CS/ENGRD 2110 FALL 2016

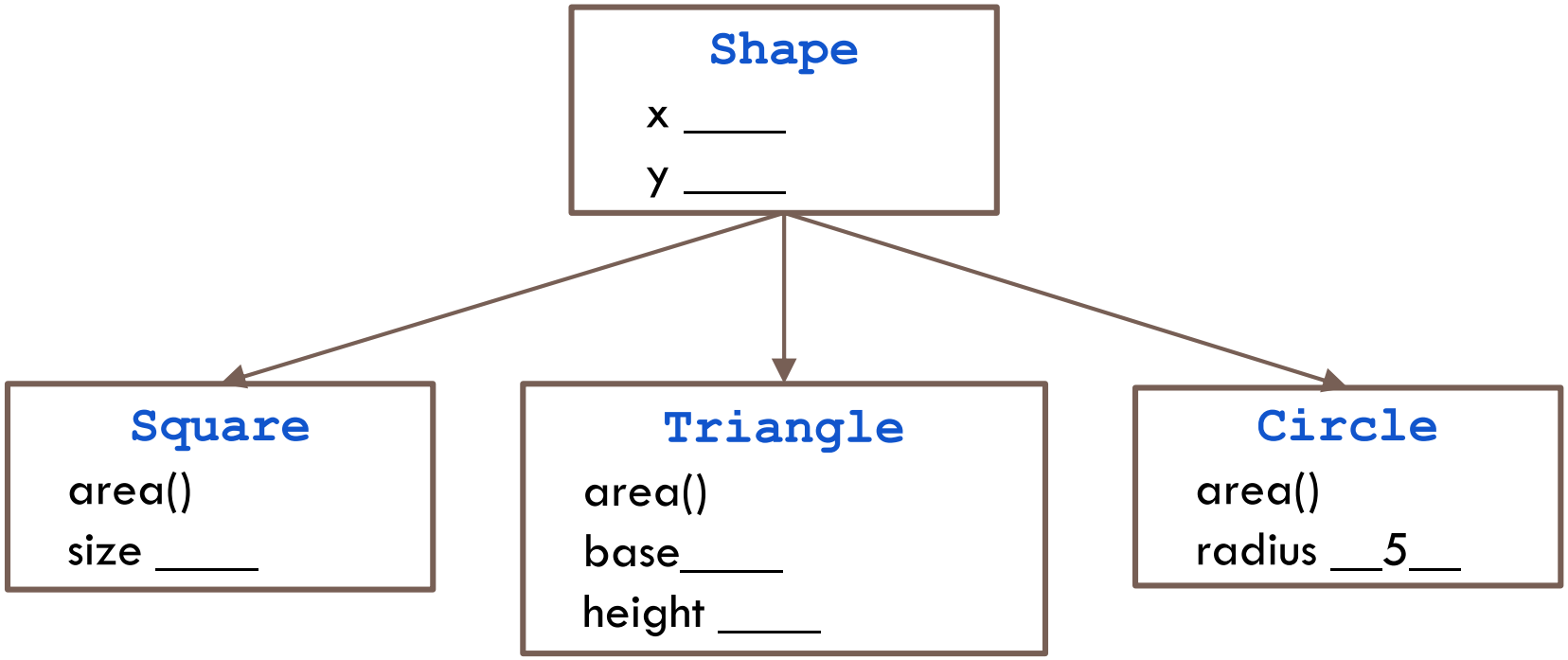
Lecture 7: Interfaces and Abstract Classes

http://courses.cs.cornell.edu/cs2110

Announcements

- Attendance for this week's recitation is mandatory!
- A2 is due Today
- Get started on A3 – a method every other day

A Little Geometry!



Demo 1: Complete this function


```
/** Return the sum of the areas of
  * the shapes in s */
static double sumAreas(Shape[] s) { }
```

1. Operator **`instanceof`** and casting are required
2. Adding new `Shape` subclasses breaks `sumAreas`

A Partial Solution:

Add method area to class Shape:

```
public double area() {
        return 0;
}
```

```
public double area() {
        throw new RuntimeException("area not
overridden");
}
```

Problems not solved

1. What is a Shape that isn't a Circle, Square, Triangle, etc? What is *only* a shape, nothing more specific?
   a. `Shape s= new Shape(...);` Should be disallowed

2. What if a subclass doesn't override area()?
   a. Can't force the subclass to override it!
   b. Incorrect value returned or exception thrown.

Solution: Abstract classes


```
public abstract class Shape {

   public double area() {
       return 0;
    }
}
```

Abstract class

Means that it can't be instantiated.

new `Shape()` illegal

Solution: Abstract methods


```
public abstract class Shape {

   public abstract double area();

}
```

Abstract method
Subclass must override.

- Can also have implemented methods
- Place abstract method only in abstract class.
- Semicolon instead of body.

Demo 2: A better solution

We modify class Shape to be abstract and make `area()` an abstract method.

- Abstract class prevents instantiation of class Shape
- Abstract method forces all subclasses to override `area()`

Abstract Classes, Abstract Methods

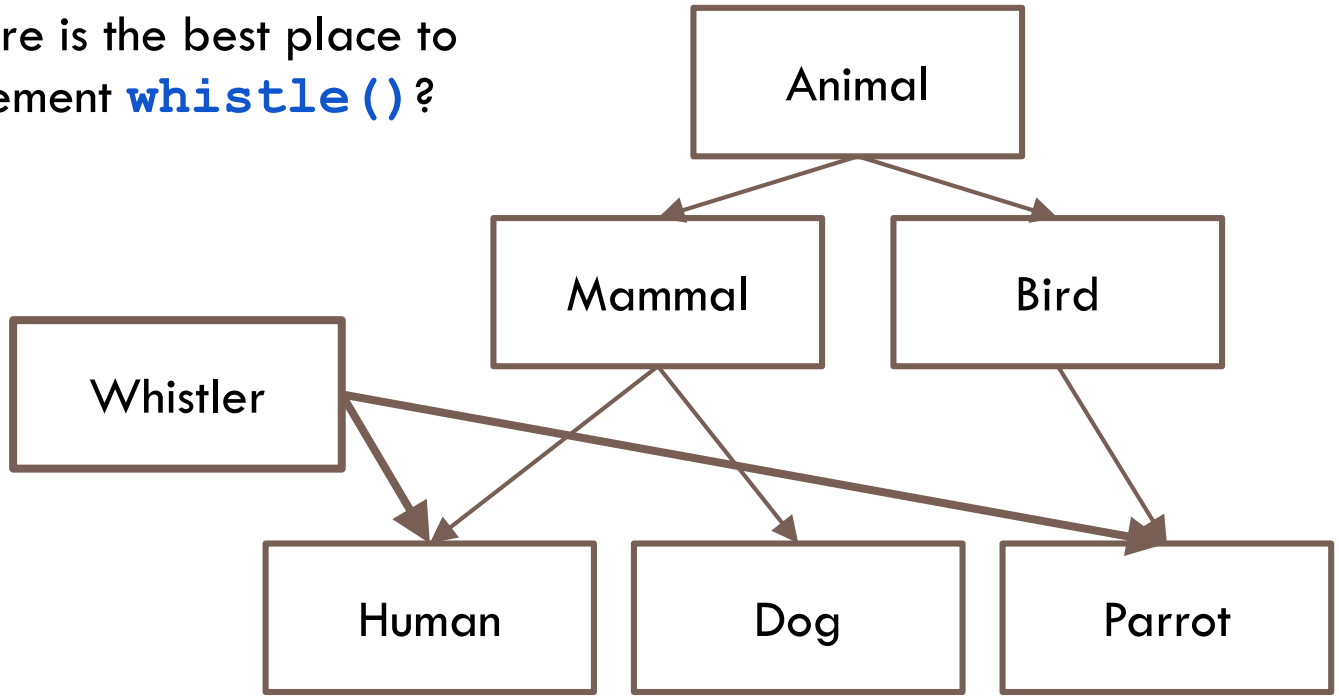
1. **Cannot instantiate an object of an abstract class.**
   (Cannot use new-expression)

2. **A subclass must override abstract methods.**

Interfaces

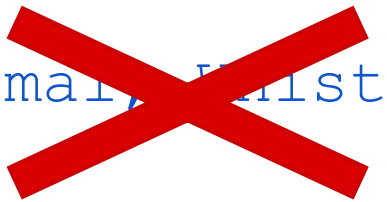
Problem

Where is the best place to implement `whistle()`?



No multiple inheritance in Java!


```
class Whistler {
  void breathe() { … }
}
class Animal {
  void breathe() { … }
}
class Human extends Animal, Whistler {
}
```

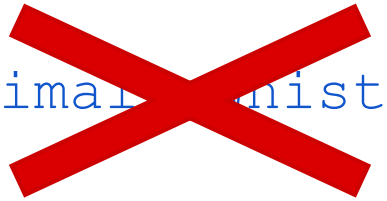


```
new Human().breathe();
```

Which breathe() should java run in class Human?

Why not make it fully abstract?


```
class abstract Whistler {
  abstract void breathe();
}
class abstract Animal {
  abstract void breathe();
}
class Human extends Animal, Whistler {
}
```

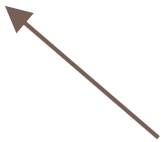


Java doesn't allow this, even though it would work. Instead, Java has another construct for this purpose, the interface

Solution: Interfaces


```
public interface Whistler {
      void whistle();
      int MEANING_OF_LIFE= 42;
}

class Human extends Mammal implements Whistler {
}
```

- methods are automatically **public** and **abstract**
- fields are automatically **public**, **static**, and **final** (i.e. constants)



Must implement all methods in the implemented interfaces

Multiple interfaces

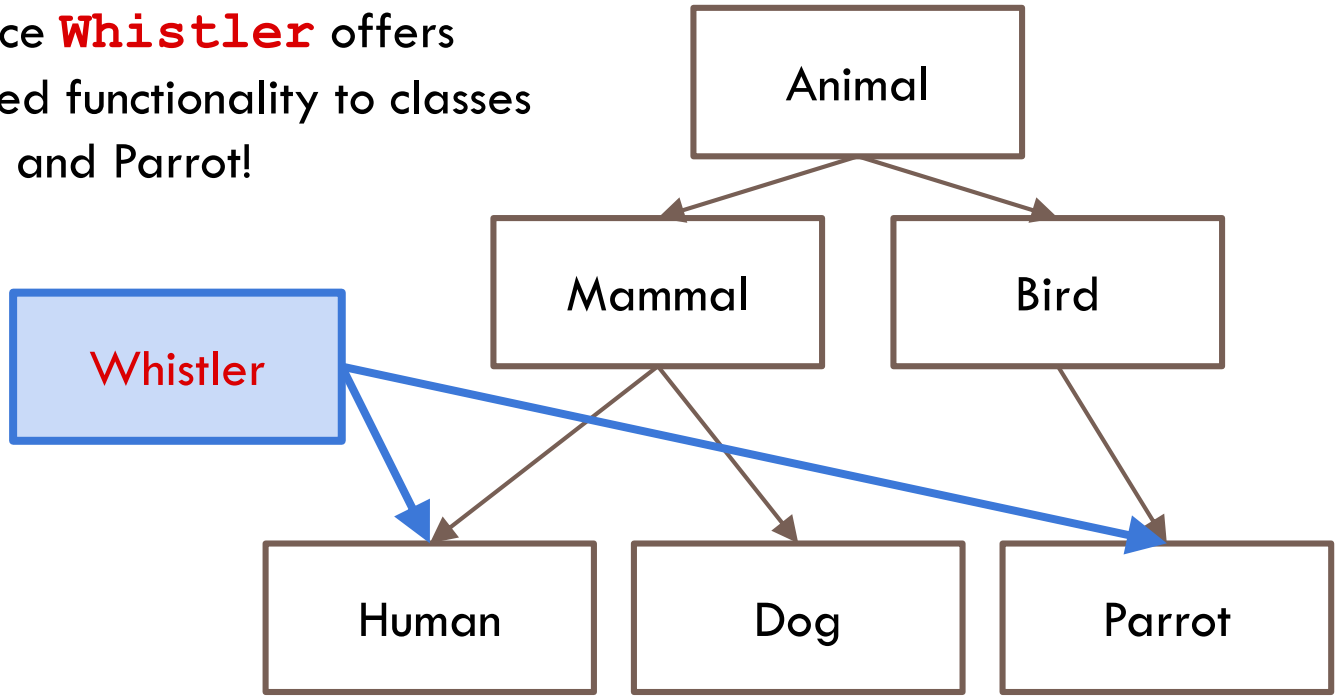

```
public interface Singer {
      void singTo(Human h);
}

class Human extends Mammal implements Whistler, Singer {
}
```

Classes can implement several interfaces!
They must implement all the methods in those interfaces they implement.

Must implement `singTo(Human h)` and `whistle()`

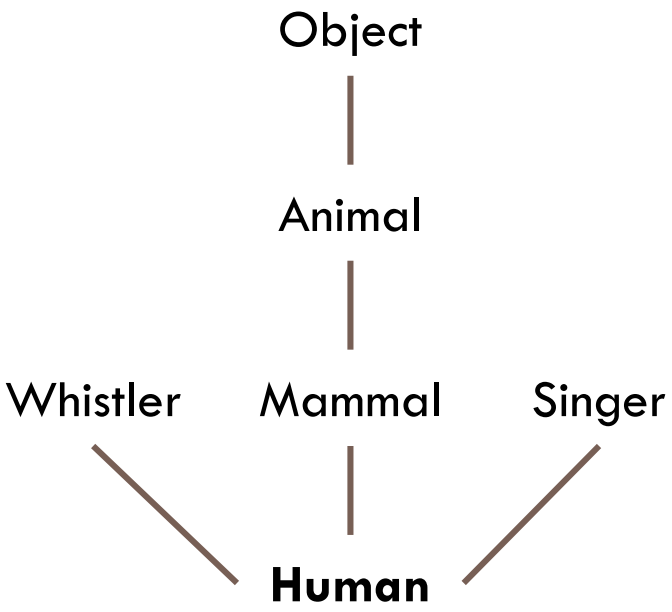
Solution: Interfaces

Interface **`Whistler`** offers promised functionality to classes Human and Parrot!



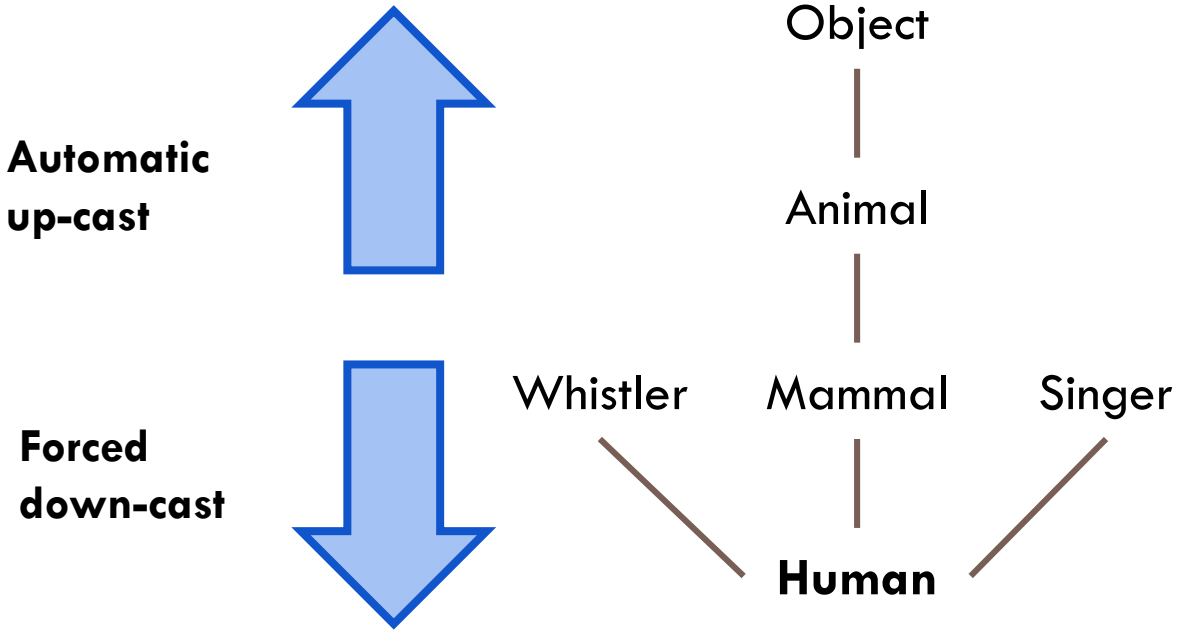
Casting to an interface


```
Human h=    new Human();
Object o= (Object) h;
Animal a= (Animal) h;
Mammal m= (Mammal) h;

Singer s= (Singer) h;
Whistler w= (Whistler) h;

All point to the same
  memory address!
```



Casting to an interface

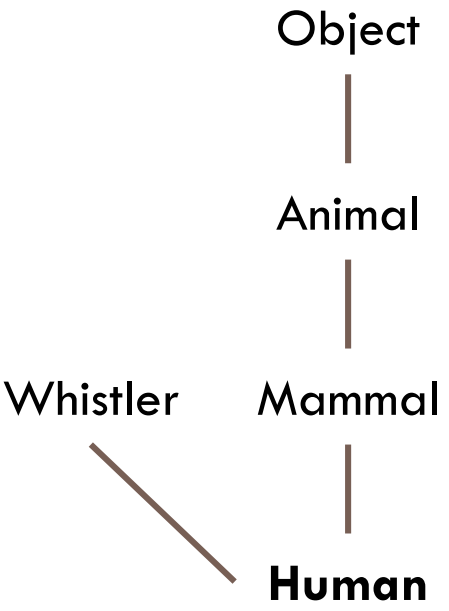

```
Human h=  new Human();
Object o= h;
Animal a= h;
Mammal m= h;
Singer s= h;
Whistler w= h;
```



Casting up to an interface automatically


```
class Human … implements Whistler {
      void listenTo(Whistler w) {...}
}
Human h = new Human(...);
Human h1= new Human(...);
h.listenTo(h1);
```

Arg h1 of the call has type Human. Its value is being stored in w, which is of type Whistler. Java does an upward cast automatically. It costs no time; it is just a matter of perception.



Demo 3: Implement Comparable<T>

Implement interface Comparable in class Shape:

```
public interface Comparable<T> {
   /** = a negative integer if this object < c,
       = 0 if this object = c,
       = a positive integer if this object > c.
       Throw a ClassCastException if c can't
            be cast to the class of this object.
      */
   int compareTo(T c);
}
```

Shape implements Comparable<T>

```
public class Shape implements Comparable<Shape> {
    ...
    /** … */
    public int compareTo(Shape s) {
        double diff= area() - s.area();
        return (diff == 0 ? 0 : (diff < 0 ? -1 : +1));
    }
}
```

Beauty of interfaces

`Arrays.sort` sorts an array of *any* class C, as long as C implements interface `Comparable<T>` without needing to know any implementation details of the class.

Classes that implement Comparable:

```
Boolean     Byte          Double       Integer
String      BigDecimal    BigInteger   Calendar
  Time        Timestamp     and 100 others
```

String sorting

`Arrays.sort(Object[] b)` sorts an array of *any* class C, as long as C implements interface **`Comparable<T>`**.

`String` implements `Comparable`, so you can write

```
String[] strings= ...;
...
Arrays.sort(strings);
```

During the sorting, when comparing elements, a String's compareTo function is used

And Shape sorting, too!

`Arrays.sort(Object[] b)` sorts an array of *any* class C, as long as C implements interface **`Comparable<T>`**.

`Shape` implements `Comparable`, so you can write

```
Shape[] shapes= ...;   ...
Arrays.sort(shapes);
```

During the sorting, when comparing elements, a Shape's compareTo function is used

Abstract Classes vs. Interfaces

- Abstract class represents something
- Sharing common code between subclasses

- Interface is what something can do
- A contract to fulfill
- Software engineering purpose

Similarities:

- Can't instantiate
- Must implement abstract methods
- Later we'll use interfaces to define "abstract data types"
  - (e.g. List, Set, Stack, Queue, etc)