

# Question Answering

Material adapted Sewon Min

University of Maryland

Exercise

# Let's answer questions like a (machine reading) computer

## Question

when was the simpsons premiere?

- Do a search on Wikipedia
- Divide up the search results within the group: each person gets a page
- For each page, give the answer that you think is the best given that page
- Decide which of them is the best answer
- What would you like smart assistant to do if you asked this question?

# Ambiguity!



The shorts became a part of The Tracey Ullman Show on April 19, 1987.



Since its debut on December 17, 1989, 703 episodes of the show have been broadcast.



The Simpsons Movie, was released in theaters worldwide on July 27, 2007

# Ambiguity!



The shorts became a part of The Tracey Ullman Show on April 19, 1987.



Since its debut on December 17, 1989, 703 episodes of the show have been broadcast.



The Simpsons Movie, was released in theaters worldwide on July 27, 2007

# Ambiguity!



The shorts became a part of The Tracey Ullman Show on April 19, 1987.



Since its debut on **December 17, 1989**, 703 episodes of the show have been broadcast.



The Simpsons Movie, was released in theaters worldwide on July 27, 2007

# Ambiguity!



The shorts became a part of The Tracey Ullman Show on April 19, 1987.



Since its debut on December 17, 1989, 703 episodes of the show have been broadcast.



The Simpsons Movie, was released in theaters worldwide on **July 27, 2007**

## Sometimes **not** Answering is Best

- If you know context (just asked about a bunch of premieres), you might want to favor movie interpretation
- But perhaps a followup question is better “did you mean. . .”
- At least say that there are other interpretations

## Sometimes **not** Answering is Best

- If you know context (just asked about a bunch of premieres), you might want to favor movie interpretation
- But perhaps a followup question is better “did you mean. . .”
- At least say that there are other interpretations
  - ▶ When did Michigan last win the championship
  - ▶ When did US last win hockey gold?
  - ▶ Where does Puerto Rico's power come from?