Dummit & Foote Ch. 1: Groups

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1. (11/14/22)

Let G be a group. Determine which of the following binary operations are associative:

a) The operation $\star$ on $\mathbb{Z}$ defined by $a \star b = a - b$:
Not associative. $3 \star (2 \star 1) = 3 - 1 = 2$ but $(3 \star 2) \star 1 = 3 - 2 = 1$.

b) The operation $\star$ on $\mathbb{R}$ defined by $a \star b = a + b + ab$:
Associative.

$$a \star (b \star c) = a \star (b + c + bc) = a + b + c + bc + ab + ac + abc = \\ (a + b + ab) \star c = (a \star b) \star c$$

c) The operation $\star$ on $\mathbb{Q}$ defined by $a \star b = \frac{a+b}{5}$:
Not associative. $0 \star (1 \star 1) = 0 + 2/5 = 2/5$ but $(0 \star 1) \star 1 = 1/5 \star 1 = 6/5 * 1/5 = 6/25$.

d) The operation $\star$ on $\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{Z}$ defined by $(a, b) \star (c, d) = (ad + bc, bd)$:
Associative.

$$((a, b) \star (c, d)) \star (e, f) = (ad + bc, bd) \star (e, f) = \\ (adf + bcf + bde, bdf) = (a, b) \star (cf + de, df) = (a, b) \star ((c, d) \star (e, f)).$$

e) The operation $\star$ on $\mathbb{Q} - \{0\}$ defined by $a \star b = a/b$:
Not associative. $(1 \star 2) \star 3 = 1/6$ but $1 \star (2 \star 3) = 3/2$.

2. (11/14/22)

Decide which of the binary operations in the preceding exercise are commutative.

a) Not commutative. $1 - 2 = -1$ but $2 - 1 = 1$.

b) Commutative. $a \star b = a + b + ab = b + a + ba = b \star a$.

c) Commutative. $a \star b = \frac{a+b}{5} = \frac{b+a}{5} = b \star a$.

d) Commutative. $(a, b) \star (c, d) = (ad + bc, bd) = (cb + da, db) = (c, d) \star (a, b)$.

e) Not commutative. $1/2 = 1/2$ but $2/1 = 2$.

3. (11/15/22)

Prove that addition of residue classes in $\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$ is associative.

Proof. Let $\bar{a}, \bar{b}, \bar{c} \in \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$. Suppose that $(\bar{a} + \bar{b}) + \bar{c} = \bar{d}$ and $\bar{a} + (\bar{b} + \bar{c}) = \bar{e}$. Then:

$$\bar{d} - \bar{c} = \bar{a} + \bar{b} \Rightarrow \bar{a} = (\bar{d} - \bar{c}) - \bar{b}$$

And:

$$\bar{e} - \bar{a} = \bar{b} + \bar{c} \Rightarrow \bar{e} = ((\bar{d} - \bar{c}) - \bar{b}) + \bar{b} + \bar{c} = \bar{d} - \bar{c} + \bar{c} = \bar{d}$$

Therefore $\bar{d} = \bar{e}$, so $(\bar{a} + \bar{b}) + \bar{c} = \bar{a} + (\bar{b} + \bar{c})$. $\square$