The Flying Groundhogs
Mike Miner & Hayden Shelton

THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Our QA System
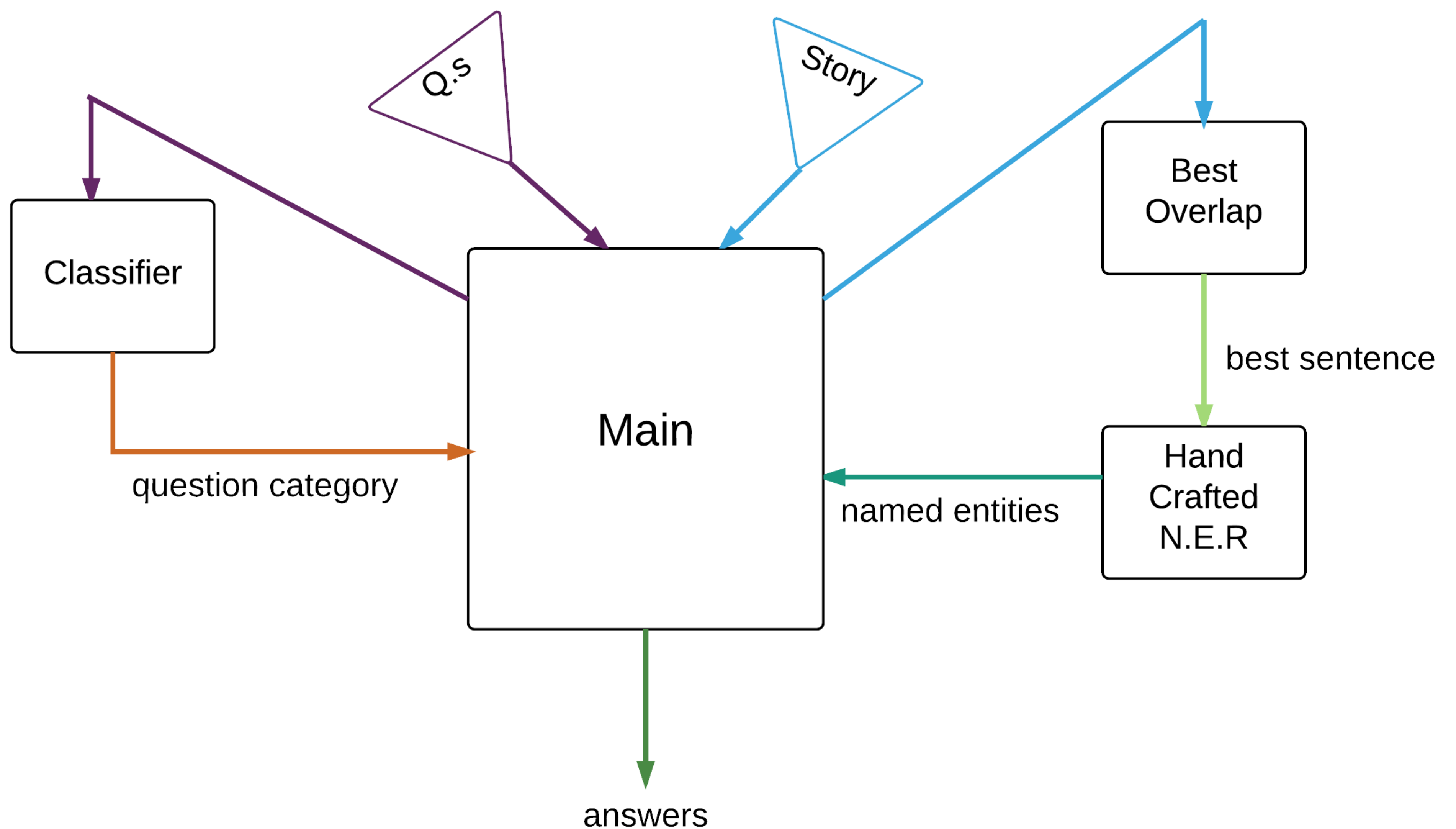
How it works:

Our system pairs each story with its list of questions. We run each question through our question classifier, which tells us what category the answer may fall into, for example, 'named entity person' or 'explanation'. We then find the sentence in the story that has the highest word overlap with the question. Once we have the best story sentence, we run it through the N.E.R, which will return an array of named entities from that sentence. From here, our main module will return either the named entities from the sentence that match the question's response category, or the whole sentence if we're not sure.

Things We Tried

- **We tried using NLTK to extract named entities. It performed worse than our N.E.R!**

- **We tried to use NLTK for noun phrase extraction and POS tagging to improve the accuracy of our classifier and N.E.R. No luck :(**

- **We tried WordNet to calculate word similarity scores. Sadly, it didn't help us either.**

What We Stuck With

- **We went back to our original code from the dry run evaluation and built it up from there.**

- **We imported large lists of named entities including locations and names.**

- **We tailored our named entity recognition toward finding Canadian proper names.**

- **Subtle tweaks increased our score substantially! For example, outputting all the location names in the best sentence instead of just one.**