Classes & Methods
Overview

● Before we can manipulate real or imaginary world entities, we need to create them

● In this module, we will learn how to create and manipulate real or imaginary world entities

● Example:

  ○ Create an entity student with attributes name, and age, and with behavior dance, and play
Learning Objectives

- To be able to write and use a class
- To be able to write a class constructor
- To be able to write comments
- To be able to understand and write accessor and mutator methods
- To be able to write methods
- To be able to use static variables and methods
- To be able to understand variable scope
- To be able to understand and use the `this` keyword
Introduction

- A **class is a template for** creating objects
- A class defines a new **data type**
- A class defines the object’s **attributes / properties** and **behavior**
- Object’s **attributes** are implemented as **instance variables**
- Object’s behavior are implemented as **methods**
- Objects are instances of a class
Class Design

- **Abstraction**: set of information properties relevant to a stakeholder about an entity
- Information Property (or property): a named, objective and quantifiable aspect of an entity
- **Stakeholder**: a real or imagined person (or a class of people) who is seen as the audience for, or user of the abstraction being defined
Class Design

- Entity: Movie
- Properties:
  - Title
  - Year
  - Length
  - Genre
  - Format
  - Price
## Class Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movie Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Moneyball&quot;</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>&quot;Sports&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Blueray&quot;</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Gone With the Wind&quot;</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>&quot;Drama&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;DVD&quot;</td>
<td>10.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Jurassic Park&quot;</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>&quot;SciFi&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;DVD&quot;</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Pirates of the Caribbean&quot;</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>&quot;Comedy&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Blueray&quot;</td>
<td>17.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sicko&quot;</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>&quot;Documentary&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Streaming&quot;</td>
<td>11.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Representing the Movie Abstraction using a Table
Content of a Class

- A class contains
  - **Instance variables** (attributes) representing the properties of the abstraction
  - One or more **constructor(s)** to **initialize** the objects’ **instance variables** (attributes)
  - Methods to implement the objects’ behavior
Anatomy of a Class

```java
public class Person {
    /* instance variables for Person attributes */
    private String name;
    private String email;
    private String phoneNumber;

    /** a constructor to initialize the attributes for a Person object with the given parameters */
    public Person(String initName, String initEmail, String initPhoneNumber) {
        /* Implementation not shown */
    }

    /* method to print Person attributes */
    public void print() {
        /* Implementation not shown */
    }
}
```
Instance variables

- Listed at the top of the class definition
- To declare an instance variable, you write

```java
private DataType variableName;
```

Means that only this class has access to this instance variable

```java
private String name;
```
Instance variables

```java
public class Movie {
    private String title;
    private int year;
    private int length;
    private String genre
    private String format
    private double price
    ...
}
```
Learning Objectives

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- **To be able to write a class constructor**
- To be able to write comments
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Constructors

- Set the **initial values** for the object’s **instance variables**
- Constructors must have the same name as the class
- Constructors have no return type!
- To define a constructor, you write

```
public className() {
    /* instance variable initialization */
}
```

Or

```
public className(DataType1 parameter1, DataType2 parameter2, …) {
    /* instance variable initialization */
}
```

No-argument constructor

Argument constructor
No-argument constructor

- Default constructor (provided by Java)
- Initializes instance variables to default values
- Person class

```java
public Person()
{
    name = "";
    email = "";
    phoneNumber = "";
}
```

default value: "" / empty string
Argument constructor

- Person class

```java
public Person(String initName, String initEmail, String initPhone) {
    name = initName;
    email = initEmail;
    phoneNumber = initPhone;
}
```

Initializes instance variables to parameters /arguments
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Comments

- There are 3 types of comments in Java:
  - // Single line comment
  - /* Multiline comment */
  - /** Documentation comment */
Preconditions and Postconditions

● Precondition:
  ○ A condition that must be true for your method to work

● Postcondition:
  ○ A condition that is true after running the method

```java
/**
 * Constructor that takes the x and y position for the turtle
 * Preconditions: parameters x and y are coordinates from 0 to the width and height of the world.
 * Postconditions: the turtle is placed in (x,y) coordinates
 * @param x the x position to place the turtle
 * @param y the y position to place the turtle
 */
public Turtle(int x, int y)
{
    xPos = x;
    yPos = y;
}
```
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Special methods

- **Accessor methods** to retrieve and return the value of the instance variables

- **Mutator methods** to change (update) the value of the instance variables

- **Main method** used to test your class (execute your code). There can be only one main method inside a class
Accessor Methods

- Getter methods
- Return the value of each instance variables
- To define a getter method, you write

```java
public VariableType getVariableName()
{
    return variableName;
}
```

Person Class:
name (String) instance variable getter
Mutator Methods

- Setter method
- Change the value of a (private) instance variable
- To define a setter method, you write

```java
public void setVariableName(VariableType value){
    variableName = value;
}
```

Person Class:
- `name` (String) instance variable
  - `setter`
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Methods

- Define the objects’ behavior
- Can only be called on an object that was created using the constructor
- Can return a value or not
- To call a method, you write:

  `objectName.methodName(/* parameters or not*/);`

Example:

```java
Person p = new Person();
p.setName("Mariah");
```
Writing a method

- A method has:
  - A signature
  - A body

```java
public returnType methodName(/* parameters */){
    // method’s body
}

public String toString() {  // signature
    return "my name is" + name;  // body
}
```
Methods with parameters

- When calling a method with parameters, you must provide **actual values** in place of the **formal parameters**
Call by value

- When calling a method:
  - A copy of the value is stored in the parameter variable
  - Any change to the value inside the method is not visible outside of the method

```java
public class Point{
    private int x;
    public Point(){
        x = 0;
    }
    public void setTimes2(int y){
        y = y * 2;
        x = y;
    }
}
```

```java
Point p = new Point();
int z = 5;
p.setTimes2(z);
System.out.println(z) // 5
```
Call by value: Objects

- When calling a method, If you pass a value that is an **object** (String, Person, Point, etc.)
  - An **alias** (a copy of the reference) of that object is stored in the parameter variable
  - Any **change** to the **object** inside the method is **visible outside of the method**
Call by value: Objects

```java
public class Point{
    private int x;
    public Point(){
        x = 0;
    }
    public int getX(){
        return x;
    }
    public void setX(int v){
        x = v;
    }
    public void xTimes2(Point p){
        p.setX(p.getX() * 2);
    }
}
```

```java
Point p1 = new Point();
Point p2 = new Point();
p2.setX(5);
System.out.println(p2.getX()); // 5
p1.xTimes2(p2);
System.out.println(p2.getX()); // 10
```
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Static variables and methods

- Instance variables and methods define the attributes and behavior of the objects.
- Instance variables and methods are called with the object name:
  `ObjectName.methodName();`
  `ObjectName.variableName;`
- **Static** variables and methods belong to the class.
- **Static** variables and methods are called with the class (and object) name:
  `ClassName.staticMethodName();`
  `ClassName.staticVariableName;`
Static variables and methods

- The `static` keyword is placed right after the `public/private` modifier when defining static variables and methods.
- A `static` method can be public or private.
- To declare a `static variable`, you write:

```java
public static VariableType VariableName;
```

```java
public static int numberOfStudents;
```
Static variables and methods

- To define a static method, you write

```java
public static MethodType MethodName(/* parameters */);

public static int getNumberOfStudents(){
    return numberOfStudents;
}
```
Static variables and methods

- All objects share the same copy of a static variable

```java
public class Student{
    private String name;
    private int age;
    public static int numberOfStudents;

    public Student(String newName, int newAge){
        name = newName;
        age = newAge;
        numberOfStudents++;
    }

    public static int getNumberOfStudents(){
        return numberOfStudents;
    }
}
```

```java
Student s1= new Student("Alice", 12);
System.out.print(Student.getNumberOfStudents()); // 1
Student s2 = new Student("Dwayne", 13);
System.out.print(Student.getNumberOfStudents()); // 2
Student s3 = new Student("Rachel", 10);
System.out.print(s3.getNumberOfStudents()); // 3
```

The same copy of `numberOfStudents` is incremented for all objects.
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Variable scope

- The **scope** of a variable is where the variable is accessible
- The **scope** depends on where the variable is declared
- There are three (3) levels of scope
  - **Class level scope**: the variable is accessible in the entire class. *Instance variables*
  - **Method level scope**: the variable is accessible inside the method. *Local variables and parameters*
  - **Block level scope**: the variable is accessible inside the body of a loop. *Loop control variables*
Variable scope

```java
public class Person {
    // instance variables
    private String name;
    private String email;

    public void verticalPrint(int length) {
        for (int i = 0; i < length; i++) {
            System.out.println(name.charAt(i));
        }
    }
}
```
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this keyword

- this is used inside a non-static method to refer to the current calling object
- Can be used to refer to instance variables (with the ‘.’ operator)
- It can be used to differentiate between instance variables and parameters

```java
public class Student{
    private String name;
    private int age;

    public Student(String name, int age){
        this.name = name;
        this.age = age;
    }

    public String getName(){
        return this.name;
    }
}
```