CSC1015F Assignment 8: Recursion

Assignment Instructions

This assignment involves constructing Python functions that use recursion. You must not use loop constructs (such as 'for' and 'while') in your solutions.

There are four questions. The first concerns identifying palindromes, the second two concern constructing a module containing *pattern matching* functions. The last concerns the identification of *palindromic prime numbers*.

Assessment

Your code will be automatically marked. Say that there are *N* trials for a question. The first *(N-1)* trials will check that your code functions correctly by executing it on test inputs. The *N*th is a penalty test. It scans the code for evidence of the use of iteration or the use of list/string reversal expressions. If it finds evidence, then it deducts the marks for the question.

In some cases, the penalty test will report a false positive. For instance, it thinks you're using loops but you are not, you simply have a variable name containing the word 'for', e.g. 'former', 'afford'.

Pattern matching

Let's say that we are building a 'dictionary' program that people can use to look up the spelling and meaning of words. People don't always know the spelling of the word they're looking for.

For the program to function well, some sort of pattern matching is required. Pattern matching is a process by which we search for words with some given characteristics. The characteristics of words include their length, character content and character order.

A pattern is a description of required characteristics.

A simple way of representing a pattern is by using a sequence of letters and special 'wild card' characters. Question 2 and 3 concern such a scheme.

We'll introduce the scheme with examples:

Pattern	Possible word matches
letter	letter
l?ad	lead, load
l*ad	lad, launchpad, lead, letterhead, lipread, load, loggerhead, lunkhead, ...
l?*ad	launchpad, lead, letterhead, lipread, load, loggerhead, lunkhead, ...
*action	abreaction, abstraction, action, attraction, benefaction, coaction, ...

And here are the rules:

- A pattern is a sequence of letters and the wild card characters '?' and '*'.
- When a letter appears in a pattern it indicates that precisely that letter must appear at the same position in matching words.
- When the wildcard character '?' appears in a pattern it indicates that any letter may appear at that position.
- When the wildcard character '*' appears in a pattern it indicates that a sequence of zero or more of letters is acceptable at that position.

Question one [20 marks]

A palindrome is a word, phrase, number, or other sequence of symbols or elements, whose meaning may be interpreted the same way in either forward or reverse direction (see Wikipedia).

Write a Python program called 'palindrome.py' that uses a recursive function to calculate whether or not a string is a palindrome (reads the same if reversed).

You may NOT use iteration, or a string slice expression (or any other technique) to reverse the string without using recursion!

Sample I/O:

```
Enter a string:
able was I ere I saw elba
Palindrome!
```

Sample I/O:

```
Enter a string:
elba is a noob
Not a palindrome!
```

Question two [20 marks]

Write a Python module called *simplematch.py* that contains a recursive function called *'match(pattern, word)'*, that can be used to determine if a given pattern matches a given word.

A pattern consists of letters and '?' wildcards.

A '?' wildcard matches any letter at the corresponding position in the word.

On the Vula page for this assignment you will find a program called *testsimple.py* that you can use to check your function. (The automatic marker will use this.)

Sample I/O:

```
Enter a pattern (or 'q' to quit):
l?ad
Enter a word
lead
It's a match.
Enter a pattern:
le?d
Enter a word
led
They don't match.
Enter a pattern (or 'q' to quit):
l??d
Enter a word
lend
It's a match.
Enter a pattern (or 'q' to quit):
q
```

HINTS:

- I can think of three base cases. One is when both strings are empty. Another is when one is empty and the other is not. And the third is …
- The palindrome function makes progress by 'eating' the characters at the ends of the string. This function makes progress by eating the first letter of each string.

Question three [30 marks]

Write a module called *advancedmatch.py* recursive function called '*match(pattern, word)*' that can be used to determine if a given pattern matches a given word.

In this case, a pattern consists of letters and '?' and '*' wildcards.

A '?' wildcard matches any letter at the corresponding position in the word.

A '*' wildcard matches zero or more letters at the corresponding position in the word.

On the Vula page for this assignment you will find a program called *testadvanced.py* that can be used to check your function. (The automatic marker will use this.)

Sample I/O:

```
Enter a pattern (or 'q' to quit):
l*ad
Enter a word:
launchpad
It's a match.
Enter a pattern (or 'q' to quit):
*ad
Enter a word:
lead
It's a match.
Enter a pattern (or 'q' to quit):
**ad
Enter a word:
lard
They don't match.
Enter a pattern (or 'q' to quit):
q
```

HINTS:

- We now have an extra base case: if *word* is '' and *pattern* is '*' then return *True*.
- Generally, when the first character of the pattern is a '*' wildcard, try to (i) match the rest of the pattern to the word, or (ii) match the pattern to the rest of the word.

Question four [30 marks]

Write a program called '`palindromeprimes.py`' that uses recursive functions to find all palindromic primes between two integers *N*, *M*, supplied as input. (start and end points are included).

- A palindrome number is a number that reads the same from the front and the back. Examples are: 212, 44, 9009, 4567654.

- To calculate whether a number is a palindrome or not, incorporate your answer to question 1.
- A prime number is a number greater than 1 that is only divisible by 1 and itself. Examples are: 3, 11, 313.

Some examples of palindromic primes are: 11, 191, 313.

You may assume it's always the case that *N>1*, and that *N≤M*.

You MUST NOT use any form of loop in your program! (Yes, we're pretty obsessive about this.)

Add the following lines at the top of your program to increase the amount of recursion that Python will allow:

```
import sys
sys.setrecursionlimit (30000)
```

Sample I/O:

```
Enter the starting point N:
200
Enter the ending point M:
800
The palindromic primes are:
313
353
373
383
727
757
787
797
```

Submission

Create and submit a Zip file called 'ABCXYZ123.zip' (where ABCXYZ123 is YOUR student number) containing palindrome.py, simplematch.py, advancedmatch.py, and palindromeprime.py.

END