

Problem 3:

2. Different messages that result in the same signature and are grammatically correct English sentences:

$m = \text{"How many stars do you think there are in the universe?"}$

$m' = \text{"221442317185 at least!"}$

3. Since signing messages use a hash function, in this case, SHA256, to get the same signature for two different messages, we need a hash collision. We can use the birthday paradox problem to figure out how large d would have to be to ensure that the probability we have a hash collision is less than 50%. From the birthday paradox problem:

$$E[X] = C(k,2)/N \approx k^2 / 2 * N < 1/2$$

Going back to the birthday paradox problem, k in this equation would be 200 or the number of "balls", in this case, messages signed, we throw in N bins. N is approximately 2^d which is the number of leaves in a binary tree with depth d . So now we have:

$$200^2 / 2 * 2^d < 1/2$$

$$40000 / 2 * 2^d < 1/2$$

$$20000 / 2^d < 1/2$$

$$2^d > 40000$$

$$d > \log_2(40000)$$

$$d > 15.2877$$

This means we would need d to be at least 16 to ensure that the probability we have a hash collision is less than 50%.