Merge Sort

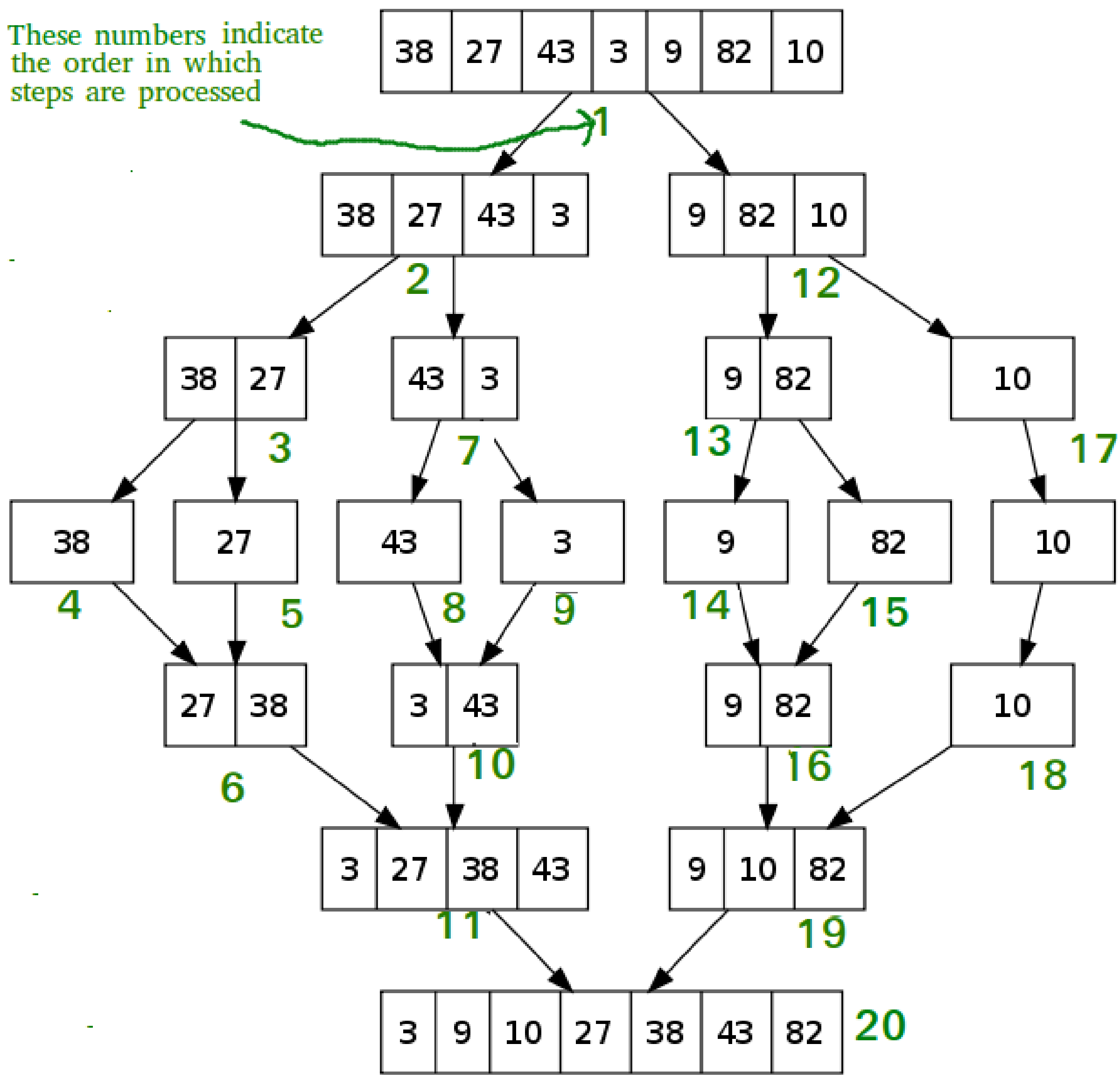
Like QuickSort, Merge Sort is a Divide and Conquer algorithm. It divides input array in two halves, calls itself for the two halves and then merges the two sorted halves.

The merge() function is used for merging two halves.

The merge(arr, l, m, r) is key process that assumes that arr[l..m] and arr[m+1..r] are sorted and merges the two sorted sub-arrays into one.

MergeSort(arr[], l, r)
If r > l
1. Find the middle point to divide the array into two halves:
   middle m = (l+r)/2
2. Call mergeSort for first half:
   Call mergeSort(arr, l, m)
3. Call mergeSort for second half:
   Call mergeSort(arr, m+1, r)
4. Merge the two halves sorted in step 2 and 3:
   Call merge(arr, l, m, r)

The following diagram from wikipedia shows the complete merge sort process for an example array {38, 27, 43, 3, 9, 82, 10}. If we take a closer look at the diagram, we can see that the array is recursively divided in two halves till the size becomes 1. Once the size becomes 1, the merge processes comes into action and starts merging arrays back till the complete array is merged.




```
/* l is for left index and r is right index of the
   sub-array of arr to be sorted */
void mergeSort(int arr[], int l, int r)
{
    if (l < r)
    {
        // Same as (l+r)/2, but avoids overflow for
        // large l and h
        int m = l+(r-l)/2;

        // Sort first and second halves
        mergeSort(arr, l, m);
        mergeSort(arr, m+1, r);

        merge(arr, l, m, r);
    }
}
```

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```
// Merges two subarrays of arr[].
// First subarray is arr[l..m]
// Second subarray is arr[m+1..r]
void merge(int arr[], int l, int m, int r)
{
    int i, j, k;
    int n1 = m - l + 1;
    int n2 =  r - m;

    /* create temp arrays */
    int L[n1], R[n2];

    /* Copy data to temp arrays L[] and R[] */
    for (i = 0; i < n1; i++)
        L[i] = arr[l + i];
    for (j = 0; j < n2; j++)
        R[j] = arr[m + 1+ j];

    /* Merge the temp arrays back into arr[l..r]*/
    i = 0; // Initial index of first subarray
    j = 0; // Initial index of second subarray
    k = l; // Initial index of merged subarray
    while (i < n1 && j < n2)
    {
        if (L[i] <= R[j])
        {
            arr[k] = L[i];
            i++;
        }
        else
        {
            arr[k] = R[j];
            j++;
        }
        k++;
    }

    /* Copy the remaining elements of L[], if there
       are any */
    while (i < n1)
    {
        arr[k] = L[i];
        i++;
        k++;
    }

    /* Copy the remaining elements of R[], if there
       are any */
    while (j < n2)
    {
        arr[k] = R[j];
        j++;
        k++;
    }
}
```

Sorting In Place: No
Stable: Yes
Online: Yes

- The quick sort is internal sorting method where the data that is to be sorted is adjusted at a time in main memory. Conversely, the merge sort is external sorting method in which the data that is to be sorted cannot be accommodated in the memory at the same time and some has to be kept in the auxiliary memory
- The quick sort is faster cases but is inefficient in some situations and also performs a lot of comparisons as compared to merge sort. Although merge sort requires less comparison, it needs an additional memory space of 0(n) for storing the extra array while quick sort needs space of O(log n).
- Mergesort is a stable sort, unlike quicksort and heapsort, and can be easily adapted to operate on linked lists and very large lists stored on slow-to-access media such as disk storage or network attached storage.
- Quick Sort preferred for Arrays and Merge Sort for Linked Lists

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