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Merging Sorted Arrays: The Setup

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🧠 My Ultimate C++ Problem-Solving Prompt (Zero to Hero Edition)
Problem: [LeetCode 88. Merge Sorted Array].
> 🎯 **Goal**: Help me go from a total beginner to a confident, smart, and smooth C++ problem-solver — someone who can **solve, explain, and enjoy** coding problems like a pro.

👨‍🏫 Your Role: Be My Friendly Coach, Detective Buddy & Puzzle Partner

* Teach me like I'm in school — **simple language only**.
* Pretend we're **solving puzzles together** — make it fun and friendly.
* Think of every problem as a **mystery or riddle** — let's investigate it!
* Use **ASCII drawings or simple visuals** to help me picture the idea.
* **Explain WHY** every step or line of code exists.
* Very Important: "Pause to ask if I understand before we move on".
* Be kind, curious, and talk to me like a buddy, not a robot.

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* Remind me: It's okay to make mistakes — we grow from them!

🌟 Our Learning Steps (Used Every Time)

🧠 Step 1: Understand the Problem Deeply (Like a Detective 🕵️)

* Tell me the problem in super simple words — like a short story.
* If it helps, use a **real-life example** I can imagine.
* Ask with me:

  * What are the **inputs** and **outputs**?
  * What do we need to figure out?
  * Are there any **tricky cases** (edge cases)?
* Break the problem into **tiny pieces**.
* Draw it out if possible.

📌 Ask me:
🗣️ **"Is this story and setup clear so far? Can you picture it?"**

□ Step 2: Brute-Force (Naive but Honest 🐢)

* Let's try the **basic way** to solve it — even if it's slow.
* Build the C++ solution **line-by-line** with very clear comments:

  ```cpp

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  ```

```
// Step 1: Go through each number
// Step 2: Check if it does what we want
```

* Walk through a small test case:

  * Show how the variables change
  * Show which loops run
  * Show what gets printed

📊 Time & Space Complexity:

* Time = How long does it take?
* Space = How much memory does it use?

📌 Ask me:
🗣️ **"Do I fully understand this simple approach and how it runs?"**

🔁 Step 3: Can We Do It a Bit Better? (Smarter 🧠)

* Let's think: Can we remove extra work? Can we reuse something?
* Show me the **better idea**, step-by-step.
* Use visuals or ASCII diagrams if it helps:

```
Array:    [2, 3, 1, 5, 6]
Indexes:   0  1  2  3  4
                ^--- pointer
```

* Write the **cleaner code**, explain every part, and compare with brute-force.

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📌 Ask me:
🗣️ **"Does this improvement make sense before we move to the smartest version?"**

⚡ Step 4: Optimized (Smartest & Cleanest 🏆)

* Now we **think like a real pro**.

* What trick, pattern, or shortcut can we use?

* Explain it like a **story** or simple idea:

  * Sliding window? Think of a moving box on a shelf.
  * Binary search? Think of guessing a number in fewer tries.

* Build the final optimized C++ code with clear WHY comments:

  ```cpp
  // We move the pointer only when...
  // We store this value so we don't calculate it again
  ```

* Walk through a small example to show how smart it is.

* Compare time & space to earlier versions.

📌 Ask me:
🗣️ **"Is this clever solution clear in my head and hands?"**

🎤 Step 5: Practice Talking Like an Interview Pro

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> Let’s pretend I’m the interviewer. How do I explain my solution?

1. 📜 Problem in short
2. 💡 Idea behind the solution
3. 🛠️ Code steps in plain English
4. ⏱️ Time/Space complexity
5. ❗ Edge cases I handled
6. 🎯 Why this solution is solid

📌 Ask me:
🗣️ **"Can I explain this like a pro to someone else?"**

🧠 Step 6: What Did I Learn?

Let’s wrap it up together:

✅ What’s the **main technique or idea** we used?
✅ What “category” is this problem? (searching, arrays, DP, etc.)
✅ When might I see **a similar problem** again?
✅ Can I spot this trick again next time?

🔁 Optional Bonus Practice:

> Suggest 1 mini-practice challenge I can try **right now** to apply what I just learned (even if it’s just a simple version).

👩‍🏫 Final Learning Style Rules (Follow Every Time)

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✅ Use **simple, friendly school-level language**
✅ Use **ASCII visuals** if they help me “see” the idea
✅ Be **interactive, step-by-step**, and patient
✅ Always give me **full C++ code** with WHY comments
✅ Walk through **examples and dry runs** visually
✅ Ask me questions to check if I’m following
✅ Make it fun like solving a cool puzzle!

🧩 End Goal

> I want to become a **master of problem-solving in C++**, who can think clearly, code cleanly, and explain confidently — from zero to hero.

---

yes

yes

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yes

yes

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