CS61B Lecture #12: Delegation, Exceptions, Assorted Features

- Delegation
- Exceptions
- Importing
- Nested classes.
- Type testing.
Trick: Delegation and Wrappers

- Not always appropriate to use inheritance to extend something.
- Homework gives example of a `TrReader`, which *contains* another Reader, to which it *delegates* the task of actually going out and reading characters.
- Another example: a class that instruments objects:

```java
interface Storage {
    void put(Object x);
    Object get();
}

class Monitor implements Storage {
    int gets, puts;
    private Storage store;
    Monitor(Storage x) { store = x; gets = puts = 0; }
    public void put(Object x) { puts += 1; store.put(x); }
    public Object get() { gets += 1; return store.get(); }
}
```

// ORIGINAL
Storage S = something;
f(S);

// INSTRUMENTED
Monitor S = new Monitor(something);
f(S);
System.out.println(S.gets + " gets");

Monitor is called a *wrapper class*. 
What to do About Errors?

- Large amount of any production program devoted to detecting and responding to errors.
- Some errors are external (bad input, network failures); others are internal errors in programs.
- When method has stated precondition, it’s the client’s job to comply.
- Still, it’s nice to detect and report client’s errors.
- In Java, we throw exception objects, typically:

  ```java
  throw new SomeException(optional description);
  ```

- Exceptions are objects. By convention, they are given two constructors: one with no arguments, and one with a descriptive string argument (which the exception stores).
- Java system throws some exceptions implicitly, as when you dereference a null pointer, or exceed an array bound.
Catching Exceptions

- **A throw** causes each active method call to *terminate abruptly*, until (and unless) we come to a **try** block.

- **Catch exceptions and do something corrective with try:**

  ```java
  try {
      Stuff that might throw exception;
  } catch (SomeException e) {
      Do something reasonable;
  } catch (SomeOtherException e) {
      Do something else reasonable;
  }
  Go on with life;
  ```

- When *SomeException* exception occurs during “Stuff…” and is not handled there, we immediately “do something reasonable” and then “go on with life.”

- Descriptive string (if any) available as `e.getMessage()` for error messages and the like.
Catching Exceptions, II

• Using a supertype as the parameter type in a catch clause will catch any subtype of that exception as well:

```java
try {
    Code that might throw a FileNotFoundException or a MalformedURLException;
} catch (IOException ex) {
    Handle any kind of IOException;
}
```

• Since FileNotFoundException and MalformedURLException both inherit from IOException, the catch handles both cases.

• Subtyping means that multiple catch clauses can apply; Java takes the first.

• Stylistically, it's nice to be more specific (concrete) about exception types where possible.

• In particular, our style checker will therefore balk at the use of Exception, RuntimeException, Error, and Throwable as exception supertypes.
Catching Exceptions, III

- There’s a relatively new shorthand for handling multiple exceptions the same way:

    ```java
    try {
        Code that might throw IllegalArgumentException
        or IllegalStateException;
    } catch (IllegalArgumentException|IllegalStateException ex) {
        Handle exception;
    }
    ```
Exceptions: Checked vs. Unchecked

• The object thrown by `throw` command must be a subtype of `Throwable` (in `java.lang`).

• Java pre-declares several such subtypes, among them
  - `Error`, used for serious, unrecoverable errors;
  - `Exception`, intended for all other exceptions;
  - `RuntimeException`, a subtype of `Exception` intended mostly for programming errors too common to be worth declaring.

• Pre-declared exceptions are all subtypes of one of these.

• Any subtype of `Error` or `RuntimeException` is said to be `unchecked`.

• All other exception types are `checked`. 
Unchecked Exceptions

• Intended for
  - Programmer errors: many library functions throw `IllegalArgumentException` when one fails to meet a precondition.
  - Errors detected by the basic Java system: e.g.,
    * Executing `x.y` when `x` is null,
    * Executing `A[i]` when `i` is out of bounds,
    * Executing `(String) x` when `x` turns out not to point to a `String`.
  - Certain catastrophic failures, such as running out of memory.

• May be thrown anywhere at any time with no special preparation.
Checked Exceptions

• Intended to indicate exceptional circumstances that are *expected* to happen from time to time. Examples:
  - Attempting to open a file that does not exist.
  - Input or output errors on a file.
  - Receiving an interrupt.

• Every checked exception that can occur inside a method must either be handled by a `try` statement, or reported in the method’s declaration.

• For example,

```java
void myRead() throws IOException, InterruptedException {
  ...
}
```

means that `myRead` (or something it calls) *might* throw `IOException` or `InterruptedException`.
A Language Design Issue

Java makes the following illegal for checked exceptions like IOException. Why?

```java
class Parent {
    void f() { ... }
}
class Child extends Parent {
    void f() throws IOException { ... }
}
```
A Language Design Issue

Java makes the following illegal for checked exceptions like IOException. Why?

```java
class Parent {
    void f() { ... }
}

class Child extends Parent {
    void f() throws IOException { ... }
}
```

Consider, for example,

```java
static void process(Parent p) {
    p.f();
}
```

According to the specification for class Parent, this is supposed to be OK, but the call `p.f()` actually calls `Child.f`, which might throw IOException. So contrary to the intent of checked exceptions, the process method might throw a checked exception that it does not list.
Good Practice

• Throw exceptions rather than using print statements and System.exit everywhere,

• ... because response to a problem may depend on the caller, not just method where problem arises.

• Nice to throw an exception when programmer violates preconditions.

• Particularly good idea to throw an exception rather than let bad input corrupt a data structure.

• Good idea to document when methods throw exceptions.

• To convey information about the cause of exceptional condition, put it into the exception rather than into some global variable:

```java
class MyBad extends Exception {
    public IntList errs;
    MyBad(IntList nums) { errs=nums; }
    try {...
        } catch (MyBad e) {
            ... e.errs ...
        }
    }
```
**Terminology**

- Many students speak of “throwing” an error when they mean “throwing an exception in order to *report* an error.”

- This is a confusion of implementation (the code a program uses to *internally* signal an exceptional condition) with visible behavior (printing an error message).

- Users are not supposed to see them, but rather the messages that interpret these exceptions and report the exceptional conditions:

  **Good:** Program prints
  
  File myData.txt not found.

  **Bad:** Program prints
  
  Exception in thread "main" java.io.IOException: File not found at foo.main(foo.java:4)
Importing

• Writing `java.util.List` every time you mean `List` or `java.lang.regex.Pattern` every time you mean `Pattern` is annoying.

• The purpose of the `import` clause at the beginning of a source file is to define abbreviations:
  - `import java.util.List;` means “within this file, you can use `List` as an abbreviation for `java.util.List`.
  - `import java.util.*;` means “within this file, you can use any class name in the package `java.util` without mentioning the package.”

• Importing does *not* grant any special access; it *only* allows abbreviation.

• In effect, your program always contains `import java.lang.*;`
Static importing

- One can easily get tired of writing `System.out` and `Math.sqrt`. Do you really need to be reminded with each use that `out` is in the `java.lang.System` package and that `sqrt` is in the `Math` package (duh)?

- Both examples are of `static` members. A feature of Java allows you to abbreviate such references:
  - `import static java.lang.System.out;` means “within this file, you can use `out` as an abbreviation for `System.out`.
  - `import static java.lang.System.*;` means “within this file, you can use `any` static member name in `System` without mentioning the package.

- Again, this is `only` an abbreviation. No special access.

- Alas, you can’t do this for classes in the anonymous package.
Nesting Classes

- Sometimes, it makes sense to nest one class in another. The nested class might
  - be used only in the implementation of the other, or
  - be conceptually “subservient” to the other

- Nesting such classes can help avoid name clashes or “pollution of the name space” with names that will never be used anywhere else.

- Example: Polynomials can be thought of as sequences of terms. Assuming that terms aren’t used outside of Polynomials, you might define a class to represent a term inside the Polynomial class:

```java
class Polynomial {

  methods on polynomials

  private Term[] terms;
  private static class Term {
    ...
  }
}
```
Inner Classes

• Last slide showed a static nested class. Static nested classes are just like any other, except that they can be private or protected, and they can see private variables of the enclosing class.

• Non-static nested classes are called inner classes.

• Used when each instance of the nested class is created by and naturally associated with an instance of the containing class, like Banks and Accounts:

![Diagram of Banks and Accounts relationship]

account → Bank
account

account → Bank
account
Example: Banks and Accounts

class Bank {
    private void addFunds(int amount) {
        totalFunds += amount;
    }

    public class Account {
        int _balance;
        public void deposit(int amount) {
            _balance += amount;
            Bank.this.addFunds(_balance);
        }
    } // Bank.this means "the bank that created me"
}

Bank bank = new Bank(...);
Bank.Account a0 = bank.new Account(...);
Bank.Account a1 = bank.new Account(...);
Example: Iterators

```java
public class ArrayList<T> {
    ...
    public T get(int k) {
        ...
    }
    public int size() {
        ...
    }

    public Iterator<T> iterator() {
        return new ArrayIterator<T>();
        // or return this.new ArrayIterator<T>();
    }

    private class ArrayIterator implements Iterator<T> {
        int _k;
        ArrayIterator() { _k = 0; }
        public boolean hasNext() { return _k < size(); }
        public T next() { _k += 1; return get(_k - 1); }
    }
}
```
Type testing: instanceof

• It is possible to ask about the dynamic type of something:

```java
void typeChecker(Reader r) {
    if (r instanceof TrReader)
        System.out.print("Translated characters: ");
    else
        System.out.print("Characters: ");
...
}
```

• However, this is seldom what you want to do. Why do this:

```java
if (x instanceof StringReader)
    read from (StringReader) x;
else if (x instanceof FileReader)
    read from (FileReader) x;
...
```

when you can just call `x.read()`?!

• In general, use instance methods rather than `instanceof`. 