

CSC148 - delete_root Helper for BST Deletion

As we saw earlier, a core step in the deletion algorithm on binary search trees is deletion at the root. Now we'll write a helper for that:

```
def delete_root(self) -> None:
    """Remove the root of this BST. Precondition: this BST is not empty."""
```

Now we'll lead you through the cases to develop an implementation of this method.

Case 1: self is a leaf

Suppose `self` is a leaf (i.e., its left and right subtrees are empty). Discuss with your group what should happen to the tree in this case. Then in the space below, (1) fill in the `if` condition to check whether `self` is a leaf, and (2) fill in the body of the `if` to implement `delete_root` for this case. (Review the BST representation invariants from the prep readings / previous worksheet!)

```
def delete_root(self) -> None:

    if self.left is None and self.right is None: # Case 1: this BST is a leaf
```

Case 2: exactly one of self's subtrees are empty

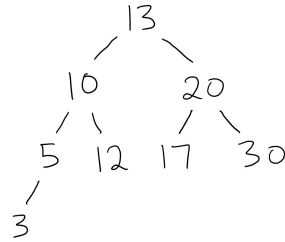
Draw two small binary search trees: one which has an empty left subtree and non-empty right subtree, and vice versa.

Now suppose we want to delete the root of each tree. The simplest approach is to use the “promote a subtree” technique from last week. Review this idea with your group, and then fill in the conditions and implementations of each `elif`.

[illegible]

Case 3: both subtrees are non-empty

Suppose we have the following BST, whose left and right subtrees are *both* non-empty.



1. For this case, as we discovered earlier, we can *extract a value* from one of the subtrees and use it to replace the current root value. We need to do so carefully, to preserve the *binary search tree property*, since this is a representation invariant! Look at the sample BST above, and suppose we want to replace the root 13. Circle the value(s) in the subtrees that we could use to replace the root, and make sure you understand why these values (and *only* these values) work.
2. Since there are two possible values, you have a choice about which one you want to pick. In the space below, write a helper method that you could call on `self.left` or `self.right` to extract the desired value, and then use that helper to complete the implementation of `delete_root`.

```
def delete_root(self) -> None:
    ...
    else:
        # Cases 1 and 2 omitted
        # Case 3: non-empty left, non-empty right
```

Write your helper here!:

3. Check your assumptions: did you assume that the value you were extracting is a leaf? Consider the following tree...

