

## Contains Duplicate II

For this problem we need to check if there are two equal elements whose indices differ by at most  $k$ .

Approach: Hash Map (Optimal)

Key Idea:

- Use a hash map to store the last index where each number appeared.
- While iterating:
  1. If the number has been seen before and  $i - \text{last index} \leq k$ , return true.
  2. Otherwise, update its last index in the map.

Algorithm:

1. Create an unordered\_map lastIndex.
2. Iterate through nums with index  $i$ :
  - If  $\text{nums}[i]$  exists in map:
    - Check if  $i - \text{lastIndex}[\text{nums}[i]] \leq k$
    - If true  $\rightarrow$  return true.
  - Update  $\text{lastIndex}[\text{nums}[i]] = i$ .
3. Return false if no valid pair found.

Complexity:

- Time:  $O(n)$  - single pass.
- Space:  $O(n)$  - hash map storing indices of elements.