# Lecture 4

Median and Selection

#### Announcements!

#### Exam 1

• Do this soon:

Read instructions on the course website (**Exams page**) and prepare for the logistics; there will be a blank sample exam on Gradescope for you to test the submission process.

• Topics:

Lectures 1-4 (up to and including today)

• Length:

2 hrs = 1.5 hrs + 0.5 hrs (includes time for scanning/etc.)

• When do I take it?

Contiguous **2-hour** window on Thursday or Friday Start no earlier than 12:01 am Thursday (Pacific Time) End no later than 11:59 pm Friday (Pacific Time)

• Where do I take it?

Gradescope (2 different ways you can choose from)

# Last Time: Solving Recurrence Relations

- A recurrence relation expresses T(n) in terms of T(less than n)
- For example,  $T(n) = 2 \cdot T\left(\frac{n}{2}\right) + 11 \cdot n$
- Two methods of solution:
  - 1. Master Theorem (aka, generalized "tree method")
  - 2. Substitution method (aka, guess and check)

#### The Master Theorem

- Suppose a ≥ 1, b > 1, and d are constants (that don't depend on n).
- Suppose  $T(n) = a \cdot T\left(\frac{n}{b}\right) + O(n^d)$ . Then

$$T(n) = \begin{cases} O(n^d \log(n)) & \text{if } a = b^d \\ O(n^d) & \text{if } a < b^d \\ O(n^{\log_b(a)}) & \text{if } a > b^d \end{cases}$$

Three parameters:

- a : number of subproblems
- b : factor by which input size shrinks

d : need to do n<sup>d</sup> work to create all the subproblems and combine their solutions.

A powerful theorem it is...

Jedi master Yoda

#### The Substitution Method

- Step 1: Guess what the answer is.
- Step 2: Prove by induction that your guess is correct.
- Step 3: Profit.

# The plan for today



- 1. More practice with the Substitution Method.
- 2. k-SELECT problem
- 3. k-SELECT solution
- 4. Return of the Substitution Method.

# A fun recurrence relation

• 
$$T(n) \leq T\left(\frac{n}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7n}{10}\right) + n$$
 for  $n > 10$ .

• Base case: T(n) = 1 when  $1 \le n \le 10$ 

Apply here, the Master Theorem does NOT.



Jedi master Yoda

#### The Substitution Method

- Step 1: Guess what the answer is.
- Step 2: Prove by induction that your guess is correct.
- Step 3: Profit.

Step 1: guess the answer

$$T(n) \le T\left(\frac{n}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7n}{10}\right) + n \text{ for } n > 10.$$
  
Base case:  $T(n) = 1$  when  $1 \le n \le 10$ 

- Trying to work backwards gets gross fast...
- We can also just try it out.
  - (see Python notebook)
- Let's guess O(n) and try to prove it.



## Aside: Warning!

- It may be tempting to try to prove this with the inductive hypothesis "T(n) = O(n)"
- But that doesn't make sense!
- Formally, that's the same as saying:
  - Inductive Hypothesis for n:

for all  $n \ge n_0$ ,  $\mathcal{I}(n) \le C \cdot n$ .

• There is some  $n_0 > 0$  and some C > 0 so that,

But now we are letting n be anything big enough!

• Instead, we should pick C first...

The IH is supposed to hold for a *specific* n.

# Step 2: prove our guess is right

$$T(n) \le T\left(\frac{n}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7n}{10}\right) + n \text{ for } n > 10.$$
  
Base case:  $T(n) = 1$  when  $1 \le n \le 10$ 

- Inductive Hypothesis:  $T(n) \leq Cn^2$
- Base case:  $1 = T(n) \leq Cn$  for all  $1 \leq n \leq 10$
- Inductive step:
  - Let k > 10. Assume that the IH holds for all n so that  $1 \le n < k$ .
  - $T(k) \le k + T\left(\frac{k}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7k}{10}\right)$   $\le k + C \cdot \left(\frac{k}{5}\right) + C \cdot \left(\frac{7k}{10}\right)$   $= k + \frac{C}{5}k + \frac{7C}{10}k$   $\le Ck ?? \leftarrow$  Whatever we choose C to be, it should have C≥1 Let's solve for C and make this true! C = 10 works.
  - (aka, want to show that IH holds for n=k).
- Conclusion:
  - There is some C so that for all  $n \ge 1$ ,  $T(n) \le Cn$
  - By the definition of big-Oh, T(n) = O(n).

We don't know what C should be yet! Let's go through the proof leaving it as "C" and then figure out what works...

(write out)

# Step 3: Profit

 $T(n) \le n + T\left(\frac{n}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7n}{10}\right)$  for n > 10. Base case: T(n) = 1 when  $1 \le n \le 10$ 

(Aka, pretend we knew this all along).

#### **Theorem:** T(n) = O(n)**Proof:**

- Inductive Hypothesis:  $T(n) \leq 10n$ .
- Base case:  $1 = T(n) \le 10n$  for all  $1 \le n \le 10$
- Inductive step:
  - Let k > 10. Assume that the IH holds for all n so that  $1 \le n < k$ .

• 
$$T(k) \le k + T\left(\frac{k}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7k}{10}\right)$$
  
 $\le k + \mathbf{10} \cdot \left(\frac{k}{5}\right) + \mathbf{10} \cdot \left(\frac{7k}{10}\right)$   
 $= k + 2k + 7k = \mathbf{10}k$ 

- Thus IH holds for n=k.
- Conclusion:
  - For all  $n \ge 1$ ,  $T(n) \le 10n$
  - Then, T(n) = O(n), using the definition of big-Oh with  $n_0 = 1, c = 10$ .

#### What have we learned?

- The substitution method can work when the master theorem doesn't.
  - For example, with different-sized sub-problems.
- Step 1: generate a guess
  - Throw the kitchen sink at it.
- Step 2: try to prove that your guess is correct
  - You may have to leave some constants unspecified till the end – then see what they need to be for the proof to work!!
- Step 3: profit
  - Pretend you didn't do Steps 1 and 2 and write down a nice proof.

# The Plan

- 1. More practice with the Substitution Method.
- 2. k-SELECT problem
- 3. k-SELECT solution
- 4. Return of the Substitution Method.

# The k-SELECT problem

from your pre-lecture exercise

A is an array of size n, k is in {1,...,n}

- SELECT(A, k):
  - Return the k'th smallest element of A.

- SELECT(A, 1) = 1
- SELECT(A, 2) = 3
- SELECT(A, 3) = 4
- SELECT(A, 8) = 14

Note that the definition of Select is 1-indexed...

- SELECT(A, 1) = MIN(A)
- SELECT(A, n/2) = MEDIAN(A)
- SELECT(A, n) = MAX(A)

For today, assume all arrays have distinct elements.



Being sloppy about

#### On your pre-lecture exercise... An O(nlog(n))-time algorithm

- SELECT(A, k):
  - A = MergeSort(A)
  - return A[k-1] \*

It's k-1 and not k since my pseudocode is 0-indexed and the problem is 1-indexed...

- Running time is O(n log(n)).
- So that's the benchmark....

Can we do better? We're hoping to get O(n) Show that you can't do better than O(n).



# Goal: An O(n)-time algorithm

- On your pre-lecture exercise: SELECT(A, 1).
  - (aka, MIN(A))
- MIN(A):
  - ret =  $\infty$
  - For i=0, ..., n-1:

    - If A[i] < ret:</li>
      ret = A[i]

This loop runs O(n) times

- Return ret
- Time O(n). Yay!

#### Also on your pre-lecture exercise How about SELECT(A,2)?

- SELECT2(A):
  - ret = ∞
  - minSoFar =  $\infty$
  - For i=0, .., n-1:
    - If A[i] < ret and A[i] < minSoFar:
      - ret = minSoFar
      - minSoFar = A[i]
    - **Else** if A[i] < ret and A[i] >= minSoFar:
      - ret = A[i]
  - Return ret

(The actual algorithm here is not very important because this won't end up being a very good idea...)

#### Still O(n) SO FAR SO GOOD.

# SELECT(A, n/2) aka MEDIAN(A)?

- MEDIAN(A):
  - ret = ∞
  - minSoFar =  $\infty$
  - secondMinSoFar =  $\infty$
  - thirdMinSoFar =  $\infty$
  - fourthMinSoFar =  $\infty$
  - •
- This is not a good idea for large k (like n/2 or n).
- Basically this is just going to turn into something like INSERTIONSORT...and that was O(n<sup>2</sup>).

# The Plan

- 1. More practice with the Substitution Method.
- 2. k-SELECT problem
- 3. k-SELECT solution
- 4. Return of the Substitution Method.

#### Idea: divide and conquer!

Say we want to find SELECT(A, k)

First, pick a "pivot." We'll see how to do this later.

Next, partition the array into "bigger than 6" or "less than 6" This PARTITION step takes time O(n). (Notice that we don't sort each half).

this pivot?

L = array with things smaller than A[pivot] R = array with things larger than A[pivot]

#### Idea: divide and conquer!

Say we want to find SELECT(A, k)

First, pick a "pivot." We'll see how to do this later.

Next, partition the array into "bigger than 6" or "less than 6"



L = array with things smaller than A[pivot]



This PARTITION step takes time O(n). (Notice that we don't sort each half).



R = array with things larger than A[pivot]

#### Idea continued...

Say we want to find SELECT(A, k)



L = array with things smaller than A[pivot]





- If k = 5 = len(L) + 1:
  - We should return A[pivot]
- If k < 5:
  - We should return SELECT(L, k)
- If k > 5:
  - We should return SELECT(R, k 5)

This suggests a recursive algorithm

(still need to figure out how to pick the pivot...)

#### Pseudocode

- **getPivot**(A) returns some pivot for us.
  - How?? We'll see later...
- **Partition**(A,p) splits up A into L, A[p], R.
  - See Lecture 4 Python notebook for code

- Select(A,k):
  - If len(A) <= 50:
    - A = MergeSort(A)
    - Return A[k-1]
  - p = getPivot(A)
  - L, pivotVal, R = Partition(A,p)
  - if len(L) == k-1:
    - return pivotVal
  - **Else if** len(L) > k-1:
    - return Select(L, k)
  - **Else if** len(L) < k-1:
    - return Select(R, k len(L) 1)

**Base Case**: If len(A) = O(1), then any sorting algorithm runs in time O(1).

**Case 1**: We got lucky and found exactly the k'th smallest value!

**Case 2**: The k'th smallest value is in the first part of the list

**Case 3**: The k'th smallest value is in the second part of the list

#### Does it work?



- Check out the Python notebook for Lecture 4, which implements this with a bunch of different pivot-selection methods.
  - Seems to work!
- Check out the handout posted on the website for a rigorous proof that this works, with any pivotchoosing mechanism.
  - It provably works!
  - Also, this is a good example of proving that a recursive algorithm is correct.

# What is the running time?

Assuming we pick the pivot in time O(n)...

• 
$$T(n) = \begin{cases} T(\operatorname{len}(\mathbf{L})) + O(n) & \operatorname{len}(\mathbf{L}) > k - 1 \\ T(\operatorname{len}(\mathbf{R})) + O(n) & \operatorname{len}(\mathbf{L}) < k - 1 \\ O(n) & \operatorname{len}(\mathbf{L}) = k - 1 \end{cases}$$

- What are len(L) and len(R)?
- That depends on how we pick the pivot...

Think: one minute Share: (wait) one minute

The best way would be to always pick the pivot so that len(L) = k-1. But say we don't have control over k, just over how we pick the pivot.

What would be a "good" pivot? What would be a "bad" pivot?



Think-Share Terrapins

# The ideal pivot



- We split the input exactly in half:
  - len(L) = len(R) = (n-1)/2

What happens in that case?



Think: one minute Share: (wait) one minute

In case it's helpful...

• Suppose  $T(n) = a \cdot T\left(\frac{n}{b}\right) + O(n^d)$ . Then

$$T(n) = \begin{cases} 0(n^d \log(n)) & \text{if } a = b^d \\ 0(n^d) & \text{if } a < b^d \\ 0(n^{\log_b(a)}) & \text{if } a > b^d \end{cases}$$

# The ideal pivot

- We split the input exactly in half:
  - len(L) = len(R) = (n-1)/2
- Let's pretend that's the case and use the Master Theorem!
- $T(n) \le T\left(\frac{n}{2}\right) + O(n)$
- So a = 1, b = 2, d = 1
- $T(n) \leq O(n^d) = O(n)$

That would be great!

Apply here, the Master Theorem does NOT. Making unsubstantiated assumptions about problem sizes, we are.

Jedi master Yoda

• Suppose 
$$T(n) = a \cdot T\left(\frac{n}{b}\right) + O(n^d)$$
. Then

$$T(n) = \begin{cases} 0(n^d \log(n)) & \text{if } a = b^d \\ 0(n^d) & \text{if } a < b^d \\ 0(n^{\log_b(a)}) & \text{if } a > b^d \end{cases}$$





### The worst pivot

- Say our choice of pivot doesn't depend on A.
- A bad guy who knows what pivots we will choose gets to come up with A.



# The distinction matters!



See Lecture 4 Python notebook for code that generated this picture.

# How do we pick a good pivot?

- Randomly?
  - That works well if there's no bad guy.
  - But if there is a bad guy who gets to see our pivot choices, that's just as bad as the worst-case pivot.

#### Aside:

- In practice, there is often no bad guy. In that case, just pick a random pivot and it works really well!
- (More on this next lecture)



# How do we pick a good pivot?

- For today, let's assume there's this bad guy.
- Reasons:
  - This gives us a very strong guarantee
  - We'll get to see a really clever algorithm.
    - Necessarily it will look at A to pick the pivot.
  - We'll get to use the substitution method.





# The Plan

- 1. More practice with the Substitution Method.
- 2. k-SELECT problem
- 3. k-SELECT solution
  - a) The outline of the algorithm.
  - b) How to pick the pivot.
- 4. Return of the Substitution Method.

#### Approach

- First, we'll figure out what the ideal pivot would be.
  - But we won't be able to get it.
- Then, we'll figure out what a **pretty good** pivot would be.
  - But we still won't know how to get it.
- Finally, we will see how to get our pretty good pivot!
  - And then we will celebrate.

# How do we pick our ideal pivot?

• We'd like to live in the ideal world.



- Pick the pivot to divide the input in half.
- Aka, pick the median!
- Aka, pick SELECT(A, n/2)!



# How about a good enough pivot?

• We'd like to approximate the ideal world.



- Pick the pivot to divide the input about in half!
- Maybe this is easier!



# A good enough pivot

• We split the input not quite in half:

STILL GOOD!

- 3n/10 < len(L) < 7n/10
- 3n/10 < len(R) < 7n/10

We still don't know that we can get such a pivot, but at least it gives us a goal and a direction to pursue!



Lucky the lackadaisical lemur

- If we could do that (let's say, in time O(n)), the Master Theorem would say:
- $T(n) \le T\left(\frac{7n}{10}\right) + O(n)$
- So a = 1, b = 10/7, d = 1
- $T(n) \leq O(n^d) = O(n)$
- Suppose  $T(n) = a \cdot T\left(\frac{n}{b}\right) + O(n^d)$ . Then

$$T(n) = \begin{cases} O(n^d \log(n)) & \text{if } a = b^d \\ O(n^d) & \text{if } a < b^d \\ O(n^{\log_b(a)}) & \text{if } a > b^d \end{cases}$$

#### Goal

• Efficiently pick the pivot so that



# Another divide-and-conquer alg!

- We can't solve SELECT(A,n/2) (yet)
- But we can divide and conquer and solve SELECT(B,m/2) for smaller values of m (where len(B) = m).
- Lemma\*: The median of sub-medians is close to the median.



\*we will make this a bit more precise.

#### How to pick the pivot



- Split A into m =  $\left[\frac{n}{5}\right]$  groups, of size <=5 each.
- For i=1, .., m:
  - Find the median within the i'th group, call it p<sub>i</sub>
- $p = SELECT([p_1, p_2, p_3, ..., p_m], m/2)$
- return the index of p in A





Why 5 and not 3?

# CLAIM: this works divides the array *approximately* in half

• Empirically (see Lecture 4 Python Notebook):



# CLAIM: this works divides the array *approximately* in half

• Formally, we will prove (later):

**Lemma:** If we choose the pivots like this, then  $|L| \leq \frac{7n}{10} + 5$  and

$$R| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$$

# Sanity Check $|L| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$ and $|R| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$



Actually in practice (on randomly chosen arrays) it looks even better!

But this is a worst-case bound.



#### How about the running time?

- Suppose the Lemma is true. (It is).
  - $|L| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$  and  $|R| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$
- Recurrence relation:

 $T(n) \leq ?$ 

Think: 1 minute Share: (wait) 1 minute



#### Pseudocode

- Lemma says that  $|L| \leq \frac{7n}{10} + 5$  and  $|R| \leq \frac{7n}{10} + 5$
- Suppose Partition runs in time O(n)
- Come up with a recurrence relation for T(n), the running time of Select, using the choosePivot algorithm we just described.

• **Select**(A,k):

- If len(A) <= 50:
  - A = MergeSort(A)
  - Return A[k-1]
- p = choosePivot(A)
- L, pivotVal, R = Partition(A,p)
- if len(L) == k-1:
  - return pivotVal
- **Else if** len(L) > k-1:
  - return Select(L, k)
- **Else if** len(L) < k-1:
  - return Select(R, k len(L) 1)

**Base Case**: If len(A) = O(1), then any sorting algorithm runs in time O(1).

**Case 1**: We got lucky and found exactly the k'th smallest value!

**Case 2**: The k'th smallest value is in the first part of the list

**Case 3**: The k'th smallest value is in the second part of the list

#### How about the running time?

• Suppose the Lemma is true. (It is).

• 
$$|L| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$$
 and  $|R| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$ 

• Recurrence relation:

$$T(n) \le T\left(\frac{n}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7n}{10}\right) + O(n)$$

The call to CHOOSEPIVOT makes one further recursive call to SELECT on an array of size n/5.

Outside of CHOOSEPIVOT, there's at most one recursive call to SELECT on array of size 7n/10 + 5.

We're going to drop the "+5" for convenience, but it does not change the final answer. Why? Hint: Define T'(n) := T(n-1000) and write recurrence for T'



Siggi the Studious Stork

# The Plan

- 1. More practice with the Substitution Method.
- 2. k-SELECT problem
- 3. k-SELECT solution
  - a) The outline of the algorithm.
  - b) How to pick the pivot.
- 4. Return of the Substitution Method.



This sounds like a job for...

# The Substitution Method!

Step 1: generate a guess Step 2: try to prove that your guess is correct Step 3: profit

$$T(n) \le T\left(\frac{n}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7n}{10}\right) + O(n)$$

That's convenient! We did this at the beginning of lecture!

Conclusion: T(n) = O(n)



Technically we only did it for  $T(n) \le T\left(\frac{n}{5}\right) + T\left(\frac{7n}{10}\right) + n$ , not when the last term

has a big-Oh...



Plucky the Pedantic Penguin

### Recap of approach

- First, we figured out what the ideal pivot would be.
  - Find the median
- Then, we figured out what a **pretty good** pivot would be.
  - An approximate median
- Finally, we saw how to get our pretty good pivot!
  - Median of medians and divide and conquer!
  - Hooray!

# In practice?

- With not-very-slick implementation, our fancy version of SELECT is worse than the MergeSort-based SELECT ☺
  - But O(n) is better than O(nlog(n))! How can that be?
  - What's the constant in front of the n in our proof? 20? 30?
- On **non-adversarial** inputs, random pivot choice is much better.



#### What have we learned? Pending the Lemma

- It is possible to solve SELECT in time O(n).
  - Divide and conquer!
- If you want a deterministic algorithm expect that a bad guy will be picking the list, choose a pivot cleverly.
  - More divide and conquer!
- If you don't expect that a bad guy will be picking the list, in practice it's better just to pick a random pivot.

# The Plan

- 1. More practice with the Substitution Method.
- 2. k-SELECT problem
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  - b) How to pick the pivot.
- 4. Return of the Substitution Method.
- 5. (If time) Proof of that Lemma.

### If time, back to the Lemma

• Lemma: If L and R are as in the algorithm SELECT given above, then

$$|L| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$$

and

$$|R| \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5$$

- We will see a proof by picture.
- See lecture notes for proof by proof.



Say these are our m = [n/5] sub-arrays of size at most 5.





Then let's sort them by the median



The median of the medians is 7. That's our pivot!

We will show that lots of elements are smaller than the pivot, hence not too many are larger than the pivot.



How many elements are SMALLER than the pivot?



At least these ones: everything above and to the left.





So how many are LARGER than the pivot? At most...

$$n - 1 - 3\left(\left\lceil\frac{m}{2}\right\rceil - 2\right) \le \frac{7n}{10} + 5 \qquad \qquad \begin{array}{c} \text{Remember} \\ m = \left\lceil\frac{n}{5}\right\rceil$$

(derivation on board)

#### That was one part of the lemma

• Lemma: If L and R are as in the algorithm SELECT given above, then



and

#### The other part is exactly the same.

# The Plan

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  - b) How to pick the pivot.
- 4. Return of the Substitution Method.
- 5. (If time) Proof of that Lemma.



#### Recap

- Substitution method can work when the master theorem doesn't.
- One place we needed it was for SELECT.
  - Which we can do in time O(n)!

#### Next time

• Randomized algorithms and QuickSort!

#### **BEFORE** next time

- Pre-Lecture Exercise 5
  - Remember probability theory?
  - The pre-lecture exercise will jog your memory.
- Familiarize Yourself with Exam Logistics