteger()
34 {
35     IntPtr p = new Integer;
36     // We can replace the Integer * with IntPtr and
37     // this doesnt have to be a pointer, in fact it is
38     // going to be a local object. Obviously we cannot
39     // invoke SetValue() on this IntPtr because it is
40     // not a member of IntPtr.
41     // So we can remove it for a moment, and if you
42     // run this now, you will see the constructor and
43     // destructor calls. That means the memory that we
44     // allocated on the heap using new is properly
45     // destroyed.
46 }
47
48 // But what use is this IntPtr if we cannot access
49 // the members of our Integer object? So we'll set up
50 // this IntPtr class in such a way that when its
51 // object is created the object will behave like a
52 // Pointer. That means we'll be able to access the
53 // member functions of the underlying resource using
54 // the arrow operator, and we'll do that by
55 // overloading the arrow operator.
56 // So the return type of arrow operator would be
57 // Integer pointer.
58
59 class IntPtr{
60     Integer *m_p;
61 public:
62     IntPtr (Integer *p) : m_p(p){

```

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47     }
48     ~IntPtr(){
49         delete m_p;
50     }
51     Integer* operator ->(){ // overloaded the arrow
    •     operator!
52         return m_p;
53     }
54 };
55 // Now in our CreateInteger() function we can set the
    •     value for the Integer:
56 void CreateInteger(){
57     IntPtr p = new Integer;
58     p->SetValue(3);
59 }
60 int main(){
61     CreateInteger();
62 }
63
64 // If you run this, it builds fine and you can see,
    •     it also calls the destructor of Integer because at
    •     the end of the scope, the p object is destroyed,
    •     and the destructor calls delete on the underlying
    •     pointer. So using RAII, we have bound the resource.
    •     Our resource is the memory allocation that is bound
    •     to the lifetime of the local object and this local
    •     object is automatically destroyed at the end of the
    •     scope.
65
66 // We can also overload one more operator that would
    •     give the behaviour of a pointer to this object and
    •     that operator is the asterisk(*) operator.
67
68 Integer & operator *(){
69     return *m_p;
70 }
71 // And we can even dereference Pointers
72 void CreateInteger(){
73     IntPtr p = new Integer;
74     (*p).SetValue(3);
75 }
76 // So all the places where we use a pointer can be

```

- replaced with this object that uses the RAII idiom.
- This object p is a local object but it behaves like
- a pointer, and it ALSO automatically deletes the
- underlying memory, so we can say this object is a
- SMART POINTER.

77

78

79 // DEFINITION OF SMART Pointer

80 /*

81 A SMART POINTER behaves like a pointer but it

- automatically frees the memory. Unfortunately, this
- smart pointer can be used only with the Integer
- objects but C++ STL provides us with smart pointers
- that can be used to manage any kind of pointer.
- We'll look at those in the next video.

82 */

83

84 /////////////// Lecture 65: Operator Overloading VI -

- Smart Pointers (C++11)

85 /*

86 C++ provides different kinds of smart pointers and

- they are defined in the STD header file: memory.

87

88 SMART PTR #1: STD UNIQUE_PTR.

89 The first smart pointer I want to talk about is the

- unique_ptr. This is a class template and it
- requires the type of the pointer that you want to
- manage.

90 */

91 **class** Integer {...};

92 **void** CreateInteger(){

93 std::unique_ptr<Integer> p (new Integer); //

- Specify the Integer type within the < > and
- then allocate memory for the integer.

94 // When we run this NOW, we can see the memory

- was allocated and freed. this is because we
- used a smart pointer.

95

96 // Unique pointer is used when you do not want to

- share the underlying resource. That means we
- CANNOT CREATE A COPY of the unique pointer. If
- you try to do so. the compiler will not allow

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    // ...
    it because its copy constructor is a DELETED
    FUNCTION.
97     auto p2(p); // COMPILER ERROR!!! – attempting to
    •
    reference a deleted function.
98     // Even though you cannot create a copy of the
    •
    unique_ptr, you can move it. It has move
    •
    semantics only and does not support copy
    •
    semantics.
99 }
100 // Even though you cannot create a copy of the
    •
    unique_ptr, you can move it. It has move semantics
    •
    only and does not support copy semantics.
101 void Process(std::unique_ptr<Integer> ptr){
102     std::cout << ptr->GetValue() << std::endl;
103 }
104
105 void CreateInteger()
106 {
107     std::unique_ptr<Integer> p (new Integer);
108     // If we try to invoke the process function like
    •
    this,
109     *p.SetValue(3);
110     Process(p); // it will not compile, because
    •
    you're trying to pass the unique_ptr by value
    •
    and THAT will create a copy.
111
112     // Do this instead – this will invoke the move
    •
    constructor and move the underlying resource
    •
    into the Process() function.
113     Process(std::move(p));
114     // After this, p will no longer hold the resource.
115     // That is why you should not use it after move,
    •
    so the ownership will be transferred to ptr,
    •
    and p will be set to a nullptr.
116 }
117 // SMART PTR #2: STD SHARED POINTER
118 // If you want to use this smart pointer in
    •
    CreateInteger() after Process(), then that means
    •
    you are SHARING THE UNDERLYING RESOURCE.
119 // Let's change our above code accordingly.
120 void Process(std::shared_ptr<Integer> ptr){
121     std::cout << ptr->GetValue() << std::endl;

```

```

121     shared_ptr<Integer> p = ptr; // ptr is destroyed,
122 }
123
124 void CreateInteger()
125 {
126     std::shared_ptr<Integer> p (new Integer);
127     // If we try to invoke the process function like
128     • this,
129     *p.SetValue(3);
130
131     // Do this instead – this will invoke the move
132     • constructor and move the underlying resource
133     • into the Process() function.
134     Process(p);
135     // After this, p will no longer hold the resource.
136     // That is why you should not use it after move,
137     • so the ownership will be transferred to ptr,
138     • and p will be set to a nullptr.
139     // A shared pointer is used when you want to
140     • share the underlying resource with other parts
141     • of the code.
142     // It internally implements some kind of
143     • reference counting and each time a COPY of a
144     • shared pointer is created, the reference count
145     • is incremented by 1. When a shared pointer is
146     • destroyed, the reference count is decremented
147     • and if the reference count becomes zero, then
148     • it releases the underlying resource, so we can
149     • still use the shared pointer p after the
150     • Process() function.
151
152     // in this function, the reference count of the
153     • shared pointer is 2, and when the shared
154     • pointer ptr is destroyed at the end of the
155     • scope, that is decremented to 1, and the
156     • underlying resource will be released only at
157     • the end of the scope of this CreateInteger()
158     • function. When the object p gets destroyed, it
159     • will decrement the reference count by 1, which
160     • will go to zero and the memory will be released.
161
162     // MODERN C++ emphasises use of smart pointers
163     • rather than raw pointers. That is why it is

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140         rather than raw pointers. That is why, it is
141         • recommended that you should always use smart
142         • pointers rather than raw pointers. This way you
143         • can prevent memory leaks for your programs.
144
145     // SMART POINTERS ARE DISCUSSED IN GREATER DEPTH
146     • IN THE NEXT SECTION.
147 }
148
149
```