CS 61A Summer 2017

Welcome to Python

Discussion 0: June 20, 2017

1 Expressions

An expression describes a computation and evaluates to a value.

Primitive Expressions

A **primitive expression** requires only a single evaluation step: you either look up the value of a name, or use the literal value directly. For example, numbers, names, and strings are all primitive expressions.

```
>>> 2
2
>>> 'Hello World!'
'Hello World!'
```

Call Expressions

A **call expression** applies a function, which may or may not accept arguments. The call expression evaluates to the function's return value.

The syntax of a function call:

$$\underbrace{\texttt{add}}_{\text{Operator}}\ (\ \underbrace{\texttt{2}}_{\text{Operand 0}}\ ,\ \underbrace{\texttt{3}}_{\text{Operand 1}}\ )$$

Every call expression requires a set of parentheses delimiting its comma-separated operands.

To evaluate a function call:

1. First evaluate the operator, and then the operands (from left to right).
2. Apply the function (the value of the operator) to the arguments (the values of the operands).

If an operand is a nested call expression, then these two steps are applied to that operand in order to evaluate it.

Questions

1.1 What would Python display?

```
>>> x = 6
>>> def square(x):
...     return x * x
>>> square(x)
```

```
>>> max(pow(2, 3), square(-5)) - square(4)
```

1.2 What would Python display?

```
>>> from operator import sub, mul
>>> def print_sub(x, y):
...     print('sub')
...     return sub(x, y)
>>> def print_mul(x, y):
...     print('mul')
...     return mul(x, y)
>>> print_sub(print_mul(505, 4), 3)
```

2 Statements

A statement in Python is executed by the interpreter to achieve an effect.

Assignment Statements

For example, an assignment statement assigns a certain value to a variable name.

At the right, Python assigns the value of the expression `6` to the name `x`. Since `6` is a primitive (a number), its value is 6. Therefore, Python creates a binding from the name `x` to 6.

Of course, variables can be reassigned to new values. At the right, `x` was reassigned to `7`.

```
>>> x = 6
>>> x
6

>>> x = 7
>>> x
7
```

def Statements

The `def` statement defines functions.

When a `def` statement is executed, Python creates a binding from the name (e.g. `square`) to a function. The variables in parentheses are the function's **parameters** (in this case, `x` is the only parameter). When the function is called, the body of the function is executed (in this case, `return x * x`).

```
>>> def square(x):
...     return x * x

>>> square(5)
25
```

Questions

2.1 Determine the result of evaluating the following functions in the Python interpreter:

```
>>> from operator import add
>>> def double(x):
...     return x + x
>>> def square(y):
...     return y * y
>>> def f(z):
...     add(square(double(z)), 1)
>>> f(4)
```

2.2 What is the result of evaluating the following code?

```
>>> from operator import add
>>> def square(x):
...     return x * x
>>> def fun(num):
...     return num
...     num / 0
>>> square(fun(5))
```

2.3 What would Python display?

```
>>> x = 10
>>> def foo():
...     return x
>>> def bar(x):
...     return x
>>> def foobar(new_value):
...     x = new_value
...     y = x + 1
...     return x

>>> foo()



>>> bar(5)



>>> foobar(20)
```

```
>>> x
```

```
>>> y
```

2.4 What would Python display?

```
>>> def cake(batter):
...     return batter
>>> def pan(x, y):
...     y = y + 20
...     return x(y)
>>> pan(print, 10)
```

```
>>> pan(cake, cake(30))
```

2.5 Write a function, `decades_ago`, that takes a year in the past (before 2017) and returns the number of decades that have passed since. A function signature with a *doctest* (an example execution) is below. Fill it in so that the doctest will pass!

```
def decades_ago(year):
    """Returns the number of decades that have passed between
    the year and 2017.

    >>> decades_ago(1995)
    2.2
    """
```

3 Side Effects

Pure and Non-Pure Functions

1. Pure functions have no side effects – they only produce a return value. They will always evaluate to the same result, given the same argument value(s).
2. Non-pure functions produce side effects, such as printing to your terminal.

Later in the semester, we will expand on the notion of a pure function versus a non-pure function.

Questions

3.1 What would Python display for the following?

```
>>> def om(cookie):
...     return cookie
>>> def nom(cookie):
...     print(cookie)

>>> om(4)



>>> nom(4)



>>> joyce = om(-4)



>>> joyce + 1



>>> michelle = nom(4)



>>> michelle + 1
```