

# Grasping Reality with Both Hands

The weblog of Brad DeLong. Comments (mostly) welcome, or email me at [delong@hey.com](mailto:delong@hey.com) with "delong-weblog" as the subject.  
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## Lacker: GPT-3 vs. Turing—Noted

Much of our intelligence is devoted to constructing models of other minds based on observations of actions, expressions, and words. We have a strong tendency to overdo it. Thus we can be very easily grifted to really, really believe that there is another mind—another Turing-class entity—back there when there isn't: the lightning does not really come from a large red-haired guy with a big hammer and anger management problems who drives a cart pulled by two goats. The latest example of this is GPT-3: **Kevin Lacker**: *Giving GPT-3 a Turing Test* <http://lacker.io/ai/2020/07/06/giving-gpt-3-a-turing-test.html>: 'An interesting corollary is that GPT-3 often finds it easier to write code to solve a programming problem, than to solve the problem on one example input...

Q: Write one line of Ruby code to reverse an array.  
A: `ary.reverse`

Q: Write one line of Ruby code to count how many X's are in an array.  
A: `ary.count { |x| x == 'X' }`

Q: Reverse the following array: [1, 3, 5, 6, 10, 4, 2, 77]  
A: [10, 6, 4, 2, 77, 3, 5, 1]

Q: How many X's are in this array: [1, 3, 5, 6, 10, 4, 2, 77]  
A: 2

This problem shows up in more human questions as well, if you ask it about the result of a sequence of operations:

Q: If I have a marble and a paper clip in a box, put a pencil in the box, and remove the marble, what is left?  
A: A paper clip.

Q: If I have two shoes in a box, put a pencil in the box, and remove one shoe, what is left?  
A: A shoe.

Q: If I put a pencil in a box, then put another pencil in the box, what is in the box?  
A: Two pencils.

Q: Then if I take out a pencil and put in a frog, what is in the box?  
A: A frog.

It's like GPT-3 has a limited short-term memory, and has trouble reasoning about more than one or two objects in a sentence....

.#noted #2020-08-02

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