THE FIRST YEAR

Matthias Felleisen
PLT
Northeastern University, Boston

WHEREITALLBEGAN

- Starting in 1995 (January 26) @ Rice University
- The "How to Design" Project
 - TeachScheme!
 - DrScheme and ProfessorJ
- ... but in reality, it all began in 1978.



The Problem





• in 1978 @ Karlsruhe (Technische Universität): variables, assignments, printing, arrays, loops, procedures, classes and methods



- in 1978 @ Karlsruhe (Technische Universität): variables, assignments, printing, arrays, loops, procedures, classes and methods
- in 2007 @ Anywhere (College, University): variables, assignments, printing, arrays, loops, procedures, classes and methods, ...



- in 1978 @ Karlsruhe (Technische Universität): variables, assignments, printing, arrays, loops, procedures, classes and methods
- in 2007 @ Anywhere (College, University): variables, assignments, printing, arrays, loops, procedures, classes and methods, ...
- ... and perhaps interfaces and inheritance.



- Algol 60/Simula 67
- Pascal
- (
- Scheme
- C++
- Eiffel
- Haskell
- Java
- Alice



- Algol 60/Simula 67
- Pascal
- (
- Scheme
- C++
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- Haskell
- Java
- Alice

1978 - 2007:

9 languages, 29 years:



- Algol 60/Simula 67
- Pascal
- C
- Scheme
- C++
- Eiffel
- Haskell
- Java
- Alice

1978 - 2007:

9 languages, 29 years:



Are we really just a fashion industry?



Is your story any better?



- Why are we still thrashing around when it comes to the first year?
- Do we really lack a "product" to sell?
- Would a Physicist ask "how do I make the introductory course more *Glamour*-ous?"

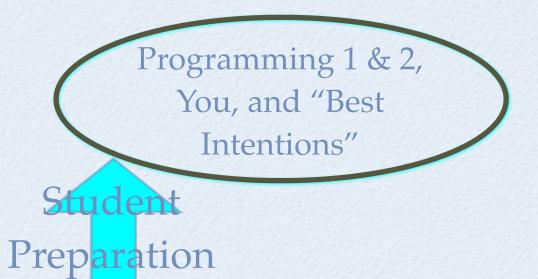


The Constraints

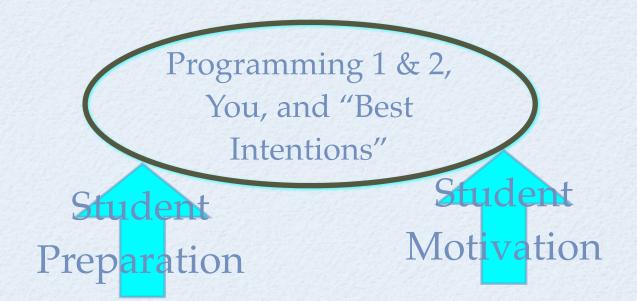


Programming 1 & 2,
You, and "Best
Intentions"





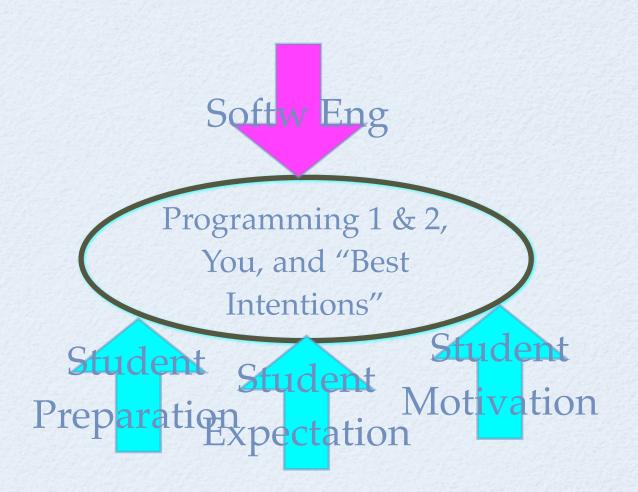




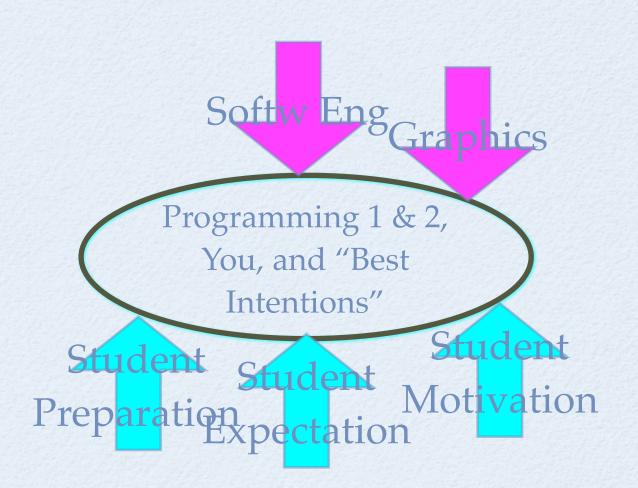




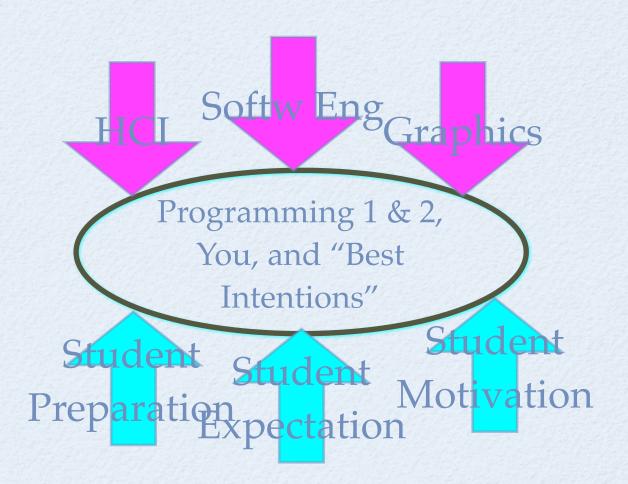




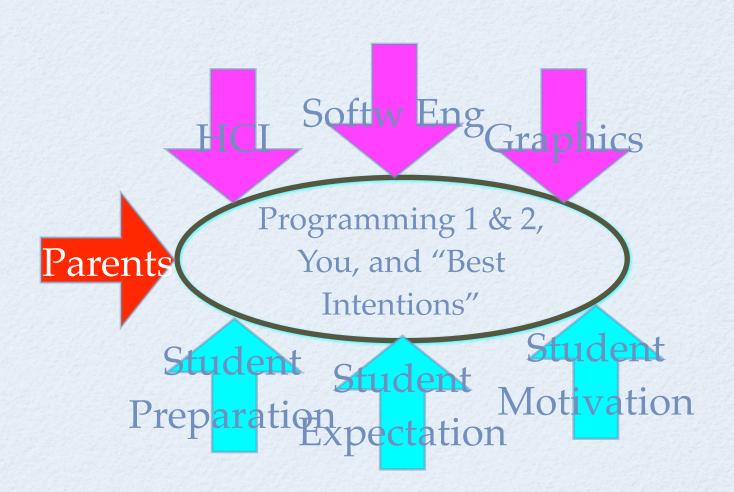




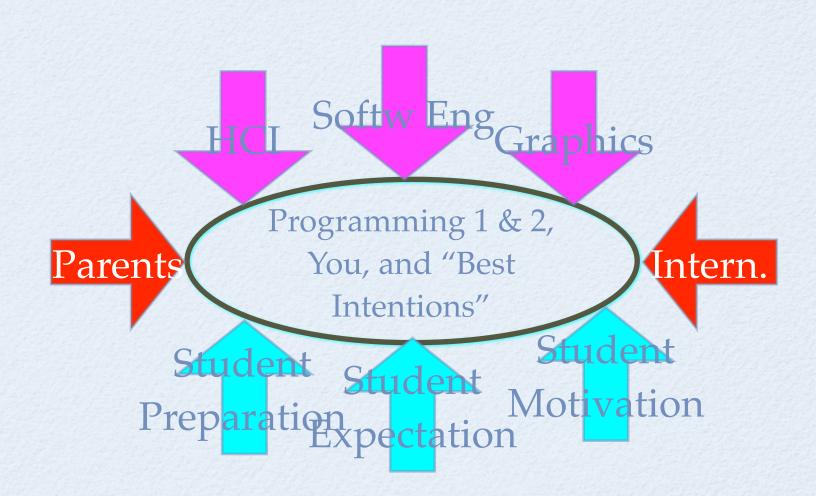




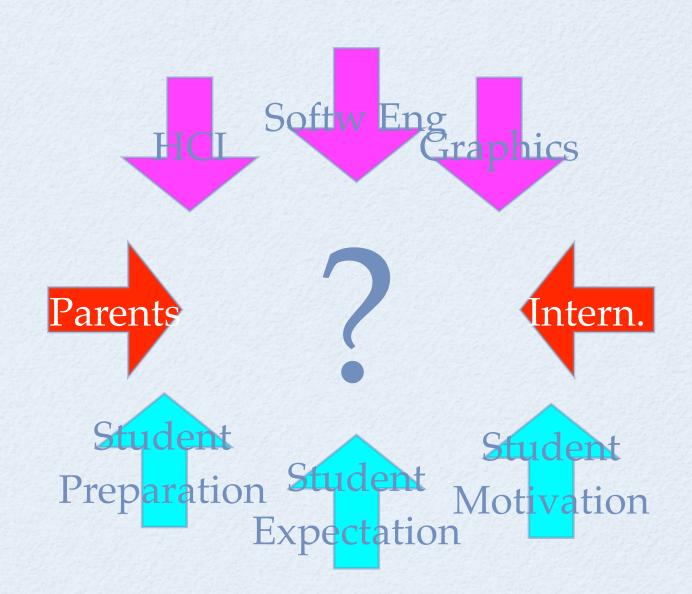










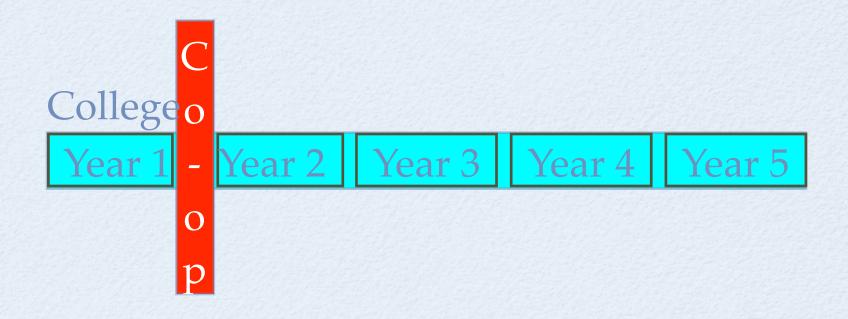




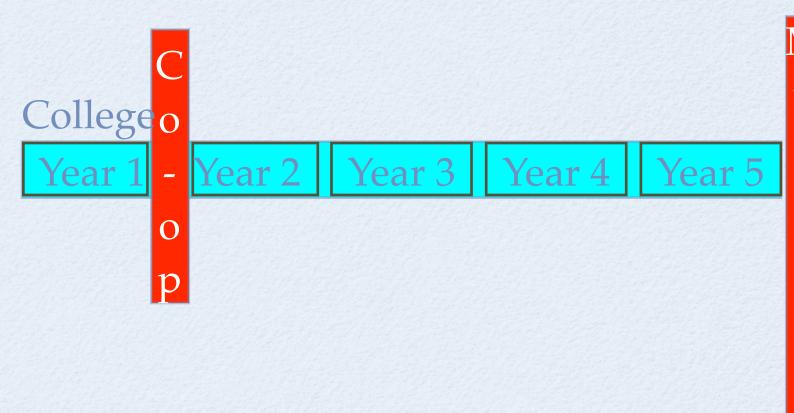
College

Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5



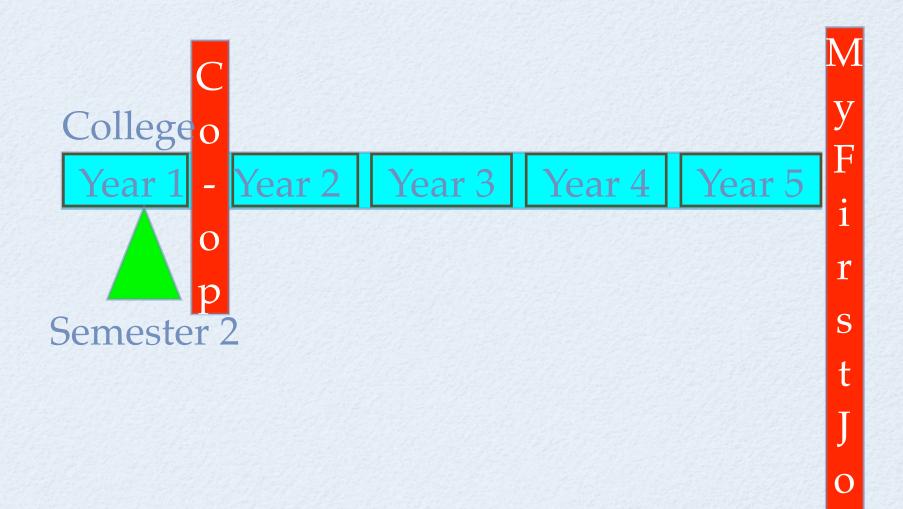




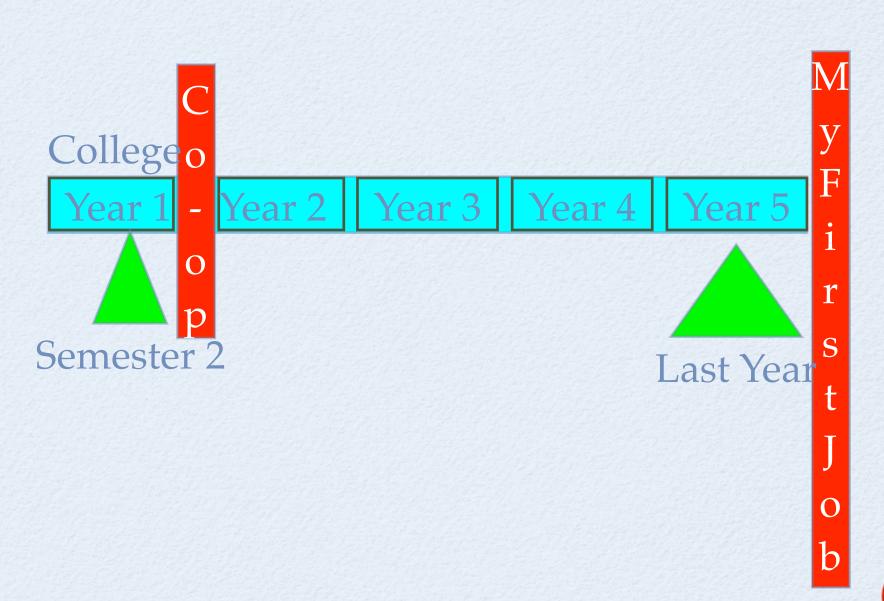




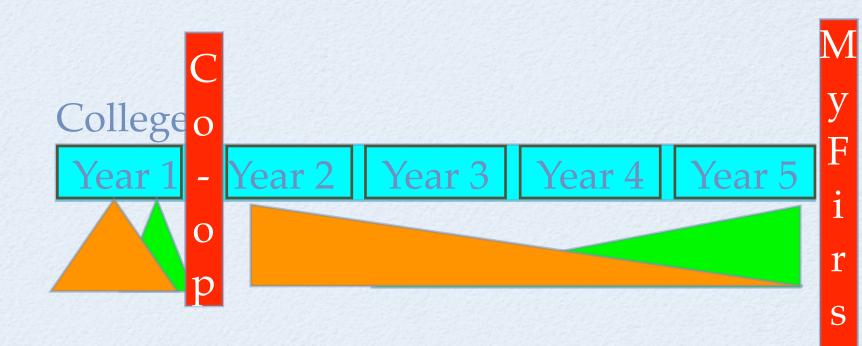












Principles
Preparation for Industry





The Principles





• College empowers life-long learning.



- College empowers life-long learning.
- Students need early exposure to best-practices.



- College empowers life-long learning.
- Students need early exposure to best-practices.
- Faculty *aims high and has spine* to stick to principles.





• Best practices means "get it right."



PROGRAMMING

- Best practices means "get it right."
- Best practices means "think it through."



PROGRAMMING

- Best practices means "get it right."
- Best practices means "think it through."
- Best practices means "to program is to design."





Object-oriented programming has won.



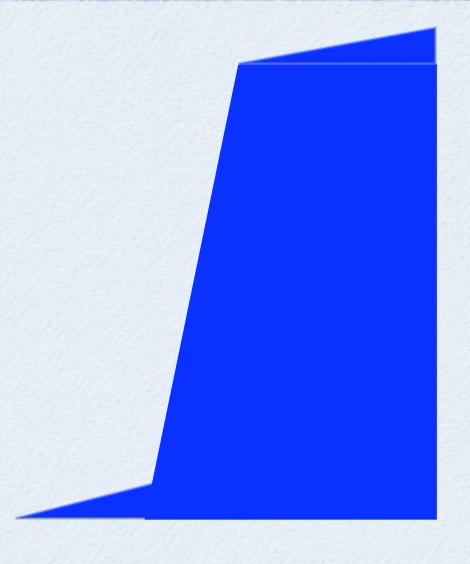
- Object-oriented programming has won.
- So has scripting (light-weight programming).



- Object-oriented programming has won.
- So has scripting (light-weight programming).
- The quality of programs depends on how often the programmer has switched languages and programming paradigms. It does *not* depend on the numbers of years spent with *one* language [PPig].



Current:



variables, assignments, printing, arrays, loops, procedures, ...





???



Wanted:

An tenth grader should naturally understand the computational model behind TTL.



Wanted:

An tenth grader should naturally understand the computational model behind TFL.

TFL must accommodate (and display ideals of) principled program design.

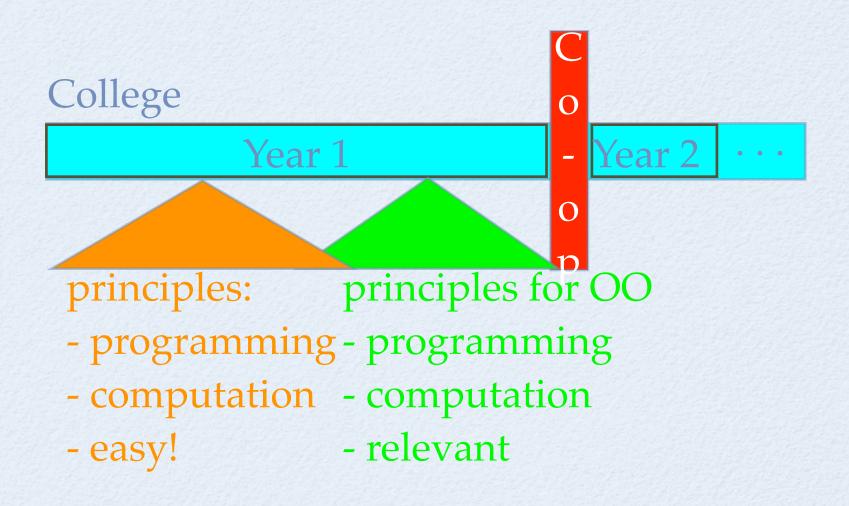


THE SECOND LANGUAGE

- The second language must prepare students for *co-op* and should be *fashionable*.
- Use the second language to demonstrate that principles work *everywhere*.



PRINCIPLES & CONSTRAINTS





Linguistics I





Sather Eiffel Java C# C++ Basic imperative or OO

JavaScript Ruby
Tcl/Tk
Python
Perl
scripting

Sather Eiffel Java C# C++ VB Basic imperative or OO

It's Scheme!

JavaScript Ruby
Tcl/Tk

Perl Python

scripting

Sather

Eiffel

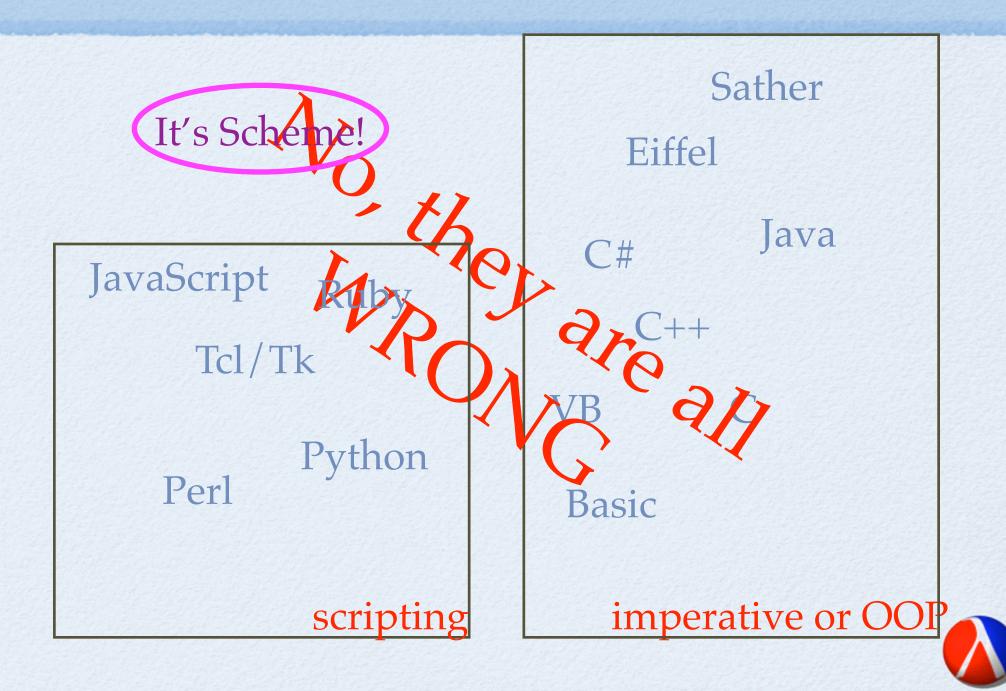
C# Java

C++

VB C

Basic

imperative or OOI



```
// a first C++ program
main() {
 double price;
 int quantity;
 double total;
 price * quantity = total;
```



```
// a first C++ program
main() {
 double price;
 int quantity;
 double total;
 price * quantity = total;
```

LHS value expected here!



```
// a first C++ program
main() {
 double price;
 int quantity;
 double total;
 price * quantity = total;
```

LHS value expected here!

- 100s of hours of observations
- inner city, urban, suburban, public, private high schools, college freshmen
- Not a C++ problem.
- Every language suffers.

```
// my first Java program with extends
class UP {
   UP(int x) {}
}

class DOWN extends UP {
   DOWN(int y) {}
}
```



```
// my first Java program with extends
class UP {
   UP(int x) {}
}

class DOWN extends UP {
   DOWN(int y) {}
}
```

constructor-error-message.java:6: cannot find symbol: constructor UP()

```
// my first Java program with extends
class UP {
   UP(int x) {}
}
class DOWN extends UP {
   DOWN(int y) {}
```

Quick: What does this mean?

constructor-error-message.java:6: cannot find symbol: constructor UP()

"You have to know everything all at once."



"You have to know everything all at once."

• We can't change the "all at once" part.



"You have to know everything all at once."

- We can't change the "all at once" part.
- We can change the "everything" part.



| Full L |
|--------|
| |
| |
| |
| |



Full L

Beginner L



Full L

Intermediate L

Beginner L



Full L

Advanced L

Intermediate L

Beginner L



Full L

Advanced I

Intermediate L

Beginner L

... and all of them are enforced and checked.



- Our choice: Scheme, a broken language
- Five subsets: Beginning, Beginning with Quote, Intermediate, Intermediate with Lambda, Advanced.
- **Beginning Scheme** is 8th grade algebra, plus structures
- The others chosen based on design principles.



Design (HtDP)



HTDP

- *Design* is what happens before, while, and after you program.
- *Design* means to create programs in a systematic manner.
- *Design* is the opposite of "tinker with examples until it works."



HTDP

Problem Statement

Problem Statement

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- The strike former rectains to such loss a lossest than head upon their









Problem Statement

Problem Statement

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 - The string to support different space of Sandral Lauri Agraed arts.
 - The picity for carding production to a secure and full service orage.
 - Mention by indicate to preven performance granteness are not
 - Planifolis for retained indications in the exect of hulls provide business of finally.
 - The sining the multiple services provides to appearable to multiple and combine and reference or program and
 - The parties for service programs to stepling multi-service existings.
 - The stilling for their speciation and made indo a dominal displayed approxime.

-0.00

To Steel

man a resident







Problem Statement

Problem Statement

- Machine educat or senging set making returns as not ing or set and printed and recompagning as somewhat traditions amples are that infroded stars. The extension of a last printed and the traditional PTDA and the Business Internet for projections objets supplied the constant the court are Applicating it must be provide by compartment over respective to a provincible
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 - The strike her new residence to such lots a located that have a parenties.





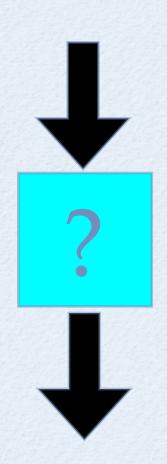


How do you "unstick"



- A design method for beginners must unstick students at *almost any point*.
- A design method must therefore *guide students step by step* from problem statement to program.
- It is only step-by-step if it is *continuous* (a small change in the problem statement leads to a systematic change to the function).





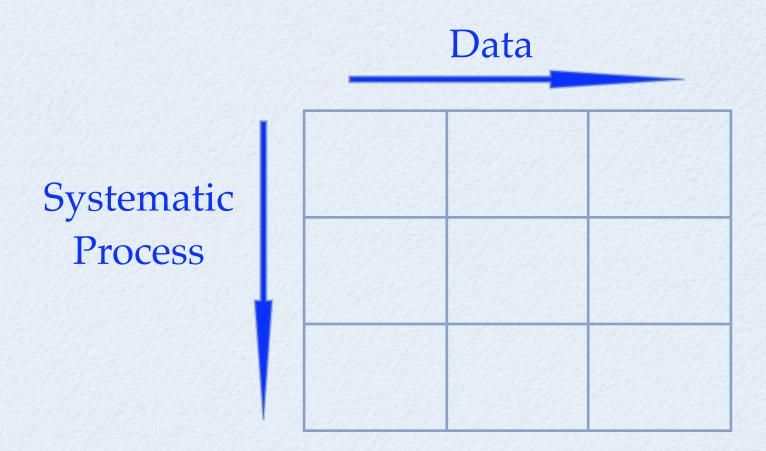
- We are designing functions: ...
- ... things that consume data ...
- ... and produce data.



- A design method must start from and must exploit the nature of input/output *data*.
- A design method must do this systematically.



HTDP: DESIGN RECIPES





- The Design Recipes:
- (1) a series of steps from problem statement to solution expressed as questions;
- (2) the steps are fine-tuned to the nature of data that the function consumes.



read the problem, extract a data
 Systematic description, illustrate the data
 Process description with examples



- state a purpose and type signature
- illustrate with behavioral examples
- translate the data descr. into a program organization (aka "take inventory")



Data

- Data comes in sets (misnamed "classes").
- Naive set theory guides development:
 - atomic (numbers, characters, ...)
 - unions (intervals, classification)
 - products (structures, records)
 - "inductive" (arbitrary size, ...)



Problem:

Control a UFO via Keystrokes on Screen

Move the anchor point of a geometric shape along the horizontal or vertical according to key presses by the user.



Data Descriptions

A **Key** is one of:

- char (#\a)
- 'left
- 'right
- 'up
- 'down
- other symbol

(define-struct point (x y))

A *Point* is a structure: (make-point Number Number)

Examples:

- -- 'left
- -- (make-posn 20 30)



Contract:

;; Point Key -> Point

Purpose Statement:

```
;; +/- Xdelta to p if key is 'right or 'left ;; +/- Ydelta to p if key is 'up or 'down
```

Function Signature:

(define (move p key) ...)



Functional Examples:

```
move((makePoint 10 20),'left)
should be (make-point (+ ... 10) 20)
```

move((make-point 10 20),'up) should be (make-point 10 (+ ... 20))



Inventory:

```
(define (move p key)
 (cond
   [ "key is a char" ... p ... ]
   [ "key is 'left" ... (point-x p) ... (point-y p) ...]
   [ "key is 'right" ... (point-x p) ... (point-y p) ...]
   [ "key is 'up" ... (point-x p) ... (point-y p) ...]
   ["key is 'down" ... (point-x p) ... (point-y p) ...]
   ["otherwise" ... p ...]
```



The Program:

from here, the program is self-evident



Tests:

(check-expect (move (make-posn 10 20) 'left) (make-posn 5 20))

• • •



HTDP: FUN

- Run: the function is used via a callback hook: (on-key-event move)
- Students write GUI-controlled programs from week 2.
- And they get to know the distinction between running and testing a program.



Problem:

Process the Files in A Directory ...

Design a function that finds put whether a file with some given name exists in a folder structure.



Data Description:

A folder is a structure with two fields:

- name, list of files and folders.

A list of files and folders is one of:

- the empty list
- a list of files and folders extended with a file
- a list of files and folders extended with a folder

Afile is a name.



Data Description:

A folder is a structure with two fields:

- name, list of files and folders.

A list of files and folders is one of:

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- a list of files and folders extended with a folder.

Afile is a name.



Socratic Scripts:

- Does the data description consist of several disjoint subsets? How many?
- For each subset (subclass): Is it a structure? What are its fields?
- Does the data description refer to itself? Make the function recursive in analogous places!



Socratic Scripts:

- Does the data description consist of several disjoint subsets? How many?
- For each subset (subclass): Is it a structure? What are its fields?
- Does the data description refer to itself? Make the function recursive in analogous places!

This is material for the 7th week for total novices at NU

HTDP: MORE DESIGN

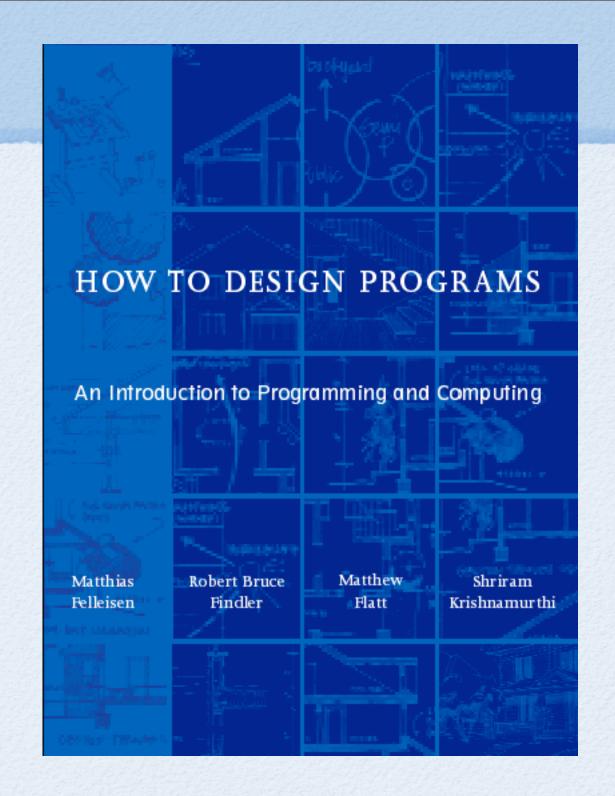
- iterative refinement (data modeling)
- abstraction over similar data (polym.)
- abstraction over similar functions (h.o.)
- generative recursion (graph traversal)
- functions with accumulators
- memory (state and assignment)



Details too much for a talk.

Warning: Commercial Plug







Dewarning: http://www.htdp.org/



Linguistics 2



Full L

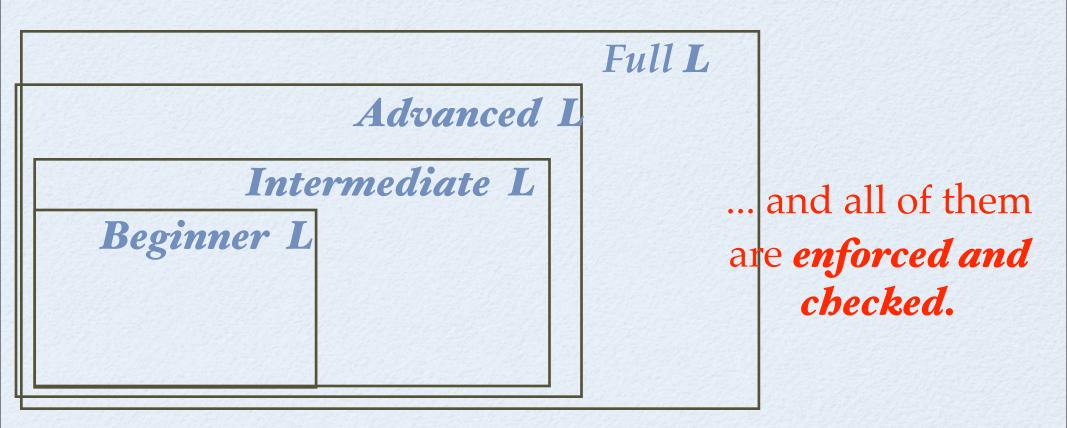
Advanced L

Intermediate L

Beginner L

... and all of them are enforced and checked.





How do you enforce and support them?



- Each language comes with a compiler and its own error reporting.
- Each language comes with an algebraic stepper.
- Each language comes with interactive REPL.

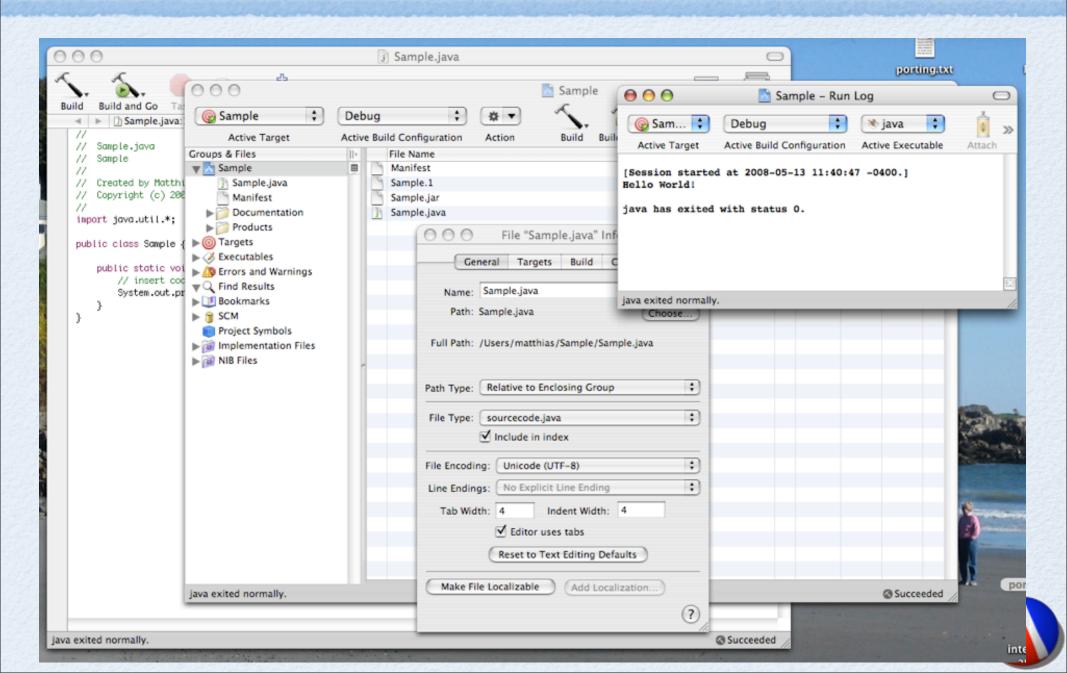


- Each language comes with a compiler and its own error reporting.
- Each language comes with an algebraic stepper.
- Each language comes with interactive REPL.

So we did it for all five of them, in one programming environment.



THE FIRST ENVIRONMENT



THE FIRST ENVIRONMENT



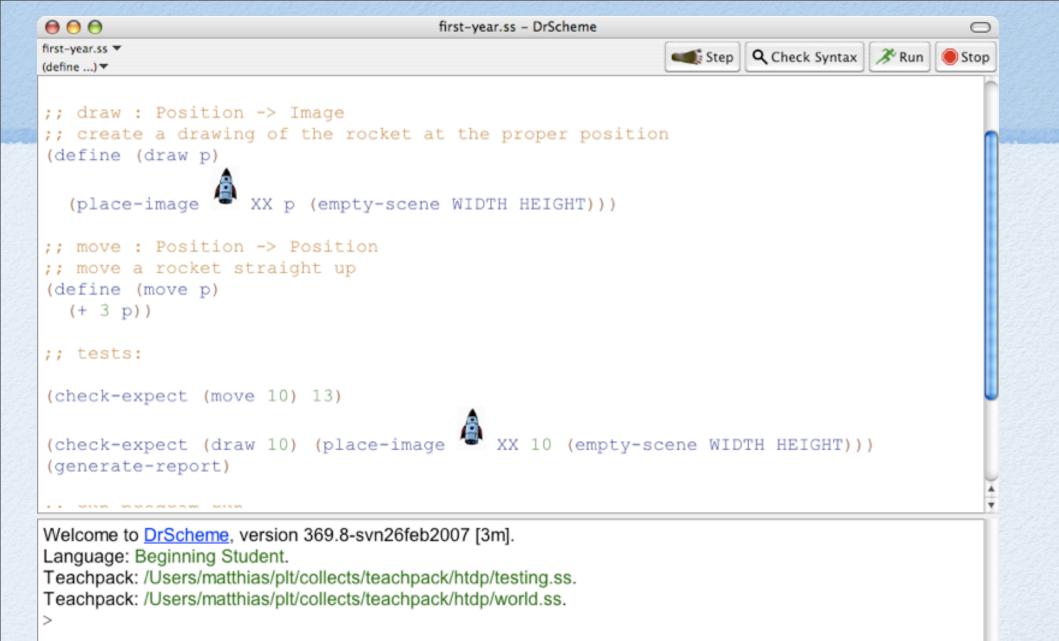
Thanks Viera Proulx



A GOOD FIRST IDE

Our Response to the 747-IDE

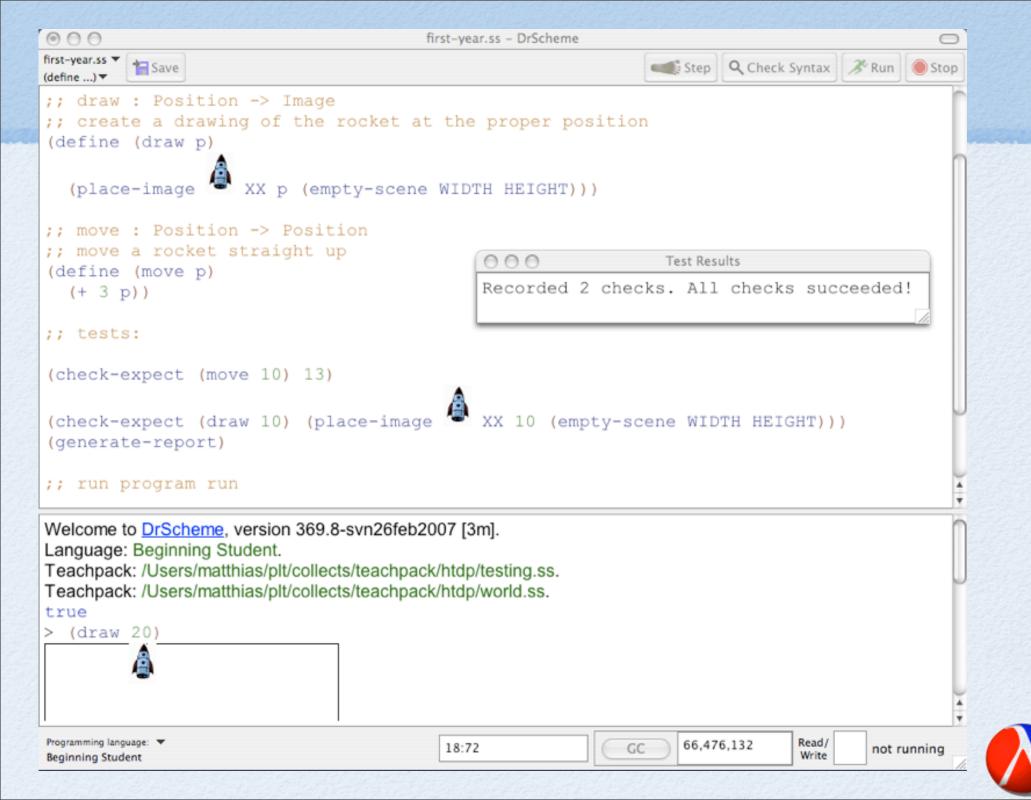


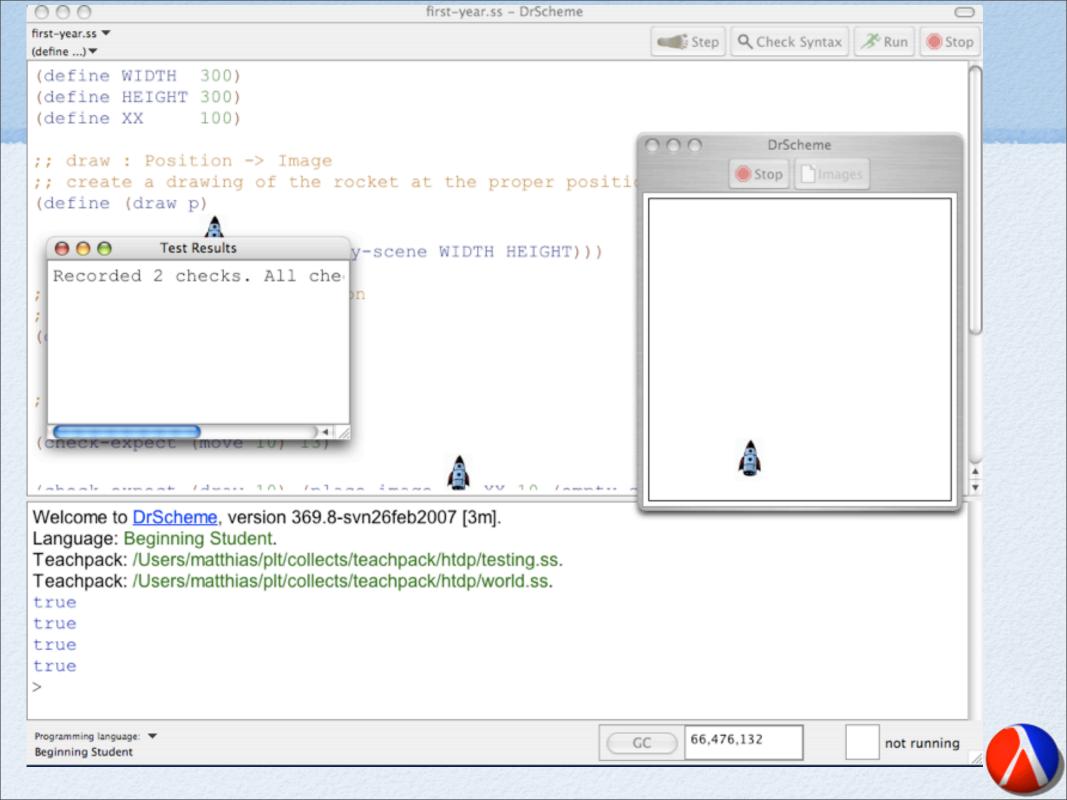


Programming language: ▼ Beginning Student









```
\Theta \Theta \Theta
                                         Stepper
                                                    Step >
                                                              Application >
               Home | < Application
                                         < Step
(define (world-move ke x)
  (cond
   ((char? ke) x)
   ((symbol=? ke 'left) (- x 2))
   ((symbol=? ke 'right) (+ x 2))
   (else x)))
(world-move 'left 20)
                                             (cond
                                              ((char? 'left) 20)
                                          → ((symbol=? 'left 'left) (- 20 2))
                                              ((symbol=? 'left 'right) (+ 20 2))
                                              (else 20))
```

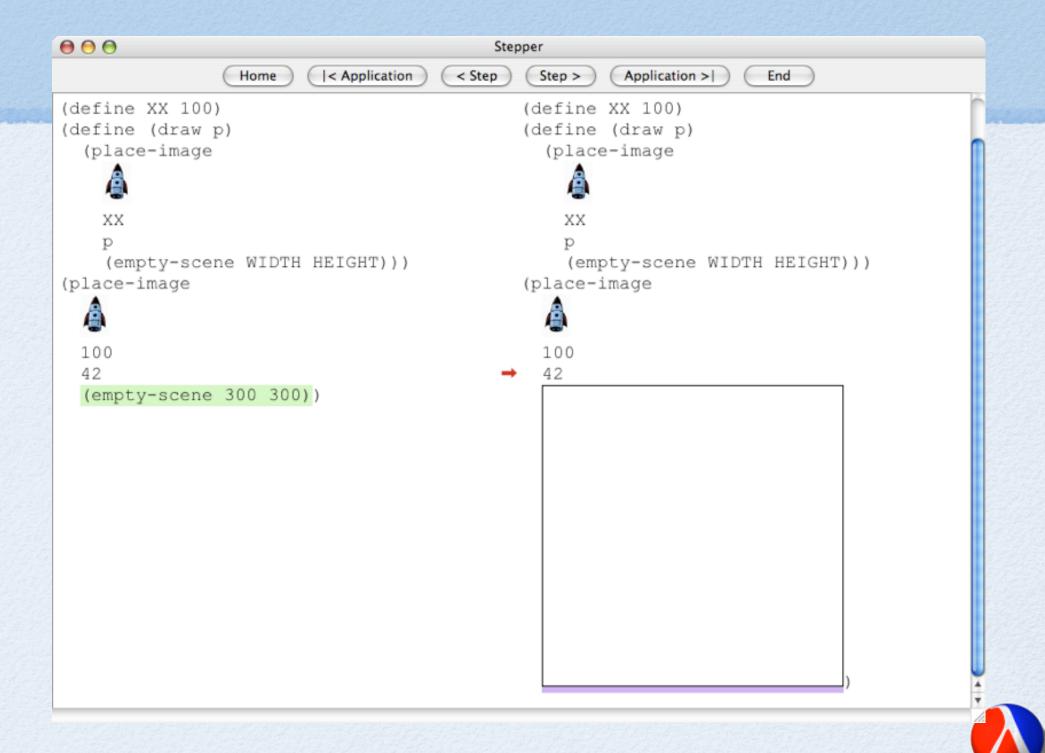


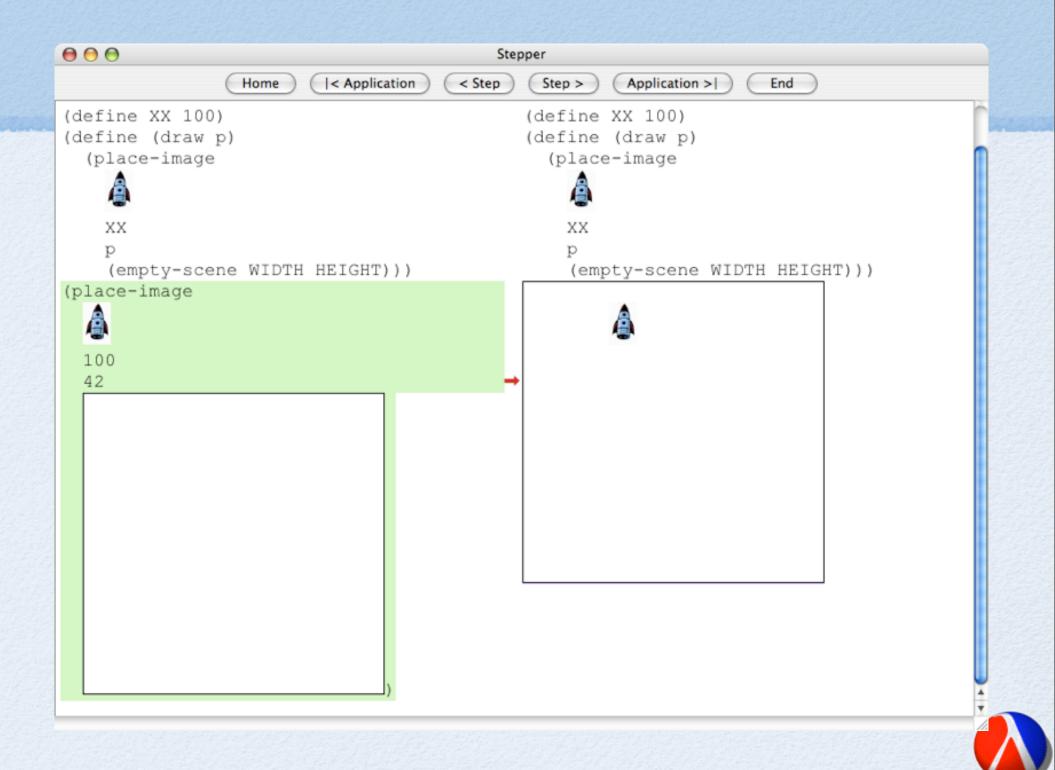
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                                                              Application >|
                          |< Application
                                                    Step >
                Home
(define (world-move ke x)
  (cond
   ((char? ke) x)
   ((symbol=? ke 'left) (- x 2))
   ((symbol=? ke 'right) (+ x 2))
   (else x)))
(cond
                                             (cond
 ((char? 'left) 20)
                                              (false 20)
 ((symbol=? 'left 'left) (- 20 2))
                                          → ((symbol=? 'left 'left) (- 20 2))
 ((symbol=? 'left 'right) (+ 20 2))
                                              ((symbol=? 'left 'right) (+ 20 2))
 (else 20))
                                              (else 20))
```

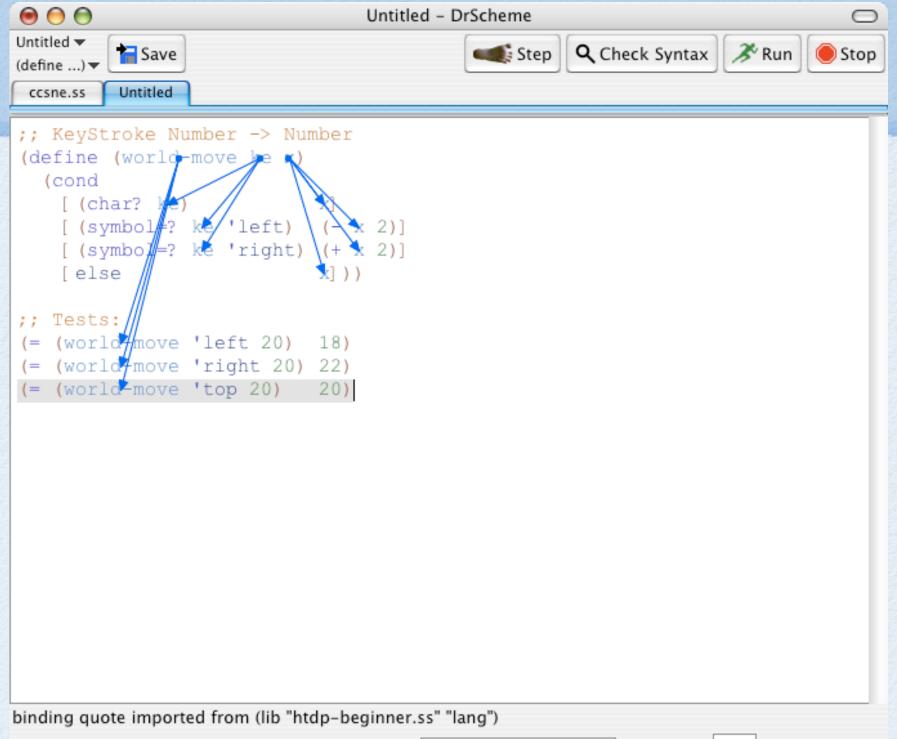


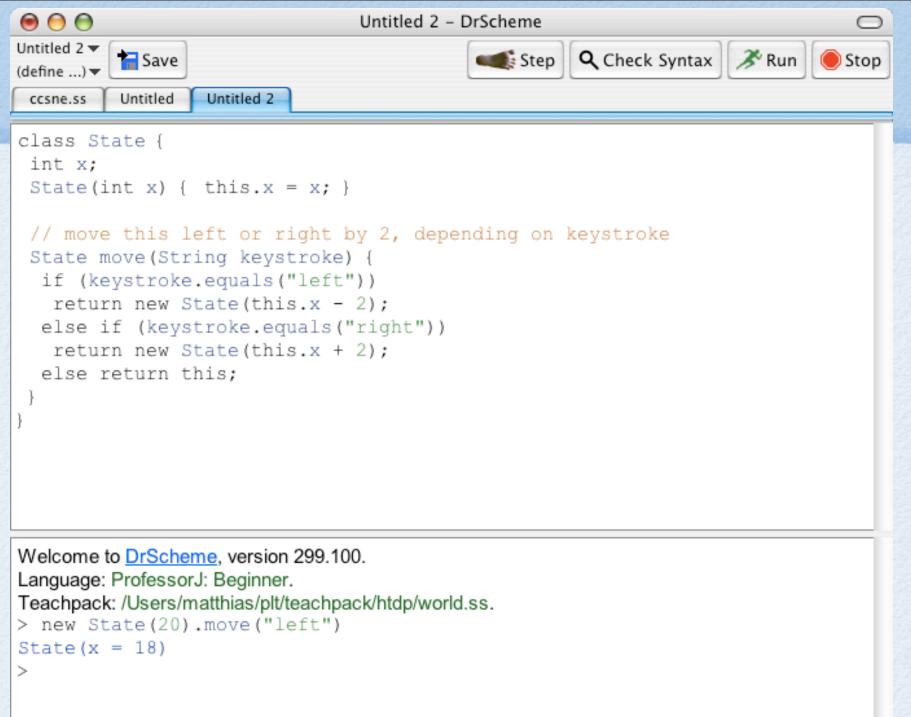
```
\Theta \Theta \Theta
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                          |< Application
                                                     Step >
                Home
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                                             (cond
 (false 20)
                                              ((symbol=? 'left 'left) (- 20 2))
                                             ((symbol=? 'left 'right) (+ 20 2))
 ((symbol=? 'left 'left) (- 20 2))
 ((symbol=? 'left 'right) (+ 20 2))
                                               (else 20))
 (else 20))
```











Design (HtDC)

Semester 2



HTDC

- Classes for Objects, Types to Check
- Does the Design Process Apply?
- Does Java Support it All?



HTDC: DESIGN RECIPE (1)

Split the Design Recipe



HTDC: DESIGN RECIPE (1)

Split the Design Recipe

Design Data:

- Diagrams & Classes
- Sample Instances
- Representation &

Interpretation



HTDC: DESIGN RECIPE (1)

Split the Design Recipe

Design Data:

- Diagrams & Classes
- Sample Instances
- Representation &

Interpretation

Design Methods:

- Signature & Purpose
- Functional Examples
- Template = Chase the Diagram
- Program!
- Tests





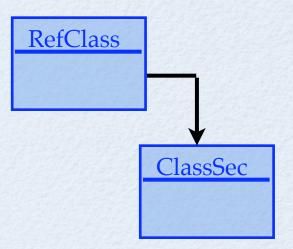
"atomic" types



"atomic" types

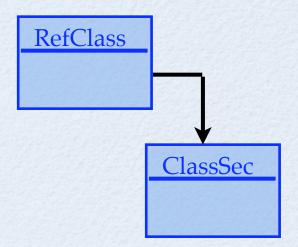


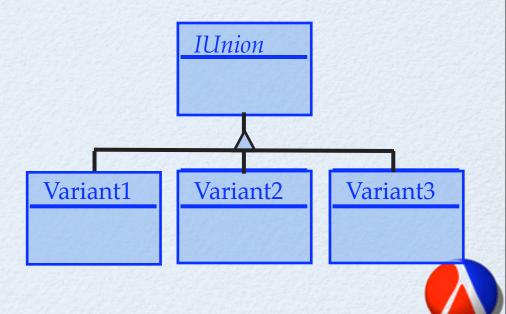
"atomic" types



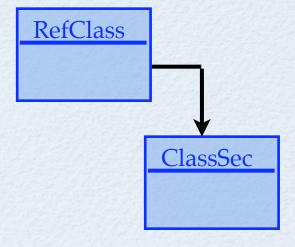


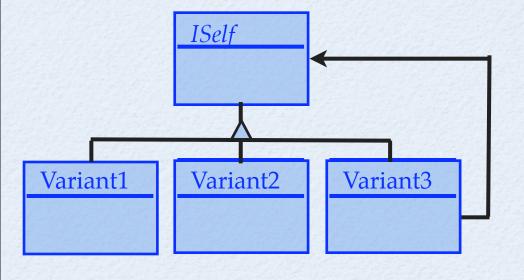
"atomic" types

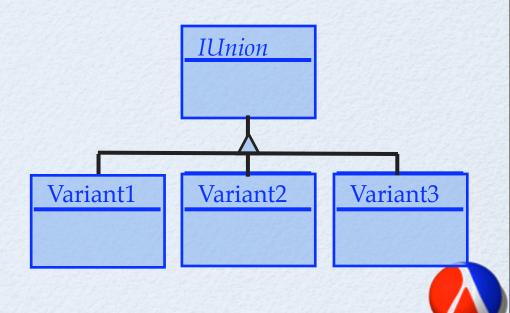




"atomic" types







WarOfWorlds extends World

UFO myUFO

UFO

Vector location



WarOfWorlds extends World

UFO myUFO

Examples

Vector uLoc = ...

UFO u = ...

World w = ...

UFO

Vector location



WarOfWorlds

UFO myUFO

World onKeyEvent(String ke)

Examples

Vector uLoc = ...

UFO u = ...

World w = ...

UFO

Vector location

UFO move(Vector delta)

WarOfWorlds

UFO myUFO

World on Key Event (String ke)

Examples

Vector uLoc = ...

UFO u = ...

World w = ...

UFO

Vector location

UFO move(Vector delta)

WarOfWorlds

UFO myUFO

World on Key Event (String ke)

Examples

Vector uLoc = ...

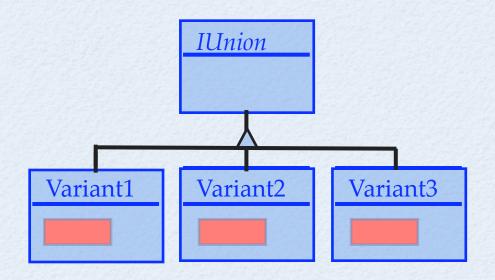
UFO u = ...

World w = ...

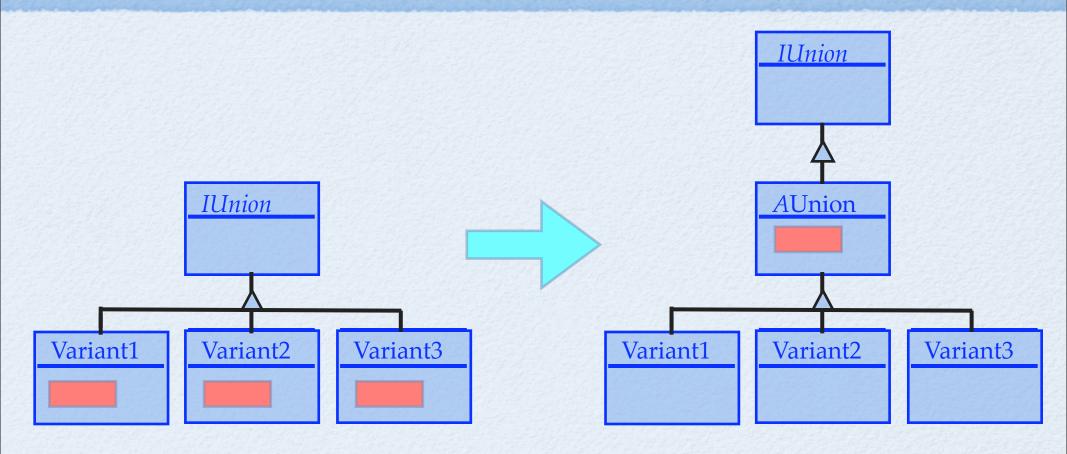
UFO

Vector location

UFO move(Vector delta)

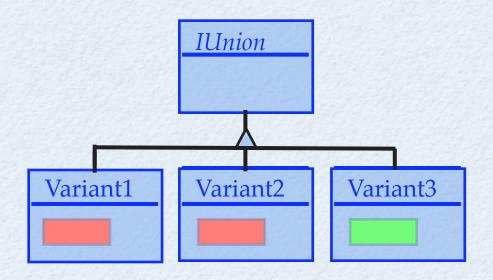




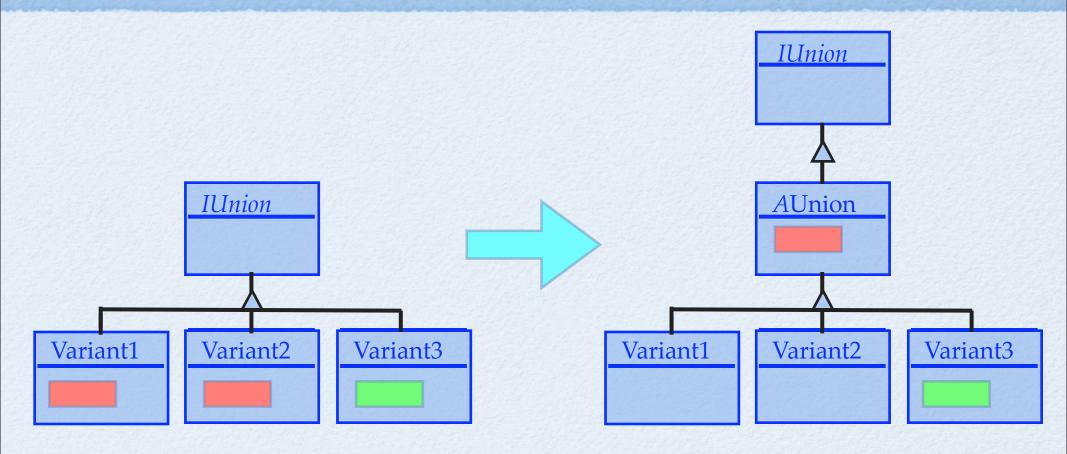


Inheritance



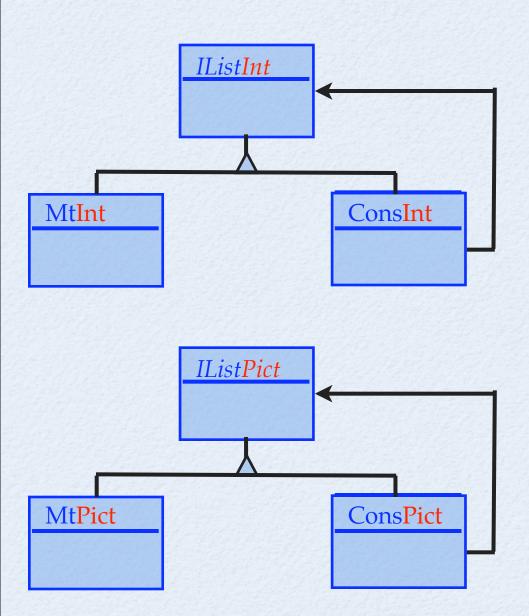




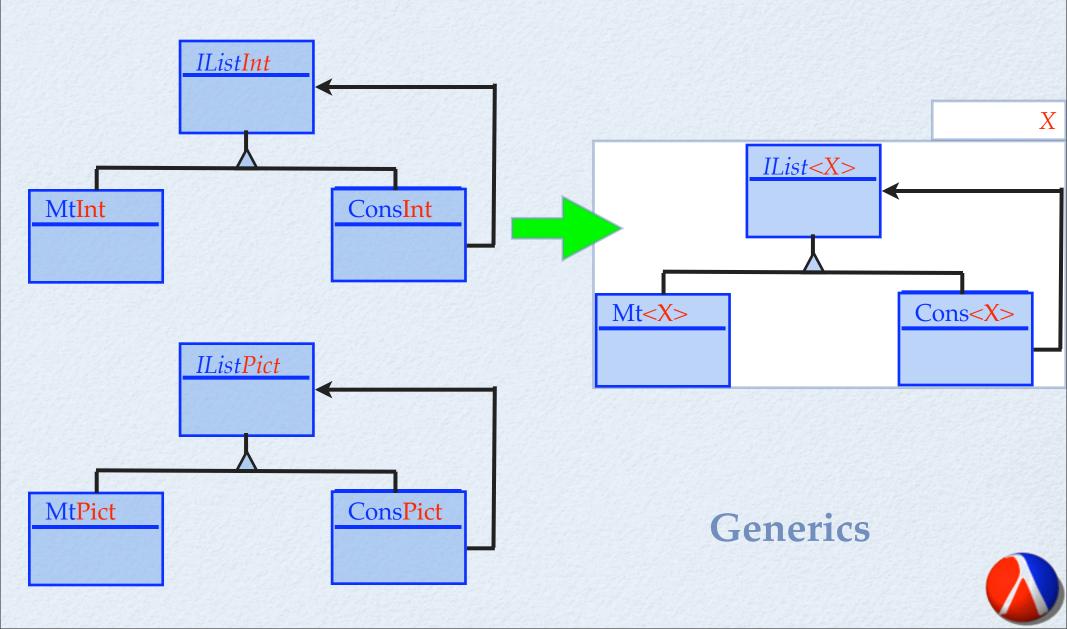


Inheritance and Overriding









- detect similar but distinct traversals
- abstract over distinct action with "first-class" methods ...
- ... which don't exist: represent as instances of command class



- detect similar but distinct traversals
- abstract over distinct action with "first-class" methods ...
- ... which don't exist: represent as instances of command class

Note: systematics "rediscovery" of patterns

HTDC: ENCAPSULATION

- idea: program for others, protect invariants
- for state, protection is encapsulation



HTDC: JAVA

- Java Teaching Languages: Beginning Student,
 Intermediate Student, Advanced Student
- switch to Eclipse and Java 1.5, with JUnit
- introduce Java run-time library



Results



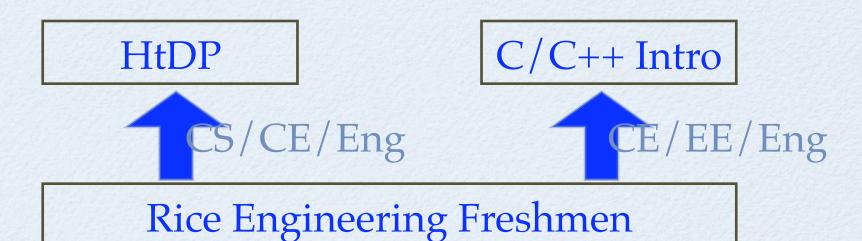
RESULTS: FIRST SEMESTER

- The first semester: Ten Years
- Evaluation with respect to C++ course(s)
- Hand-over test at Rice: five instructors
- Field tests at 20 local high-schools
- Now used at 12+ colleges and 200+ high schools

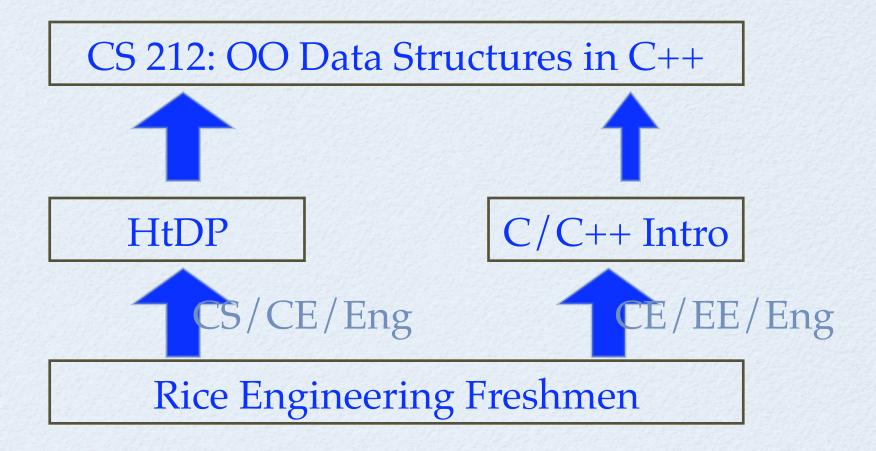


Rice Engineering Freshmen

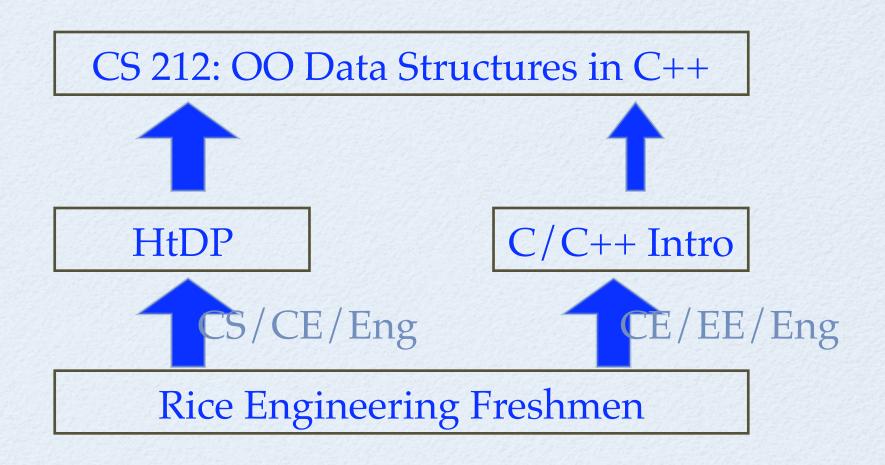












HtDP Students routinely outperform C/C ++ students on C++



Class Class Class 1 2 3



Same 2 Curricula

Class Class



Same 2 Curricula

Class Class



Same 2 Curricula

lass Class

Same Teacher

 All students: HtDP preferred by ~70%



Same 2 Curricula

Class 1

Class 2

Class

- All students: HtDP preferred by ~70%
- The more C++, the more they prefer HtDP



Same 2 Curricula

Class 1

Class

Class

- All students: HtDP preferred by ~70%
- The more C++, the more they prefer HtDP
- Female students:
 prefer HtDP by a ratio over 4:1



RESULTS:SECOND SEMESTER

- The second semester: four full years at NU
- Three follow-up courses, 3 different instructors: all confirm that the students have made a quantum leap in programming performance.
- Field tests: at a few high schools and colleges



RESULTS

Fall 2008: Bootcamp for MS



Conclusions, Future



FUTURE

| | Programming | Mathematics |
|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Semester 1 | How to Design Programs | Discrete |
| Semester 2 | How to Design Classes | How to Prove Programs (ACL2) |



Combining principles with pragmatics in the first year is



Combining principles with pragmatics in the first year is

• ... feasible



Combining principles with pragmatics in the first year is

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• ... effective



Combining principles with pragmatics in the first year is

• ... feasible

• ... effective

• ... productive



Combining principles with pragmatics in the first year is

- ... feasible
- ... effective
- ... productive
- It is the *right* thing!



Design Principles



Design Principles

Series of PLs



Design Principles

Series of PLs



Design Principles

Series of PLs



Design Principles

5 - 10 Years of Development Work with between 3 and 20 people

Series of PLs



Design Principles

Good Luck!

5 - 10 Years of Development Work with between 3 and 20 people

Series of PLs



Thank You!

Matthew Flatt Robert Findler Shriram Krishnamurthi Kathi Fisler Kathy Gray Viera Proulx John Clements and many, many more

