

PROBLEM SOLVING

[BACK](#)

Polya's approach to problem-solving



image source: <http://doi.org/10.3932/ethz-a-000099441>

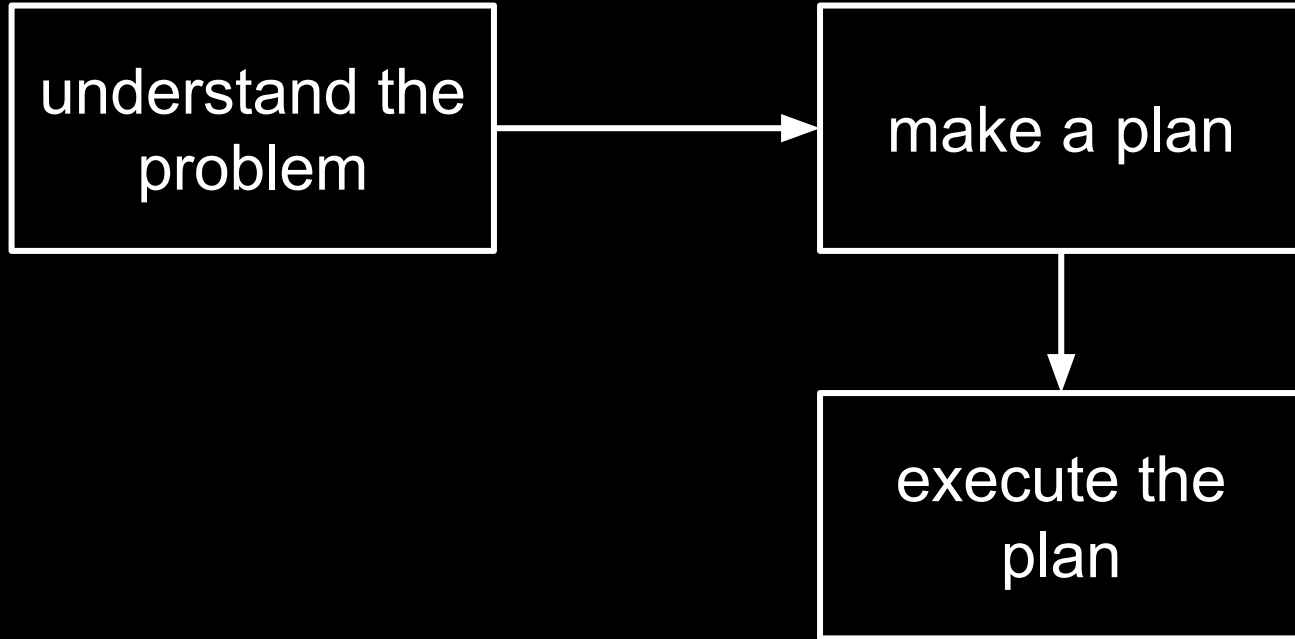
Polya's approach to problem-solving

understand the
problem

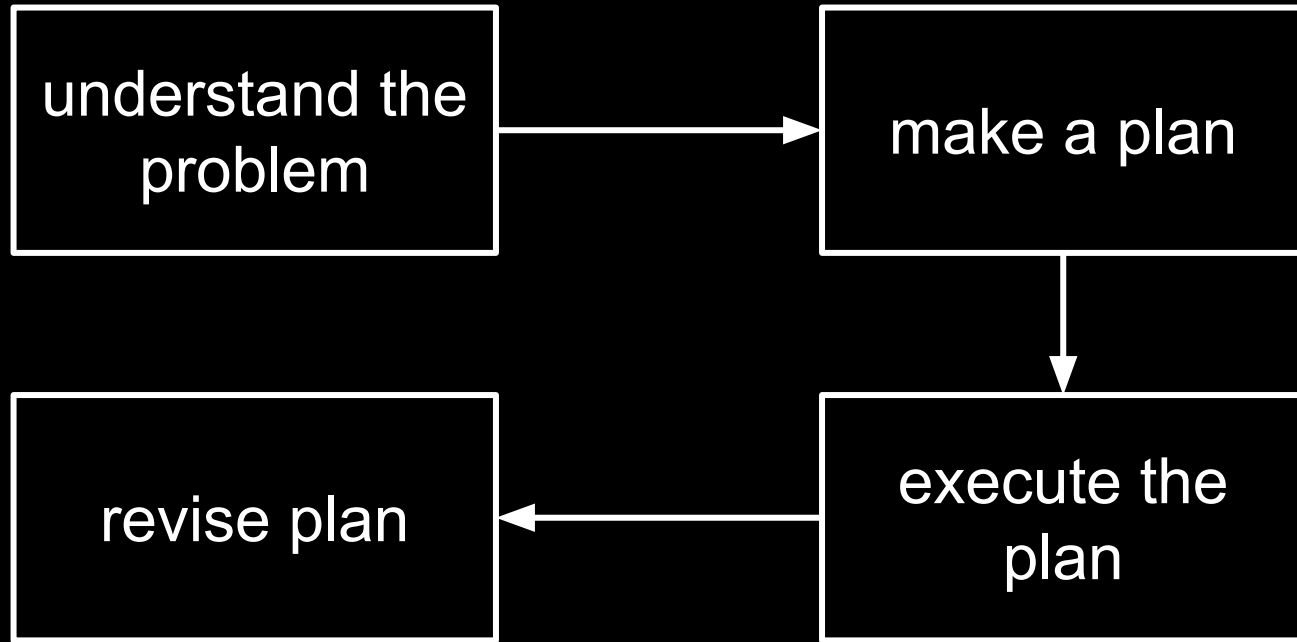
Polya's approach to problem-solving



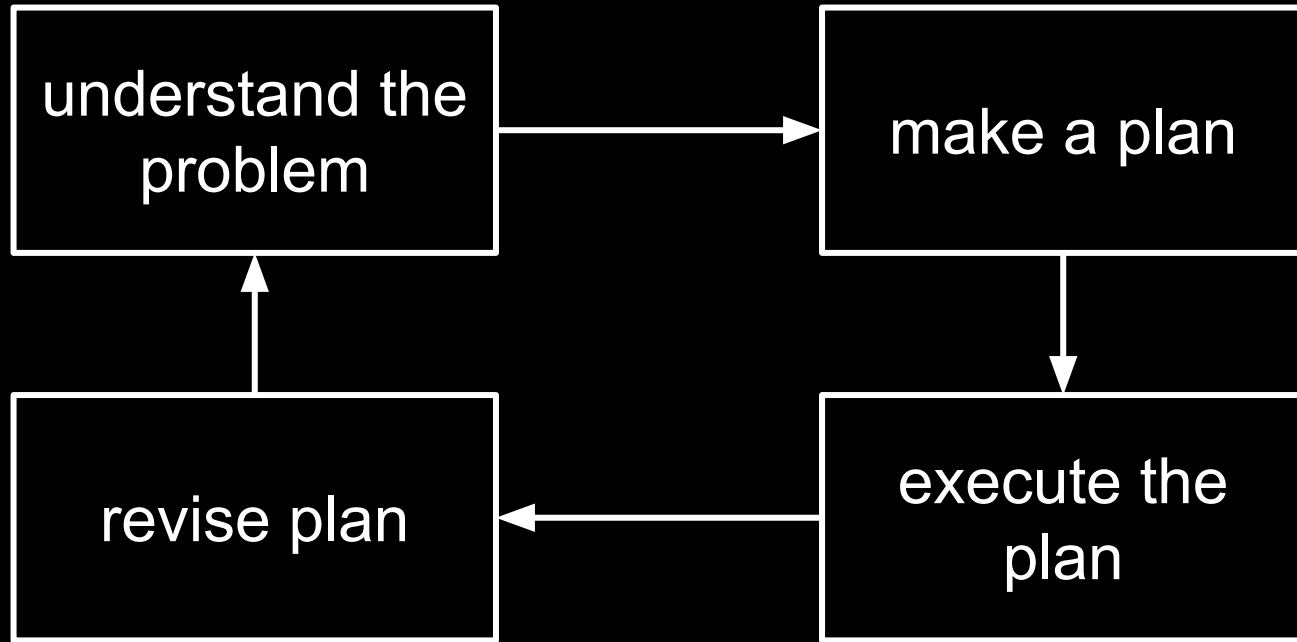
Polya's approach to problem-solving



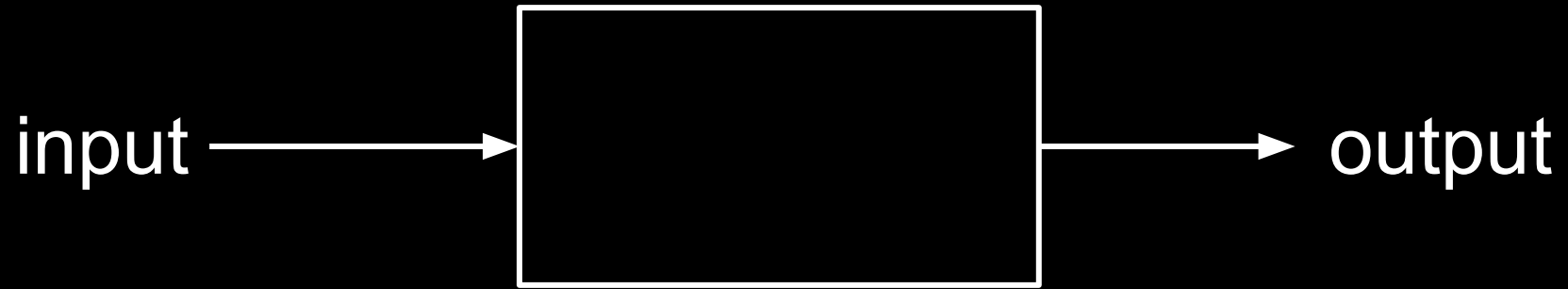
Polya's approach to problem-solving



Polya's approach to problem-solving



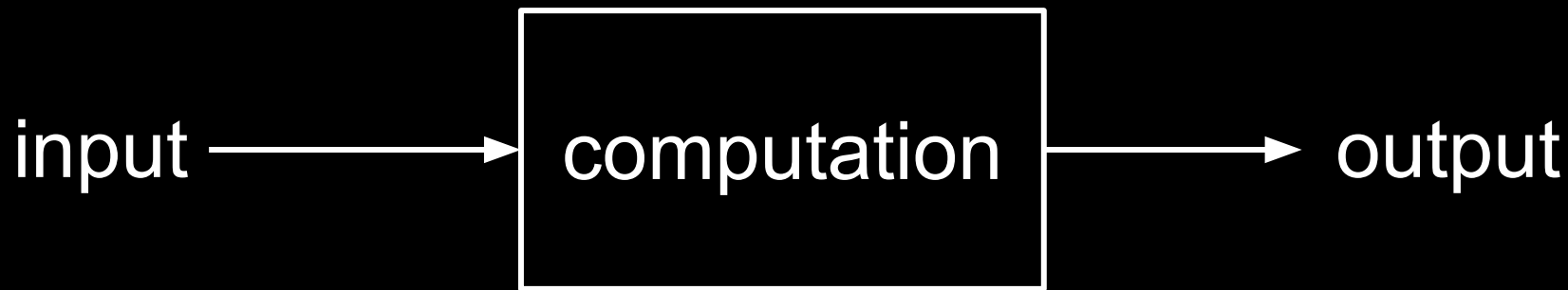
a model to represent problems



a model to represent problems



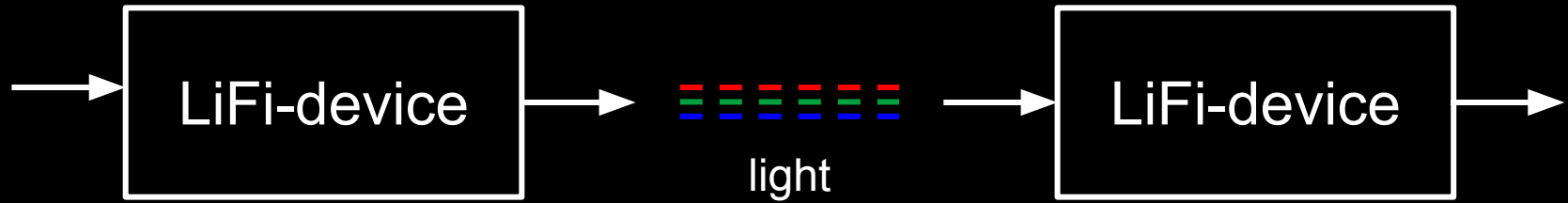
a model to represent problems

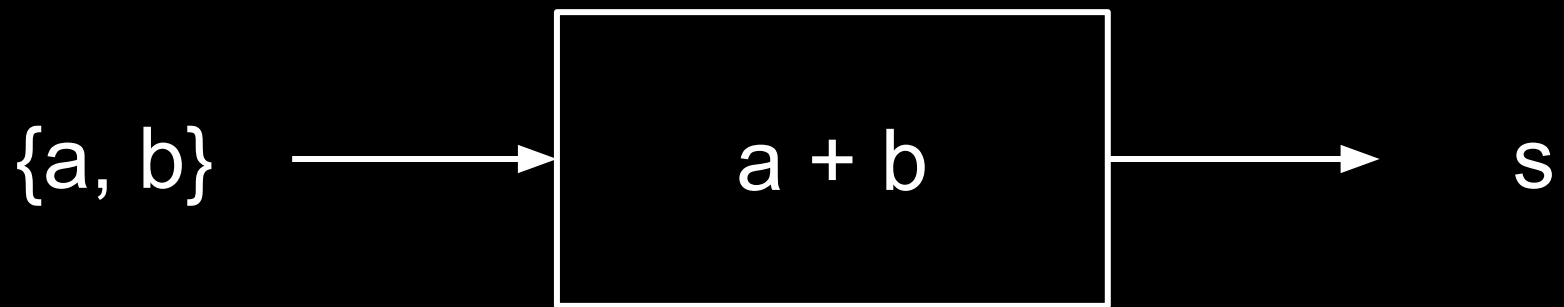


the LiFi-project as an
input - processing - output - problem



the LiFi-project as a communication problem







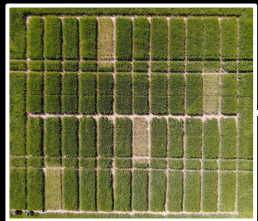


output



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processing of
information



`count_plants()`

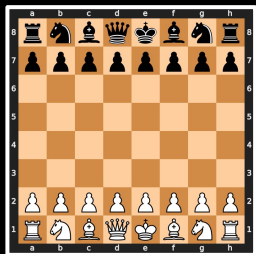
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representation of
information



next_move()

E2 → E4



1: 0R

2: 0N

3: 0B

4: 0K

5: 0Q

6: 0B

7: 0N

8: 0R

9: 0P

10: 0P

11: 0P

12: 0P

13: 0P

14: 0P

15: 0P

16: 0P

57: 1R

58: 1N

59: 1B

60: 1K

61: 1Q

62: 1B

63: 1N

64: 1R

...

representation of information



problem solving strategies

divide and conquer

large and complex problem

smaller problem

smaller problem

smaller problem

smaller problem

even smaller problem	even smaller problem
even smaller problem	even smaller problem
even smaller problem	even smaller problem
even smaller problem	even smaller problem

sorted list +
element



search()



yes / no

is 67 a prime number?

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

linear search



2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

linear search



2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

linear search



2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

linear search



2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

linear search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

↑

19 steps... can't we do better?

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97
↑

large and complex
problem

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

large and complex
problem

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

smaller
problem

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41

smaller
problem

43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

binary search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

binary search

67 != 41



2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, ~~41~~,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

binary search

67 > 41



2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, ~~41~~,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

binary search

67 > 41



2, 3, 5, 7, ~~11~~, ~~13~~, 17, 19, ~~23~~, ~~29~~, 31, 37, ~~41~~,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97

binary search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97



67 != 71

binary search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97



67 != 71

binary search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97



$67 < 71$

binary search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
43, 47, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 79, 83, 89, 97



67 != 59

binary search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
~~43~~, 47, ~~53~~, 59, 61, 67, ~~71~~, ~~73~~, 79, ~~83~~, ~~89~~, 97



67 > 59

binary search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41,
~~43~~, ~~47~~, ~~53~~, ~~59~~, 61, 67, ~~71~~, ~~73~~, ~~79~~, ~~83~~, ~~89~~, 97



67 = 67

binary search

2, 3, 5, 7, 11, ~~13~~, 17, 19, ~~23~~, ~~29~~, 31, 37, 41,
~~43~~, 47, ~~53~~, 59, ~~61~~, 67, ~~71~~, ~~73~~, 79, ~~83~~, ~~89~~, 97



67 = 67

3 splits → much better

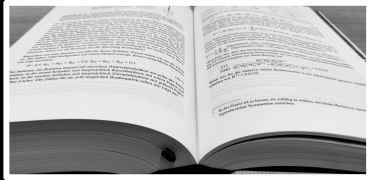
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67 = 67



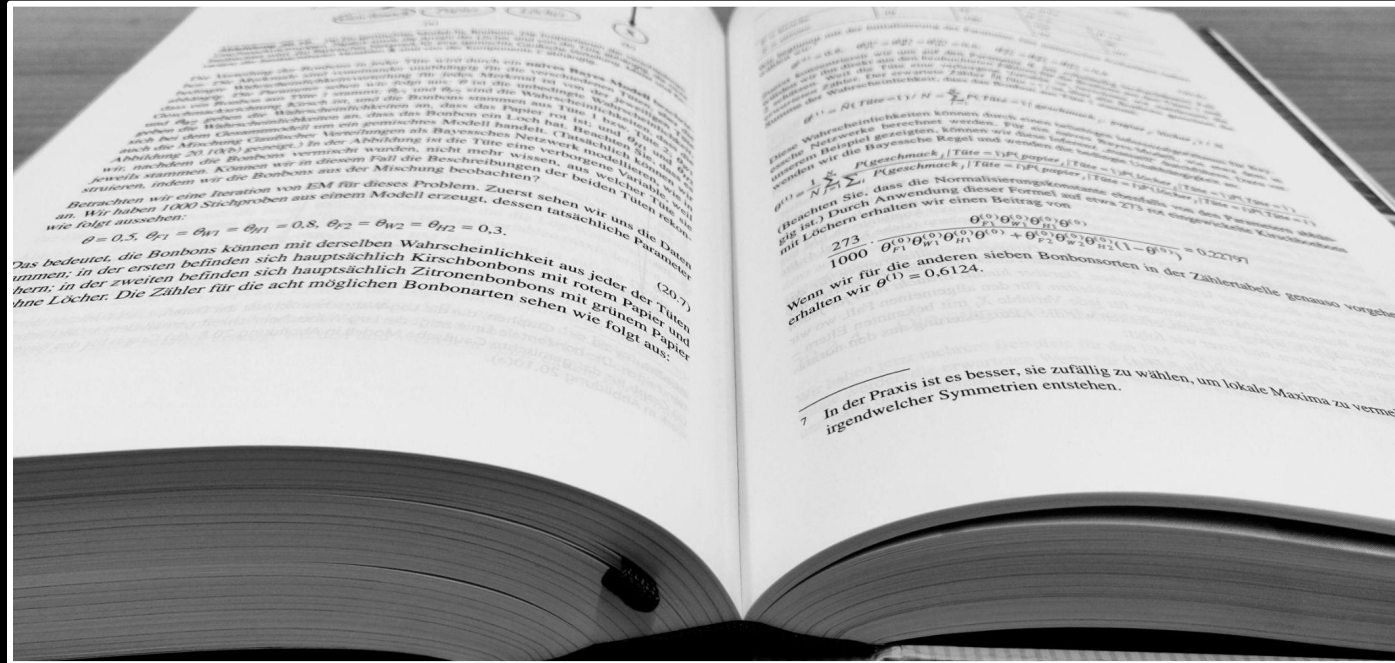
how efficient are linear and
binary search in general?



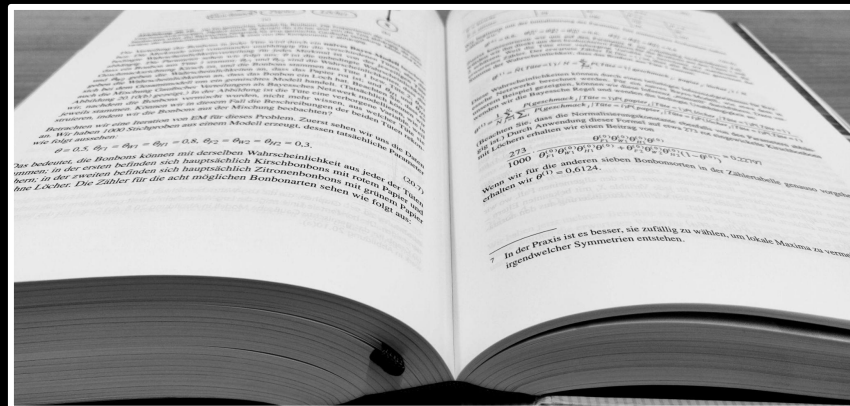
`count_words()`

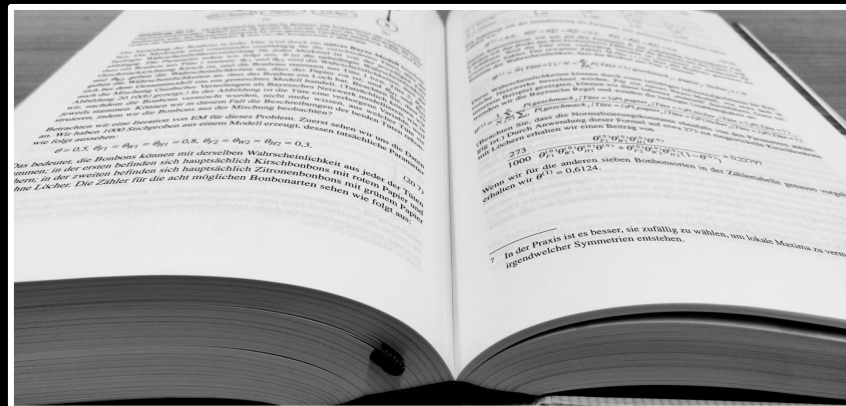
word count

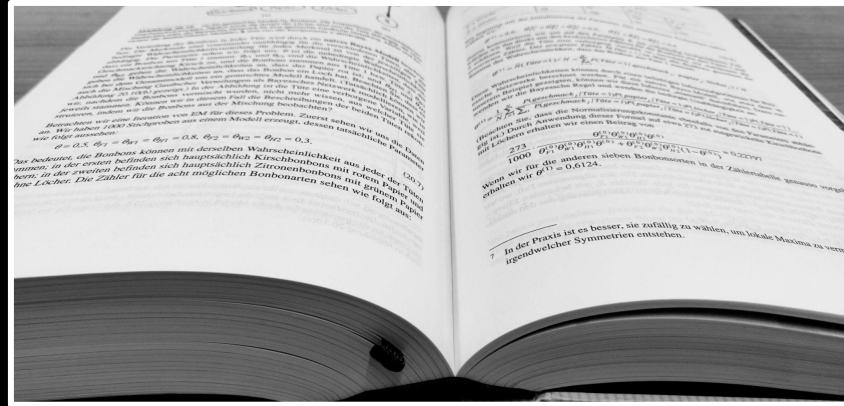
how many words are in the book?



strategies, anyone?



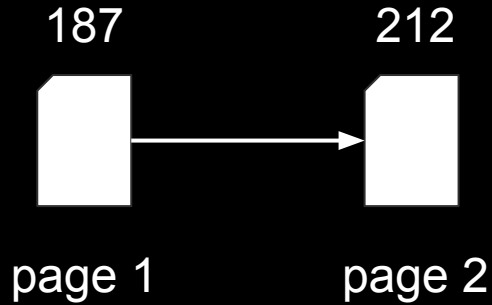
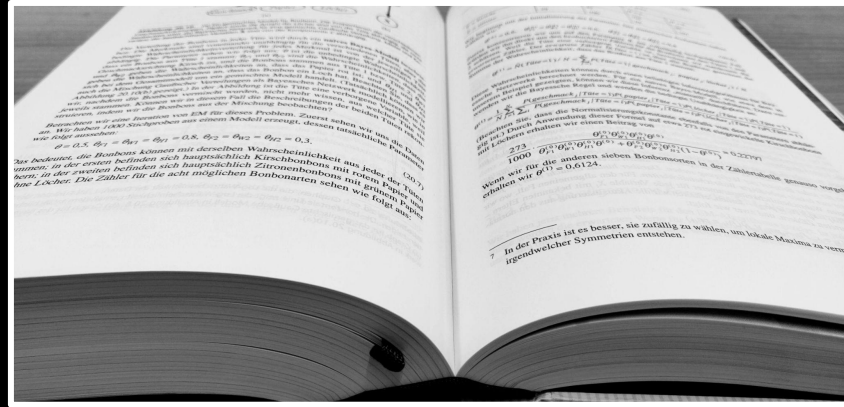


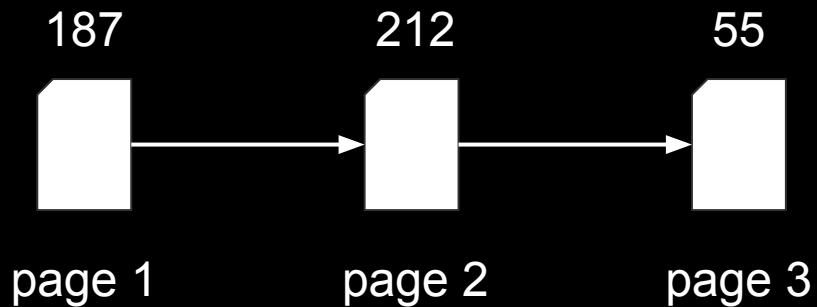
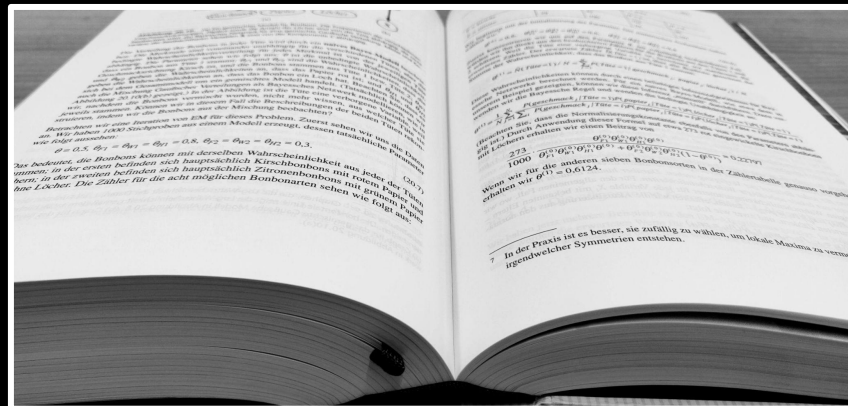


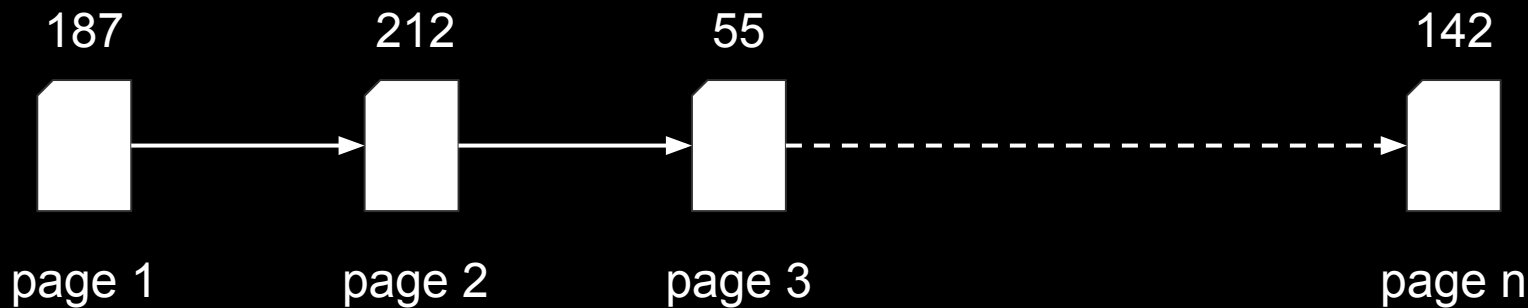
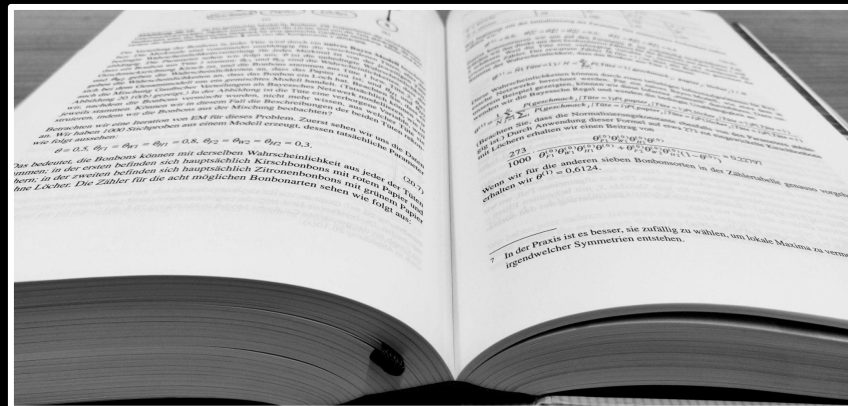
187

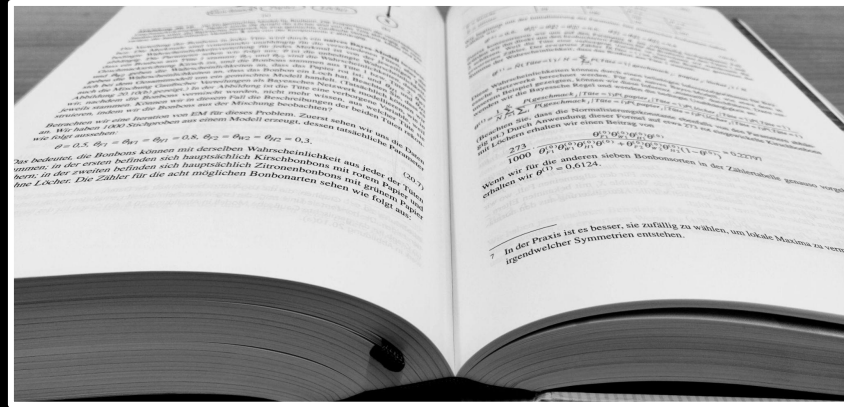


page 1









n = 1327 pages

Ø 2:23 minutes per page

~ 52.34 hours

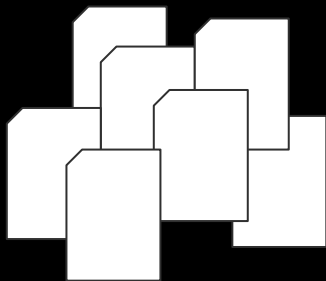


divide and conquer

+

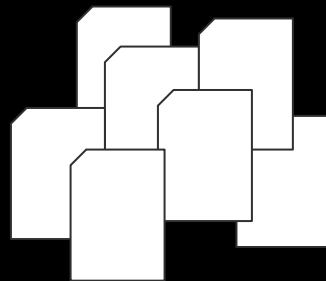
?

pages 1 - 700



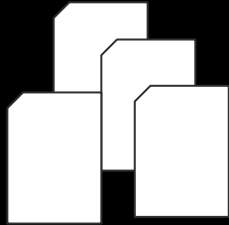
student 1

pages 701 - 1327



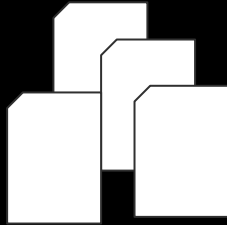
student 2

pages 1 - 350



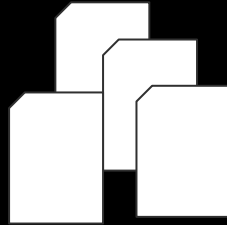
student 1

pages 351 - 700



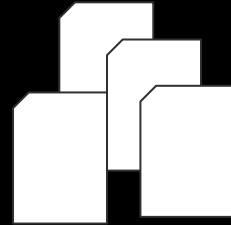
student 2

pages 701 - 1050



student 3

pages 1051- 1327



student 4

divide and conquer

+

distribution and parallelization

