<https://leetcode.com/problems/remove-duplicate-letters/description/>

Given a string s, remove duplicate letters so that every letter appears once and only once. You must make sure your result is

**the smallest in lexicographical order** among all possible results.

**Example 1:**

Input: s = "bcabc"

Output: "abc"

**Example 2:**

Input: s = "cbacdcbc"

Output: "acdb"

**Constraints:**

* 1 <= s.length <= 104
* s consists of lowercase English letters.

**Note:** This question is the same as 1081: <https://leetcode.com/problems/smallest-subsequence-of-distinct-characters/>

**Attempt 1: 2023-03-24**

**Solution 1: Monotonic Increasing Stack (30 min)**

class Solution {

public String removeDuplicateLetters(String s) {

Stack<Character> stack = new Stack<Character>();

Set<Character> visited = new HashSet<Character>();

int[] lastIndex = new int[26];

for(int i = 0; i < s.length(); i++) {

lastIndex[s.charAt(i) - 'a'] = i;

}

for(int i = 0; i < s.length(); i++) {

char c = s.charAt(i);

if(!visited.contains(c)) {

while(!stack.isEmpty() && stack.peek() > c && i < lastIndex[stack.peek() - 'a']) {

char ch = stack.pop();

visited.remove(ch);

}

stack.push(c);

visited.add(c);

}

}

StringBuilder sb = new StringBuilder();

while(!stack.isEmpty()) {

sb.append(stack.pop());

}

return sb.reverse().toString();

}

}

**Refer to**

<https://leetcode.com/problems/remove-duplicate-letters/solutions/1859410/java-c-detailed-visually-explained/>

First Of all, we have to pick the character's if it is not already visited. If, that's the case we'll try to pick these character's. We'll also make sure, the previously picked character is smaller then the current character in order to maintain **lexicographically order**. But, how we can check the previously picked character is best for!! **And the answer is Stack!!**

What we'll do, use the **stack** to keep track of selected character's. We try to put the character's only once & maintain the lexicographicall smallest one. **So, how we do that :-**

* If the stack is empty, we'll put the **current character into our stack**
* We'll also keep here **boolean array** which will mark, whether we have seen this character or not. So, that if we are getting again the same character and we have already seen that. We'll ignore that character.
* So, the length of **boolean array** will be **26**

***Let's Understand it's working***

* First we put character c into our stack and mark it as true
* Then we come to next character i.e. b we check is **b < c** to maintain lexicographically order. Yes b is smaller then c we'll remove it from the stack.
* But before removing we have to check that, is c more present in our string. So, how will we quickly check that for that we'll keep one more Array which will keep track of last index of all the character's present in our string
* So, we see that c exists on 7th index.
* We'll remove c from the stack & don't forgot to mark c in boolean array from **true to false**
* Now add b into our stack. And mark b in boolean array as true
* Now next character is a which is smaller then b & do the same process of checking if it exists somewhere in array & if so, remove it from stack update boolean to false. And put a into the stack. And in boolean array mark it as true.
* Let's add c in the stack mark it as true & c > a so carry on....
* Let's add d in the stack mark it as true & d > c so carry on....
* Now we encounter c which is already visited so, carry on....
* Let's add b in the stack mark it as true & b < d so carry on....

This, line explanation : BY @nirala\_414

"now try to add "b" in the stack and mark it as true, for this since the current\_element("b") is less than

the peek(top) element of stack("d")so we should pop the "d" for now and push "b" in stack but before

poping "d" check is there "d" is again persent in given string after this "b" , since "d" is not more

persent after this "b" so we can't do that pop and push operation for "d" and "b" respectively , simply

add "b" into the stack and mark is as true that's set, but in some case if "d" is available again after

that "b" then we will definitely be poping "d" from the stack and adding "b" into the stack( we can take

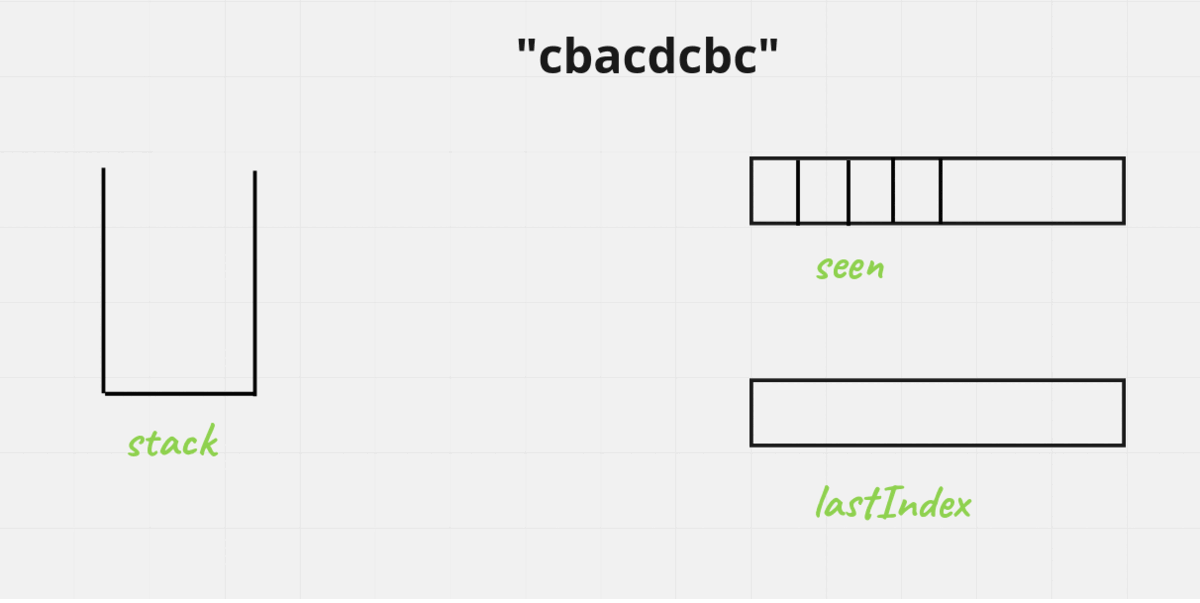
example for this case as "cbadcbcd" and try to dry run it )

Now we encounter c which is already visited so, carry on....

End of the string.

Now whatever character we have present in our stack, take them out. i.e. **bdca** now reverse it **acdb** and this is our smallest lexicographically string

Let's understand it visually :- You can download all the images from here **[G-Drive](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZmVXpG5uFqFHm_f6GXC78_3pmwkcaxNP?usp=sharing)**



class Solution {

public String removeDuplicateLetters(String s) {

int[] lastIndex = new int[26];

for (int i = 0; i < s.length(); i++){

lastIndex[s.charAt(i) - 'a'] = i; // track the lastIndex of character presence

}

boolean[] seen = new boolean[26]; // keep track seen

Stack<Integer> st = new Stack();

for (int i = 0; i < s.length(); i++) {

int curr = s.charAt(i) - 'a';

if (seen[curr]) continue; // if seen continue as we need to pick one char only

while (!st.isEmpty() && st.peek() > curr && i < lastIndex[st.peek()]){

seen[st.pop()] = false; // pop out and mark unseen

}

st.push(curr); // add into stack

seen[curr] = true; // mark seen

}

StringBuilder sb = new StringBuilder();

while (!st.isEmpty())

sb.append((char) (st.pop() + 'a'));

return sb.reverse().toString();

}

}

ANALYSIS :-

* **Time Complexity :-** BigO(N)
* **Space Complexity :-** BigO(N)