

## 287. Find the Duplicate Number (Floyd Cycle Detection)

Problem: Given  $n+1$  integers in range  $[1,n]$ , find the duplicate without modifying array and using  $O(1)$  space. Approach: Treat array as linked list and apply Floyd's Cycle Detection. Algorithm: 1. Use  $\text{slow} = \text{nums}[0]$ ,  $\text{fast} = \text{nums}[0]$ . 2. Move  $\text{slow} = \text{nums}[\text{slow}]$ ,  $\text{fast} = \text{nums}[\text{nums}[\text{fast}]]$  until they meet. 3. Reset  $\text{slow} = \text{nums}[0]$ . 4. Move both one step until they meet again. 5. That meeting point is the duplicate. Code (C++):

```
class Solution {
public:
    int findDuplicate(vector<int>& nums) {
        int slow = nums[0];
        int fast = nums[0];
        do {
            slow = nums[slow];
            fast = nums[nums[fast]];
        } while (slow != fast);

        slow = nums[0];
        while (slow != fast) {
            slow = nums[slow];
            fast = nums[fast];
        }
        return slow;
    }
};
```

Dry Run:  $\text{nums} = [1,3,4,2,2]$   $\text{slow} = 1$ ,  $\text{fast} = 1$   $\text{slow} = 3$ ,  $\text{fast} = 2$   $\text{slow} = 2$ ,  $\text{fast} = 2$  (meet) Reset  $\text{slow} = 1$   $\text{slow} = 3$ ,  $\text{fast} = 4$   $\text{slow} = 2$ ,  $\text{fast} = 2 \rightarrow \text{duplicate} = 2$

Time Complexity:  $O(n)$  Space Complexity:  $O(1)$