

Subject: Re: [ap-compsci] String literals and ==

Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2009 11:23 AM

From: Nick Parlante <nick.parlante@cs.stanford.edu>

Reply-To: "AP Computer Science" <ap-compsci@lyris.collegeboard.com>

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Conversation: [ap-compsci] String literals and ==

Not exactly answering your question, but I would avoid talking about == much with Strings or with any objects at all.

I was very "on message" in CS1 with the simple rule: use .equals() with objects and use == only with primitives like ints.

Then as an aside I might mention what == does in various cases, but then go back to the simple message which I really want them to remember.

For more advanced Java of course you need to talk about it, but it's a distraction for most things you want to do. Or put another way -- just because a language has a feature, doesn't mean you need to talk about it!

My highly condensed view of "computational thinking" projects is that you show the students just the features you need to do interesting work, rather than going through the features A-Z.

Cheers,

Nick

Stephanie Allen wrote:

> This is my first year teaching APCS and we are using the 2nd edition of Java Software Solutions by Lewis, Loftus and Cocking.

>

> I've looked in the errata for this question but it is not listed. On the bottom of page 267 in Chapter 5 the author states if:

>

> String name1 = "John";

> String name2 = "John";

>

> then the expression name1 == name2 will return false. I thought it would return true since the references would be the same because Java will only make one String object for equivalent string literals.

>

> I also thought that if:

>

> String name1 = "John";
> String name2 = new String("John");
>
> then the expression name1 == name 2 would be false.
>
> Is this correct? Is it an error in the text?
>
> Thank you.
>
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