Solve the following problems before the exercise session and be prepared to present your solutions at the session.

1. Alice and Bob agree that she will choose a character uniformly at random from the string MISSISSIPPI and tells it to him. How much information (in bits) does she convey in the expected case? (This is called the entropy of the distribution of the characters and the 0th-order empirical entropy of the string.)

2. Build a Shannon code for the probability distribution over the distinct characters \{M, I, S, P\} according to which Alice chooses.

3. Build a Huffman code for that probability distribution, make it canonical, and use it to encode MISSISSIPPI.

4. What is the redundancy of your Huffman code (i.e., the amount by which the expected codeword length exceeds the entropy of the distribution)?

5. Suppose we are given a sequence \( W = w_1, \ldots, w_n \) of positive weights. Huffman’s algorithm builds a binary tree on \( n \) leaves assigned those weights, whose weighted external path length (i.e., the sum over the leaves of their weights times their depths) is minimized. You saw Travis attempt at a proof of correctness in class; unscrambled the pieces below to obtain a coherent proof.

(a) Without loss of generality, assume \( w_1 \) and \( w_2 \) are the smallest weights in \( W \), so Huffman’s algorithm builds a tree \( T \) for \( W \) starting by replacing \( w_1 \) and \( w_2 \) with \( w_1 + w_2 \).

(b) The difference between the weighted external path lengths of \( T \) and \( T' \) is \( w_1 + w_2 \).

(c) Since difference between the weighted external path lengths of \( T_{\text{opt}} \) and \( T'_{\text{opt}} \) is \( w_1 + w_2 \), and \( T' \) has minimum weighted external path length for \( W' \), the difference between the weighted external path lengths of \( T_{\text{opt}}' \) and \( T' \) is at least \( w_1 + w_2 \).

(d) By induction. Huffman’s algorithm is trivially correct when given 1 weight. Assume Huffman’s algorithm is correct when given \( n - 1 \) weights.

(e) By our inductive assumption, Huffman’s algorithm correctly builds an optimal tree \( T' \) for \( W' = w_1 + w_2, w_3, \ldots, w_n \).

(f) Therefore, we need only show that the difference between the weighted external path lengths of an optimal tree for \( W \) and \( T' \) is at least \( w_1 + w_2 \).

(g) As we proved in class, since \( w_1 \) and \( w_2 \) are the smallest weights in \( W \), there exists an optimal tree \( T_{\text{opt}} \) for \( W \) in which the leaves with weights \( w_1 \) and \( w_2 \) are siblings.

(h) If we remove the leaves with weights \( w_1 \) and \( w_2 \) from \( T_{\text{opt}} \) and assign their parent weight \( w_1 + w_2 \), then we obtain a tree \( T'_{\text{opt}} \) for \( W' \).

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\(^1\)Travis forgot to write “expected” in a few places in the notes; he’s added it now.