

Homework #2

B05902120 / Yu-Ting, TSENG

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Problem description

In assignment 2, you are required to implement a bidding system which will handle a sequence of competitions. The goal of this assignment is to practice how to communicate between processes through `pipe` and `FIFO`, and to understand how to use `fork` to create processes.

There is only one bidding system which has a list of players. The bidding system will distribute every four players to a competition held by a host. A competition will be held ten rounds, and every player will get 1000 dollars each round. In each round, each player need to announce how much he would like to spend on each item. For example, four players, A, B, C, D attend this competition. In the first round, they tell the host 900, 900, 500, and 300 separately. After the host gets their announcements, it will judge that C wins the item. This is because both A and B announce the same number of money in this round, the host will find the second large and unique one to win the item. In this round, C will pay 500 dollars, and the other three, A, B, and D will get their money back. In the second round, A, B, and D will have 2000 dollars, while C only has 1500 dollars. The result depends on the number of items they got after ten rounds in the competition.

One announcement is called a round. At the beginning of each round, the host will tell players how much money do they have as well as others', and they cannot announce more than they really have. A competition will be held ten rounds, and only one player will win the item in each round.

The bidding system, needs to schedule every four players to each host. That is, if there are N players, there will be $C(N, 4)$ competitions. However, the number of host may be more than or less than the number of competitions, and a host can only hold a

competition at a time.

After a competition is finished, the host should return the rankings of the competition to the bidding system. The bidding system should then add the scores to the corresponding player accumulatively. The bidding system should wait until all competitions completed and rank all players according to their accumulative scores.

Format for input and output

The request to bidding system:

```
./bidding_system [host_num] [player_num]
```

It requires two arguments, the number of hosts ($1 \leq \text{host_num} \leq 12$), and the number of players ($4 \leq \text{player_num} \leq 20$).

At first, the bidding system should fork and execute the number of hosts specified by the argument, with id from 1 to `host_num`. The bidding system must build pipes to communicate before executing them. The message coming from the host would be the rankings of players of the competition held by the host(described in the `host.c` part). After bidding system executes a desired number of hosts, it should then distribute 4 players to an available host via pipe. The players' id are numbered from 1 to `player_num`, so the messages sent to the host are of the format in the following,

```
[player1_id] [player2_id] [player3_id] [player4_id]\n
```

Please keep every four players' id in ascending order.

If there is no available host, the bidding system should wait until one of the hosts return the competition result, and assign another 4 players to that host. There will be $C(\text{player_num}, 4)$ competitions in total. You need to make sure that you make full use of all hosts and try not to let any available host idle.

The bidding system should keep accumulative scores of all players. The accumulative scores are initialized to 0. When a host return the competition result, the bidding system should add scores to the corresponding player accumulatively. The player in the first, second, third, and fourth place gets 3, 2, 1, 0 separately.

After all competitions are done, the bidding system should send "-1 -1 -1 -1\n"

to all hosts, telling them that all competitions are finished so that they can exit. Then, the bidding system outputs all players' id in increasing order and their corresponding ranks, separated by a space. For example, if there are five players and their accumulative scores are 7, 10, 3, 7, 3, the bidding system should output:

```
1 2\n
2 1\n
3 4\n
4 2\n
5 4\n
```

The request to host:

```
./host [host_id]
```

It requires an argument, the id of the host. The host should create five FIFOs:

1. `host[host_id].FIFO`: read responses from 4 players.
2. `host[host_id]_A.FIFO`: write a message to player A.
3. `host[host_id]_B.FIFO`: write a message to player B.
4. `host[host_id]_C.FIFO`: write a message to player C.
5. `host[host_id]_D.FIFO`: write a message to player D.

The host should read from `stdin`, waiting bidding system to assign 4 players in. After knowing the players, the host forks 4 child processes, and executes 4 player programs, starting a ten-round competition. In each round, the host first tells all these 4 player how much money do they have(as well as others) via specific FIFO to help them make their decisions. Notice that players cannot announce an amount of money larger than they really have. Hosts should judge which player wins the item in each round, and calculate how much money do they have in the next round, which is defined as

$$money_{next} = 1000 + money_{prev} - \alpha * pay$$

where $money_{next}$ is the money in the next round, $money_{prev}$ is the money in the previous round. $\alpha = 1$ if the player wins the item in the previous round, otherwise $\alpha = 0$. pay is an amount of money that the player was willing to pay in the previous round. Messages from hosts to players should be of the format in the following,

```
[player_A money] [player_B money]
[player_C money] [player_D money]\n
```

After giving out the message to each player, the host should continue to collect money coming from 4 players. The format of the message will be describe in the `player.c` part.

The host accumulates each player's score, which means the number of items got in this competition. After 10 rounds, the host needs to output the following to standard output,

```
[playerA_id] [playerA_rank] 2\n
[playerB_id] [playerB_rank] 2\n
[playerC_id] [playerC_rank] 2\n
[playerD_id] [playerD_rank] 2\n
```

where the ranks are ordered from 1 to 4. If some players get the same scores, they will be ranked at the same place, and the following one will be ranked according to the number of players whose scores are higher. For example, if four players, `player_1`, `player_2`, `player_3`, and `player_4` get 3, 4, 3, 0 respectively. Then the host will rank `player_2` the first place, and rank both `player_1` and `player_3` the second place, and rank `player_4` the fourth place.

After sending out the result to bidding system, the host should wait until bidding system assigns another competition. However, when the host receives "-1 -1 -1 -1\n" from bidding system, it indicates that all competitions are done, so the host should exit.

The request to player:

```
./player [host_id] [player_index] [random_key]
```

It requires three arguments. `host_id` is the host id that holds the competition. `player_index` should be one of 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D', the index of a player in a competition. `random_key` would be an integer for a player ($0 \leq \text{random_key} \leq 65535$), and should be randomly generated unique for 4 players in the same competition. It is used to verify if a response really comes from that player.

Note that the player index is NOT the same as the player id. It is just a index of each player and used to indicate a certain player in a competition. The player should open a FIFO named `host[host_id]_[player_index].FIFO`, such as `host1A.FIFO`, which was already created by the host. The player reads the message from `host[host_id]_[player_index].FIFO` and writes the message to `host[host_id].FIFO`.

Take `host1` and `player_A` as an example,

$$\text{host1.FIFO} \xleftarrow{\text{read}} \text{host1} \xrightarrow{\text{write}} \text{host1_A.FIFO} \xleftarrow{\text{read}} \text{player_A} \xrightarrow{\text{write}} \text{host1.FIFO}$$

At the beginning of each round, the players should read messages from the host in certain format (which we defined in `host.c`). Then they should write their responses to the host in the following format,

```
[player_index] [random_key] [money]\n
```

indicating the index of the player, the random key given in the argument, and the money that players want to pay.

The above process will be repeated. The players must guarantee that it correctly gives out 10 responses. The player will exit after it gives out 10 responses, and will be executed again when competing in another competition.

Tasks and Scoring

There are 7 subtasks in this assignment. By finishing all subtasks you earn the full 7 points.

1. Your `bidding_system` works fine. (1 point)
 - We will use your `bidding_system` as well as TA's `host` and `player` to testify whether your output is correct.
2. Your `bidding_system` schedules `host` effectively. (0.5 point)
 - You should implement `select` to make sure not to let available `host` idle.
3. Your `bidding_system` executes `host` correctly. (0.5 point)
 - You should not fork new `host` when you want to hold new competition.
 - That is, you can only fork `host` `host_num` times, and assign new competition to one of them.
4. Your `host` works fine. (2 point)
 - We will use your `host` as well as TA's `bidding_system` and `player` to testify your output is correct.
5. Your `player` works fine. (1 point)

- We will use your `player` as well as TA's `bidding_system` and `host` to testify your output is correct.

6. Completeness. (1.5 point)

- If you successfully produce correct result with all your `bidding_system`, `host` and `player`.

7. Produce executable files successfully. (0.5 point)

- Your Makefile can generate `bidding_system`, `host` and `player`.

Notes

- Remember to `flush(fflush(), fsync())` whenever you write messages to pipes or FIFOs to ensure the message being correctly pass out.
- For the `host`, remember to clear the FIFOs before a new competition begins, in case any `player` died in the last competition and did not read all message.