# Python Code for Solving the Padlock Problem Using Combination Generation

### **Problem Recap**

Farmer John wants to find the best five-letter word to use as the third row on his padlock that will maximize the number of valid word combinations. The padlock consists of three rows, each with five letter discs that can rotate to form different combinations.

- Fixed Rows: "BELLA" and "LOVES"
- Flexible Row: A word of choice to maximize valid words

The goal is to find the third row word that allows the most valid words to be created when each disc is rotated.

```
In [1]: # Load valid words from a file into a list
        def load valid words(filename):
            valid_words = []
            with open(filename, 'r') as file:
                for line in file:
                    valid_words.append(line.strip().upper())
            return valid_words
        # Generate possible combinations by rotating letters in each slot
        def generate_combinations(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, flexible_row):
            all_combinations = []
            for i in range(5):
                for j in range(5):
                    for k in range(5):
                        for m in range(5):
                            for n in range(5):
                                 word = fixed_row1[i] + fixed_row2[j] + flexible_row[k] + fi
                                 all_combinations.append(word)
            return all_combinations
        # Check if a combination is in the list of valid words
        def count_valid_words(combinations, valid_words):
            count = 0
            for word in combinations:
                if word in valid words:
                    count += 1
            return count
        # Find the best third row word
        def find_best_word(valid_words, fixed_row1="BELLA", fixed_row2="LOVES"):
            max_valid_combinations = 0
            best_word = None
            for candidate_word in valid_words:
                # Generate all combinations for the candidate word
                combinations = generate_combinations(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, candidate_word
```

```
# Count how many of these combinations are in the valid words list
        valid count = count valid words(combinations, valid words)
        # Check if this candidate has the most valid combinations
        if valid_count > max_valid_combinations:
            max_valid_combinations = valid_count
            best_word = candidate_word
    return best_word, max_valid_combinations
# Main function
def main():
   # Load valid words from file (assumes valid_words.txt in the same directory)
   valid words = set(load valid words(r'C:\Users\s563104\OneDrive\Personal\valid w
   # Find the best third row word
   best_word, max_valid_combinations = find_best_word(valid_words)
   print("Best word for the third row:", best_word)
   print("Maximum valid combinations:", max_valid_combinations)
# Run the main function
if __name__ == "__main_ ":
   main()
```

Best word for the third row: VIGIL Maximum valid combinations: 29

### Determine the best N words

Provided an integer, N, determine the best N words which can be used as a third word in the combination lock for generating the maximum number of valid words.

```
In [2]: from itertools import product
        # Load valid words from a file into a set for quick lookup
        def load valid words(filename):
            with open(filename, 'r') as file:
                valid_words = set(line.strip().upper() for line in file)
            return valid_words
        # Generate all possible combinations by rotating letters in each slot
        def generate_combinations(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, flexible_row):
            all_combinations = set()
            for letters in product(*zip(fixed row1, fixed row2, flexible row)):
                word = ''.join(letters)
                all_combinations.add(word)
            return all combinations
        # Find the best N words that maximize valid combinations
        def find_best_n_words(valid_words, fixed_row1="BELLA", fixed_row2="LOVES", N=1):
            word_combinations = []
```

```
for candidate word in valid words:
         # Generate all combinations for the candidate word as the flexible row
         combinations = generate_combinations(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, candidate_word
         # Count how many of these combinations are in the valid words list
         valid_count = sum(1 for word in combinations if word in valid_words)
         # Append the candidate word and its valid word count to the list
         word_combinations.append((candidate_word, valid_count))
     # Sort words by the valid combination count in descending order and select top
     word_combinations.sort(key=lambda x: x[1], reverse=True)
     return word_combinations[:N]
 # Main function to run the code for the best N words
 def main():
     # Load valid words from file
     valid_words = load_valid_words(r'C:\Users\s563104\OneDrive\Personal\valid_words
     # Find the top N best words
     N = 5 # Example: Find the top 5 words
     best_words = find_best_n_words(valid_words, N=N)
     print(f"Top {N} words for the third row:")
     for word, count in best words:
         print(f"{word}: {count} valid combinations")
 # Run the main function
 if __name__ == "__main__":
     main()
Top 5 words for the third row:
CANDY: 30 valid combinations
PASTY: 29 valid combinations
DUSTY: 29 valid combinations
DITTY: 28 valid combinations
```

# A fourth letter option

DANDY: 28 valid combinations

Farmer John is considering adding a fourth letter to each of the five discs. What two extra words

should he choose to allow the letter lock to generate the maximum number of valid words? NOTE: Number of flexible words trying here is 1000 to avoid crashing.

```
import cProfile
from itertools import product

# Load valid words into a set for fast membership checking
def load_valid_words(filename):
    with open(filename, 'r') as file:
        return {line.strip() for line in file}
```

```
# Count valid combinations using set intersection
def count_valid_combinations(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, flexible_row1, flexible_row2,
   # Generate all combinations for the given rows and store as a set
   generated combinations = {
        ''.join(letters) for letters in product(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, flexible_ro
   # Find the intersection with valid_words and count the matches
   valid_combinations = generated_combinations & valid_words
   return len(valid combinations)
# Sequentially process word pairs to avoid parallel processing overhead
def find_best_two_words(valid_words, sample_size=50):
   fixed_row1, fixed_row2 = "BELLA", "LOVES"
   max_valid_combinations = 0
   best combination = ()
   # Use a smaller subset for efficiency
   candidate_words = list(valid_words)[:sample_size]
   for i, word1 in enumerate(candidate_words):
        for word2 in candidate_words[i + 1:]:
            valid_count = count_valid_combinations(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, word1, w
            if valid_count > max_valid_combinations:
                max_valid_combinations = valid_count
                best_combination = (word1, word2)
    return best_combination, max_valid_combinations
# Main function with profiling to analyze performance
def main():
   valid words = load valid words(r'C:\Users\s563104\OneDrive\Personal\valid words
   best_words, max_count = find_best_two_words(valid_words, sample_size=1000)
   print(f"Best two words: {best_words} with {max_count} valid combinations")
if __name__ == "__main__":
   cProfile.run('main()')
```

Best two words: ('ROADS', 'MEANT') with 35 valid combinations
1561946802 function calls (1561946609 primitive calls) in 623.053 seconds

Ordered by: standard name

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ck}
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loop}
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text}
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                                         0.000 {built-in method _heapq.heappop}
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k}
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                                         0.000 {built-in method time.monotonic}
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objects}
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jects}
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        2
objects}
                                         0.000 {method '__exit__' of '_thread.lock' o
             0.000
                      0.000
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bjects}
        2
                                         0.000 {method 'exit 'of 'sqlite3.Connect
             0.000
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```

```
ion' objects}
    190/3
             0.000
                      0.000
                               0.000
                                         0.000 {method 'acquire' of '_thread.lock' ob
jects}
             0.000
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                                         0.000 {method 'append' of 'collections.dequ
      128
e' objects}
        5
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                                         0.000 {method 'append' of 'list' objects}
       62
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                                         0.000 {method 'cancelled' of '_asyncio.Futur
e' objects}
                               0.000
                                         0.000 {method 'disable' of ' lsprof.Profile
             0.000
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r' objects}
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                                         0.001 {method 'execute' of 'sqlite3.Connecti
             0.000
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        1
on' objects}
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                                         0.000 {method 'extend' of 'list' objects}
        2
        2
             0.000
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                                         0.000 {method 'get' of '_contextvars.Context
Var' objects}
             0.000
                      0.000
                               0.000
                                         0.000 {method 'get' of 'dict' objects}
       64
                               0.000
                                         0.000 {method 'items' of 'dict' objects}
             0.000
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        3
             0.000
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                                         0.000 {method 'items' of 'mappingproxy' obje
cts}
1560937500 237.676
                       0.000 237.676
                                         0.000 {method 'join' of 'str' objects}
             0.000
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      128
e' objects}
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                                         0.000 {method 'release' of '_thread.lock' ob
        1
jects}
             0.001
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                               0.010
                                         0.000 {method 'run' of '_contextvars.Contex
      126
t' objects}
       62
             0.000
                      0.000
                               0.002
                                         0.000 {method 'set_result' of '_asyncio.Futu
re' objects}
     4981
             0.001
                      0.000
                               0.001
                                         0.000 {method 'strip' of 'str' objects}
        5
             0.000
                      0.000
                               0.000
                                         0.000 {method 'upper' of 'str' objects}
        1
             0.000
                      0.000
                               0.000
                                         0.000 {method 'values' of 'mappingproxy' obj
ects}
                                         0.000 {method 'write' of '_io.StringIO' obje
        2
             0.000
                      0.000
                               0.000
cts}
```

## A fourth letter option

#### **Variation**

Let's try with a wordlist size of 50.

```
In [9]: # Load valid words from a file into a list

def load_valid_words(filename):
    valid_words = []
    with open(filename, 'r') as file:
        for line in file:
            valid_words.append(line.strip().upper())
    return valid_words

# Generate possible 5-letter combinations by rotating letters in each slot

def generate_combinations(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, flexible_row1, flexible_row2):
    all_combinations = []
```

```
for i in range(5):
        for j in range(5):
            for k in range(5):
                for m in range(5):
                    for n in range(5):
                        word = fixed_row1[i] + fixed_row2[j] + flexible_row1[k] + f
                        all_combinations.append(word)
    return all_combinations
# Check if a combination is in the list of valid words
def count_valid_words(combinations, valid_words):
   count = 0
    for word in combinations:
        if word in valid words:
            count += 1
   return count
# Find the best two flexible rows for maximum valid combinations
def find_best_two_words(valid_words, fixed_row1="BELLA", fixed_row2="LOVES", sample
   max valid combinations = 0
   best_words = (None, None)
   # Limit the candidates for flexible rows to the first 50 words
   candidate_words = valid_words[:sample_size]
   # Try each pair of words as flexible rows
   for i, word1 in enumerate(candidate_words):
        for j, word2 in enumerate(candidate_words):
            if word1 != word2:
                # Generate all combinations for the candidate word pair
                combinations = generate_combinations(fixed_row1, fixed_row2, word1,
                # Count how many of these combinations are in the valid words list
                valid count = count valid words(combinations, valid words)
                # Check if this pair has the most valid combinations
                if valid_count > max_valid_combinations:
                    max valid combinations = valid count
                    best_words = (word1, word2)
                    print(f"New best combination found: {best_words} with {max_vali
   return best_words, max_valid_combinations
# Main function
def main():
   # Load valid words from file (assumes valid_words.txt in the same directory)
   valid_words = load_valid_words(r'C:\Users\s563104\OneDrive\Personal\valid_words
   # Find the best two words for the flexible rows
   best words, max valid combinations = find best two words(valid words, sample si
   print("Best words for the flexible rows:", best_words)
   print("Maximum valid combinations:", max_valid_combinations)
# Run the main function
```

```
if __name__ == "__main__":
    main()

New best combination found: ('Ï»¿WHICH', 'THERE') with 4 valid combinations
```

```
New best combination found: ('I»¿WHICH', 'THERE') with 4 valid combinations
New best combination found: ('THERE', 'THEIR') with 7 valid combinations
New best combination found: ('THEIR', 'THERE') with 8 valid combinations
New best combination found: ('ABOUT', 'THERE') with 10 valid combinations
New best combination found: ('ABOUT', 'THESE') with 14 valid combinations
New best combination found: ('WORDS', 'GOING') with 15 valid combinations
New best combination found: ('RIGHT', 'AGAIN') with 19 valid combinations
New best combination found: ('GREAT', 'AGAIN') with 21 valid combinations
New best combination found: ('GOING', 'AGAIN') with 32 valid combinations
Best words for the flexible rows: ('GOING', 'AGAIN')
Maximum valid combinations: 32
```

#### Discussion

When designing the padlock solution using two fixed rows (BELLA and LOVES) and two flexible rows chosen from the list of valid words, we face a significant computational challenge. Here's a breakdown of the process, focusing on why generating and verifying these combinations is computationally demanding:

Combination Generation:

For each pair of flexible words, we generate combinations by rotating each of the five letters in each slot. Given that each letter slot in each row has four options (due to our flexible rows), we end up with

4×4×4×4=1024 unique 5-letter combinations per flexible word pair. Scale of Verification:

After generating these 1024 combinations, each combination needs to be checked against a valid\_words list, which contains approximately 4980 words. This results in 1024×4980=5,098,240 individual comparisons for a single pair of flexible words. Multiple Flexible Word Pairs:

Since we aim to test multiple pairs of flexible words to find the pair generating the maximum valid combinations, this process is repeated many times. For instance, if we choose a sample of 50 words as candidates for the flexible rows, we would end up testing approximately  $50 \times 49/2 = 1225$  unique pairs. This leads to a total of  $1225 \times 5,098,240 \approx 6,248,960,000$  comparisons.

Resource and Time Requirements:

This calculation leads to a total of approximately 6.25 billion comparisons (1225 pairs  $\times$  5,098,240 combinations per pair). This staggering figure represents just 50 words.

If it is to scale this up to the full 4980-word list, we would be looking at over 600 billion comparisons. The computational demand highlights just how challenging it becomes to handle large datasets for combination generation and validation, making this approach daunting without significant optimization techniques.