

## Project 4, Critters Part 1, FAQ

### 1. How are we supposed to use the jar files provided to us?

Non-executable jar files are like zip files, and may be opened using unzip. They can also be loaded into Eclipse using import, and the files therein modified.

### 2. How am I supposed to test my files on Linux?

Before the submission date, we will provide instructions.

### 3. How are we supposed to access the private fields like "x\_coord" and "y\_coord" in Critter.java when we are not provided getter/setters and we are not allowed to add non-private methods?

You can access private fields from inside the class itself. That should be enough for this project. In this case, all the methods inside Critter have access to x\_coord and y\_coord. Same deal with reproduce.

If you want your derived Critters to access the fields, make them subclasses of TestCritter. Remember that the Critters you submit must be sub-classes of Critter, not TestCritter.

### 4. What does the static block do?

Static blocks are initialization blocks. These static blocks will be called when JVM loads the class into memory i.e. once, initially.

### 5. What is a protected final method?

A final method is one that cannot be overwritten by a subclass. A protected method can, however, be executed by a subclass.

Protected is an access level modifier, such as public or private.

	Class	Package	Subclass  (same pkg)	Subclass  (diff pkg)	World
public	+	+	+	+	+
protected	+	+	+	+	o
no modifier	+	+	+	o	o
private	+	o	o	o	o

+ : accessible  
o : not accessible

### 6. If our simulator randomly spawns multiple algae to the same grid location, how should it be handled?

The confusion here is, what happens at the end of the cycle when encounters are resolved, and fight is called, and both algae return 0. This is fine, because even algae fight, just with a power level of zero. One of the algae will be killed (can be picked

arbitrarily, doesn't matter) and the other will live on with the dead one's life.

**7. What is the exact order of events of everything that happens in worldTimeStep()?**

```
// 1. increment timestep; timestep++;  
// 2. doTimeSteps();  
// 3. Do the fights. doEncounters();  
// 4. updateRestEnergy();  
// 5. Generate Algae genAlgae();  
// 6. Move babies to general population. population.addAll(babies); babies.clear();
```

**8. Should rest energy be subtracted from every critter? Even the ones who moved?**

Yes, rest energy should be subtracted from every critter in step 4. There is no need to keep track of which ones moved.

**9. Using Class.forName() and newInstance() seems to require that we need to catch some exceptions. Should these be handled individually? How does the InvalidCritterException interact with these?**

The exceptions the methods throw (ClassNotFoundException, InstantiationException, and IllegalAccessException) as all of them except the IllegalAccessException can be prompted by the user requesting to create a critter that does not exist. InvalidCritterException is one that should be thrown, not caught, and since the aforementioned exceptions will be triggered by inputting an invalid critter, an InvalidCritterException can be thrown from the catch block for the aforementioned Exceptions.

**10. getInstances() in Critter.java is already partially filled in, but it doesn't do everything the doc says it should do. Can we edit it?**

Yes, you should edit it. What is provided is just a skeleton, and you have to flesh it out.

**11. What exactly are the desired outputs for stage 3? Should there be an output to the screen when an InvalidCritterException is thrown?**

The desired outputs fall into two categories:

- 1) Invalid Command: Invalid Commands are commands that are not one of the following (quit, show, step, seed, make, or stats). In this instance of an invalid command, print "invalid command:" followed by text entered
- 2) Exception occurs during the command (regardless of exception type, including InvalidCritterException): Print "error processing: <command\_here>" when this occurs.

For example:

"make Craig 10-" is an invalid Integer, so print out "error processing:  
make Craig 10-"

"make Critter main" main will cause an InvalidCriticException. You do not need to print out "Invalid Critter Class:" you simply need to print out "error processing: make Critter main"

**12. Overlapping critters when display world is called: Which one should be printed?**

It does not matter which one is printed, as long as something is printed.

13. `Class.forName("Craig")` **throws a** `ClassNotFoundException`. This is because the input to `Class.forName()` has to be fully qualified. So the method call should be changed to `Class.forName("assignment4.Craig")`;

**14. Are multiple commands in the same line considered invalid commands?**

Yes, commands must be entered one at a time, and must be on separate lines.

**15. Should movement energy cost be subtracted even if the move is failed? For example, if the critter tries to run away during fight into a square that is already occupied?**

Yes, every time a critter tries to move, the movement cost should be subtracted.

**16. How to call a specific Critter's static `runStats` instead of calling the `runStats` in Critter?**

This can be solved by using reflection. In brief, you have to get the `Class` of the Critter whose stats you want (say, `Craig`), create a `List` of instances of `Craig`, and then use reflection to invoke the `runStats` method of `Craig` with the already-obtained list as the parameter. We might post an addendum later giving you more details if you are still stuck.

**17. How does the rounding work when a critter loses a fight?**

Assign to the winner half of the loser's energy, rounded down.

**18. Should a critter move to a square that is occupied by a dead critter?**

This only matters in the `fight` method, when critters are trying to run away. And yes, they should be able to.

**19. Should we check energy before making an action?**

Only for `reproduce()`. Critters can kill themselves trying to walk.

**20. What is expected for custom critters?**

They don't have to be super interesting, but they have to be unique. Don't copy-paste code from `Craig` for example.

**21. How to generate Javadoc for the assignment?**

After adding all of your javadoc style comments, go to toolbar at top:  
Project -> Generate Javadoc

Choose options appropriate for this assignment. After you finish, you should have javadoc html files in the destination folder that you specified in the options.

**22. What should the output for `stats Critter` be?**

This is not a valid command since `Critter` is not a concrete type of `Critter`. That is, it cannot be instantiated. Therefore the output for this command should be error processing: `stats Critter`

**23. When running, can a critter run through/over another `Critter`?**

Yes, critters can pass through other `Critters`.

**24. What does the direction field do in `reproduce`?**

It specifies the direction in which to place the child after being born, relative to its parent.

**25. How can a program continue execution if an exception is thrown?**

You can simply catch the exception, do something with it, and then execution will continue normally.

**26. Should rest energy be subtracted from `Algae`?**

Yes, rest energy should be subtracted from every `Critter`, including `Algae`.