

HW8: Huffman Coding (due Thursday, June 4, 2015 11:30pm)

This assignment focuses on binary trees, priority queues, and recursion. Turn in the following files using the link on the course website:

- `HuffmanCode.java` – A class that represents a “huffman code” which is used to compress data
- `HuffmanNode.java` – A class that represents a single piece of a huffman code
- `secretmessage.short` – A compressed hidden message that you will write
- `secretmessage.code` – The corresponding huffman code for your hidden message

You will need the support files `HuffmanCompressor.java`, `BitInputStream.java`, and `BitOutputStream.java`; place these in the same folder as your program or project. You should not modify the provided files. The code you submit must work properly with the unmodified versions.

ASCII and Binary Representation

We discovered on an earlier assignment that every `char` has an equivalent `int` value between 0 and 255. (Recall, `(int)'a' = 97`, `(int)'z' = 122`, etc.) In this assignment, we go a step further: computers actually see integers as *binary* (1's and 0's). Binary is a lot like the normal numbers we use, except it's based around 2 instead of 10. For example, “1204” is written that way, because

$$1204 = \boxed{1} \cdot 10^3 + \boxed{2} \cdot 10^2 + \boxed{0} \cdot 10^1 + \boxed{4} \cdot 10^0$$

Similarly, because

$$97 = \boxed{0} \cdot 2^7 + \boxed{1} \cdot 2^6 + \boxed{1} \cdot 2^5 + \boxed{0} \cdot 2^4 + \boxed{0} \cdot 2^3 + \boxed{0} \cdot 2^2 + \boxed{0} \cdot 2^1 + \boxed{1} \cdot 2^0$$

97 is “01100001” in binary! In fact, all *char*'s can be written using exactly 8 binary digits (bits). This encoding, which is used pretty universally by computers, is called ASCII.

Huffman Coding

Huffman coding is an algorithm devised by David A. Huffman of MIT in 1952 for *compressing* data to make a file occupy a smaller amount of space. Unbelievably, this algorithm is still used today in a variety of very important areas. For example, mp3s and jpgs both use Huffman Coding. The general idea behind Huffman Coding is the following:

What if we used fewer than 8 bits for characters that are more common?

Consider the following (simple) example. Imagine we have the following file:

```

bbbbaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa
cccaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa
ddaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa

```

How many bits to store with ASCII Coding?

First, we find the ASCII code for each letter:

a → 01100001, b → 01100010,
c → 01100011, d → 01100100

Since each line has 80 letters, and each letter code is 8 bits, the number of bits required is:

$$80 \cdot 8 \cdot 3 = 1920$$

How many bits to store with Huffman Coding?

Since a is most frequent, we use a short code for it, then we use the next longest code for b, etc:

a → 1, b → 00,
c → 011, d → 010

In this file, we have 229 a's, 4 b's, 3 c's, and 2 d's. Since we need one bit for a, two for b, and three for c and d, the total count of bits is:

$$229 \cdot 1 + 4 \cdot 2 + 3 \cdot 3 + 2 \cdot 3 = 252$$

Woah! By changing the coding, we compressed the file by a factor of 10!!

In this assignment, you will create classes `HuffmanCode` and `HuffmanNode` to represent a huffman code to be used in compression of data. You are provided with a client `HuffmanCompressor.java` that handles user interaction and calls your huffman code methods to compress and decompress a given file.

Making a Huffman Code

In the previous example, we magically arrived at the special binary sequences to be used as codes. In this section, we explain the algorithm to create these special binary sequences.

Throughout this section, we will use the following example file:

simple-spec-example.txt

aba ab cabbb

Step 1: Count the Frequencies in the File

The file `simple-spec-example.txt` has the characters 'a', 'b', 'c', and ' '. Counting up the frequencies, we get the following:

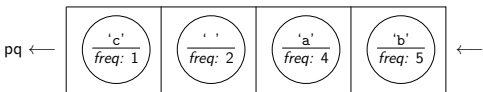
Character	Count
' '	2
'a'	4
'b'	5
'c'	1

Step 2: Create a “Priority Queue” Ordered By Frequency

Since our ultimate goal is to create a code based on frequencies, we need to use a data structure that helps us keep track of the order of the letters based on frequencies. We will use a *priority queue* for this. A *priority queue* is a queue that is ordered by *priorities* (in this case frequencies) instead of FIFO order. In other words, we can ask the priority queue to insert a new element (`add(element)`) and we can ask it for the highest priority (`remove()`).

For huffman coding, we want to remove the node with *lowest* frequency first. (Intuitively, the reason is that the things we remove first will end up having the longest codes).

We begin by creating a node for each letter in our text:

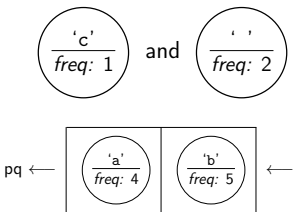


Step 3: Combine the Nodes Until Only One is Left

Now that we have a priority queue of the nodes, we want to put them together into a tree. To do this, we repeatedly remove the smallest two (the ones at the front of the priority queue) and create a new node with them as children. Note that the priority queue is *arbitrary* in how it breaks ties.

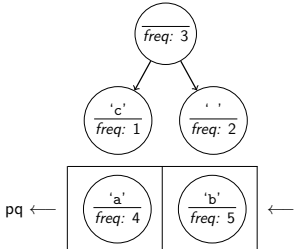
(3a) Remove Two Smallest

First, remove the smallest two nodes from the priority queue:



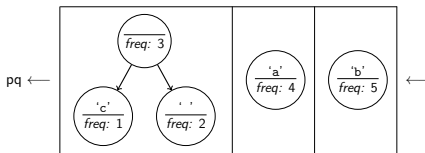
(3b) Combine Them Together

Then, create a new node. The frequency is the sum of two nodes:



(3c) Add Back To Priority Queue

Now that we have a “new node”, add it back to the priority queue:

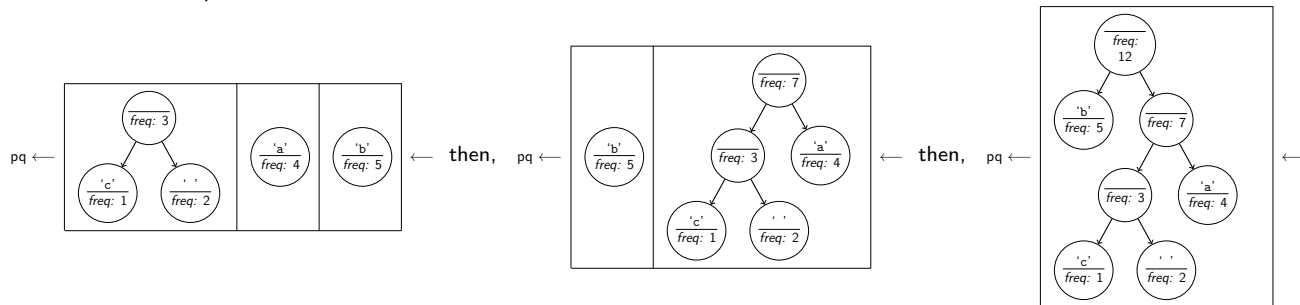


We repeat this process until there is only one node left in the priority queue.



In Java, if you print out a priority queue, it *will not* appear in the order you expect it to. This is EXPECTED behavior.

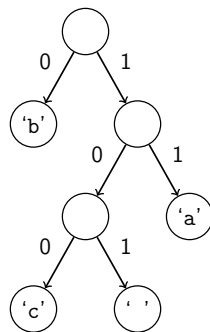
Here are the remaining steps (each time, we remove the two smallest frequencies, combine them, and put the result back):



Now that we only have one node left, we can use the tree we constructed to create the huffman codes!

Step 4: Read Off The Huffman Codes

At this point, the frequencies of the letters have already been taken into account; so, we no longer even look at them. Thus, the tree we've constructed looks like the following:



```

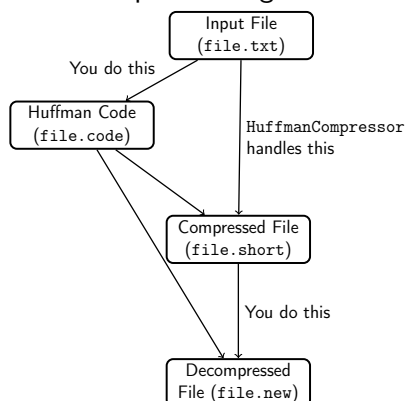
simple-spec-example.code
98
0
99
100
32
101
97
11
  
```

To figure out the huffman code for a letter, we traverse the tree from the root to the node with the letter in it. When we go left, we print a 0 and if we go right, we print a 1. For example, 'c' would be 100, because we go right, then left, then left to reach it.

Just like in 20 questions, we will output the tree in “standard format”. Notice that the only actual information is in the leaves of the tree. So, the code file, which you can get by asking the main to “make a code”, will consist of line pairs: the first line will be the ASCII value of the character in the leaf and the second line will be the huffman code for that character. For example, the output of the tree we just constructed would look like the above. The leaves should appear in traversal order.

Huffman Compression and Decompression

Now that we know how to construct a huffman code, we are ready to understand the huffman compression and decompression algorithms. Here is an overview of how they work:



Compression Algorithm

- (1) HuffmanCompressor generates the frequencies in a given file.
- (2) HuffmanCode creates the huffman code from the frequencies.
- (3) HuffmanCode writes out the huffman codes to a .code file.
- (4) HuffmanCompressor writes a .short file.

Decompression Algorithm

- (1) HuffmanCode reads in a .code file in standard format.
- (2) HuffmanCode writes out a .new file.

HuffmanNode

The contents of the HuffmanNode class are up to you. Though we have studied trees of ints, you *should* create nodes specific to solving this problem. Your HuffmanNode class should have at least one constructor used by your tree. Your node's fields *must* be public. Any fields representing data *must* be *final*. HuffmanNode should not contain *any actual huffman coding logic*. It should only represent a single node of the tree.

HuffmanCode

This class represents a huffman code for a particular file. It keeps track of a binary tree constructed using the huffman algorithm.

HuffmanCode should have the following constructors:

```
public HuffmanCode(int[] frequencies)
```

This constructor should initialize a new HuffmanCode object using the algorithm described for making a code from an array of frequencies. frequencies is an array of frequencies where frequencies[i] is the count of the character with ASCII value i. Make sure to use a PriorityQueue to build the huffman code.

```
public HuffmanCode(Scanner input)
```

This constructor should initialize a new HuffmanCode object by reading in a previously constructed code from a .code file. You may assume the Scanner is not null and is attached to a legal, existing file in standard format.

HuffmanCode should also implement the following methods:

```
public void save(PrintStream output)
```

This method should store the current huffman codes to the given output stream in the standard format described above.

```
public void translate(BitInputStream input, PrintStream output)
```

This method should read individual bits from the input stream and write the corresponding characters to the output. It should stop reading when the BitInputStream is empty. You may assume that the input stream contains a legal encoding of characters for this tree's huffman code. **See below for the methods that a BitInputStream has.**

BitInputStream

The provided BitInputStream class reads a file bit by bit. This will be useful for the translate method in HuffmanCode. BitInputStream has the following methods:

```
public int nextBit()
```

This method returns the next bit in the input stream. If there is no such bit, then it throws a NoSuchElementException.

```
public boolean hasNextBit()
```

This method returns true if the input stream has at least one more bit and false otherwise.

The interface for BitInputStream looks very much like a Scanner, and it should be used similarly.

Implementation Details

Your program should exactly reproduce the format and general behavior demonstrated on the output comparison tool. Note that this assignment has two mostly separate parts: creating a huffman code and decompressing a file using your huffman code. Of the four methods to implement, two are relevant to each part.

Creating A Huffman Code

You will write methods to (1) create a huffman code from an array of frequencies and (2) write out the code you've created in standard format.

Frequency Array Constructor

You should use the algorithm described in the "Making a Huffman Code" section to implement this constructor. You will need to use `PriorityQueue<E>` in the `java.util` package.

The only difference between a priority queue and a standard queue is that it uses the natural ordering of the objects to decide which object to dequeue first, with objects considered "less" returned first. You will be putting subtrees into your priority queue, which means you'll be adding values of type `HuffmanNode`.

This means that your `HuffmanNode` class will have to implement the `Comparable<E>` interface. It should use the frequency of the subtree to determine its ordering relative to other subtrees, with lower frequencies considered "less" than higher frequencies. If two frequencies are equal, the nodes are too.

It would have been best for Sun to define `PriorityQueue` as an interface because there are many ways to implement a priority queue, but that's not how they did it. In this case, we have a tradeoff. We would like to make it clear that we need a priority queue rather than a simple queue. On the other hand, we prefer to use interfaces when possible to keep our code flexible. There isn't necessarily a "right" choice in this case. You should go with interfaces and flexibility. So, you are required to use an interface (in this case, `Queue<E>`) to define the type of variables, parameters and return values.

The Huffman solution is not unique. You can obtain any one of several different equivalent trees depending upon how certain decisions are made. If you implement it as we have specified, then you should get exactly the same tree for any particular implementation of `PriorityQueue`. Make sure that you use the built-in `PriorityQueue` class and that when you are combining pairs of values taken from the priority queue, you make the first value removed from the queue the left subtree and you make the second value removed the right subtree.

Decompressing A File

You will write methods to (1) read in a `.code` file created with `save()` and (2) translate a compressed file back into a decompressed file.

Scanner Constructor

This constructor will be given a `Scanner` that contains a file produced by `save()`. In other words, the input for this constructor is the output you produced into a `.code` file. The goal of this constructor is to re-create the huffman tree from your output. Note that the frequencies are irrelevant for this part, because the tree has already been constructed; so, you should set all the frequencies to some standard value (such as 0 or -1) when creating `HuffmanNodes` in this constructor.

Remember that the standard code file format is a series of pairs of lines where the first line has an integer representing the character's ASCII value and the second line has the code to use for that character. You might be tempted to call `nextInt()` to read the integer and `nextLine()` to read the code, but remember that mixing token-based reading and line-based reading is not simple. Here is an alternative that uses a method called `parseInt` in the `Integer` class that allows you to use two successive calls on `nextLine()`:

```
1 int n = Integer.parseInt(input.nextLine());  
2 String code = input.nextLine();
```

translate

This method takes in a `BitInputStream` representing a previously compressed file and outputs the original decompressed file. `BitInputStream` can be used in a very similar way to a `Scanner`; see the description of its methods on page 4.

This method reads sequences of bits that represent encoded characters to figure out what the original characters must have been. The algorithm works as follows:

- Begin at the top of the tree
- For each bit read in from the `BitInputStream`, if it's a 0, go left, and if it's a 1, go right.
- Eventually, we will hit a leaf node. Once we do, write out the integer code for that character to the output file using the following `PrintStream` method:

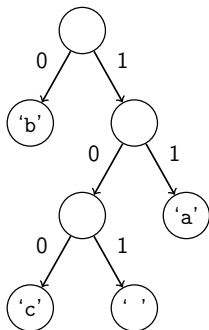
```
public void write(int b)
```

- Then, go back to the top of the tree, and do the process over again.

You will have to be careful if you use recursion in your decode method. Java has a limit on the stack depth you can use. For a large file, there are hundreds of thousands of characters to decode. It would not be appropriate to write code that requires a stack that is hundreds of thousands of levels deep. You might be forced to write some or all of this using loops to make sure that you don't exceed the stack depth.

Translate Example

Suppose we have the following `.code` and `.short` files:



simple2-spec-example.short
110101110101100

Read 1, go right. Read 1, go right. 'a' is a leaf. Output 'a'. (Input: 110101110101100)
Read 0, go left. 'b' is a leaf. Output 'b'. (Input: 110101110101100)
Read 1, go right. Read 0, go left. Read 1, go right. ' ' is a leaf. Output ' '. (Input: 110101110101100)
Read 1, go right. Read 1, go right. 'a' is a leaf. Output 'a'. (Input: 110101110101100)
Read 0, go left. 'b' is a leaf. Output 'b'. (Input: 110101110101100)
Read 1, go right. Read 0, go left. Read 1, go right. ' ' is a leaf. Output ' '. (Input: 110101110101100)
Read 1, go right. Read 0, go left. Read 0, go left. 'c' is a leaf. Output 'c'. (Input: 110101110101100)

So, the decompressed text is "ab ab c".

Creative Aspect (secretmessage.short and secretmessage.code)

Along with your program you should turn in files named `secretmessage.short` and `secretmessage.code` that represent a "secret" compressed message from you to your TA and its code file. The message can be anything you want, as long as it is not offensive. Your TA will decompress your message with your tree and read it while grading.

Style Guidelines and Grading

Part of your grade will come from appropriately utilizing binary trees and recursion to implement huffman coding as described previously. We will also grade on the elegance of your recursive algorithm; don't create special cases in your recursive code if they are unnecessary.

`x = change(x)`

An important concept introduced in lecture was called `x = change(x)`. This idea is related to proper design of recursive methods that manipulate the structure of a binary tree. You must follow this pattern on this assignment to receive full internal correctness credit. For example, you might be tempted to “morph” a huffman node to have a new frequency or value. Since the data and frequency in your huffman nodes must be final, this should not compile. You can rearrange where nodes appear in the tree, but you shouldn't turn a former answer node into a question node just to simplify the programming you need to perform.

Avoid Redundancy

Create “helper” method(s) to capture repeated code. As long as all extra methods you create are private (so outside code cannot call them), you can have additional methods in your class beyond those specified here. If you find that multiple methods in your class do similar things, you should create helper method(s) to capture the common code.

Generic Structures

You should always use generic structures. If you make a mistake in specifying type parameters, the Java compiler may warn you that you have “unchecked or unsafe operations” in your program. If you use jGRASP, you may want to change your settings to see which line the warning refers to. Go to Settings/Compiler Settings/Workspace/Flags/Args and then uncheck the box next to “Compile” and type in: `-Xlint:unchecked`

Data Fields

Properly encapsulate your objects by making your fields private. (You can and *should* make your fields in `HuffmanNode` public.) Avoid unnecessary fields; use fields to store important data of your objects but not to store temporary values only used in one place. Fields should always be initialized inside a constructor or method, never at declaration.

Java Style Guidelines

Appropriately use control structures like loops and if/else statements. Avoid redundancy using techniques such as methods, loops, and factoring common code out of if/else statements. Properly use indentation, good variable names, and types. Do not have any lines of code longer than 80 characters.

Commenting

You should comment your code with a heading at the top of your class with your name, section, and a description of the overall program. All method headers should be commented as well as all complex sections of code. Make sure you describe complex methods inside methods. Comments should explain each method's behavior, parameters, return values, and assumptions made by your code, as appropriate. The `ArrayList` class from lecture provides a good example of the kind of documentation we expect you to include. You do not have to use the pre/post format, but you must include the equivalent information—including the type of exception thrown if a precondition is violated. Write descriptive comments that explain error cases, and details of the behavior that would be important to the client. Your comments should be written in your own words and not taken verbatim from this document.