CSE 143
Lecture 9

References and Linked Nodes

reading: 16.1; 3.3

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A `swap` method?

- Does the following `swap` method work? Why or why not?

```
public static void main(String[] args) {
    int a = 7;
    int b = 35;

    // swap a with b
    swap(a, b);

    System.out.println(a + " " + b);
}

public static void swap(int a, int b) {
    int temp = a;
    a = b;
    b = temp;
}
```
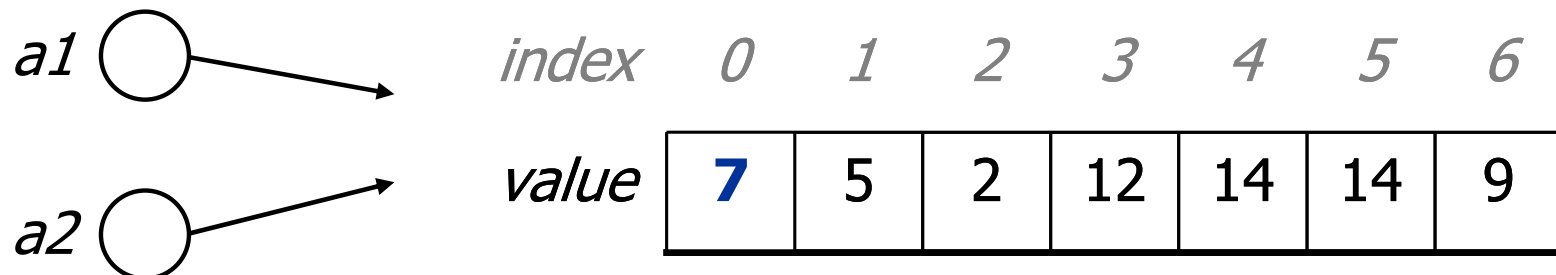
Value semantics

- **value semantics**: Behavior where values are copied when assigned to each other or passed as parameters.

  - When one primitive is assigned to another, its value is copied.
  - Modifying the value of one variable does not affect others.

```
int x = 5;
int y = x;      // x = 5, y = 5
y = 17;         // x = 5, y = 17
x = 8;          // x = 8, y = 17
```

Reference semantics

- **reference semantics**: Behavior where variables actually store the address of an object in memory.
  - When one reference variable is assigned to another, the object is *not* copied; both variables refer to the *same object*.

```
int[] a1 = {4, 5, 2, 12, 14, 14, 9};
int[] a2 = a1;      // refers to same array as a1
a2[0] = 7;
System.out.println(a1[0]);    // 7
```

index	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
value	**7**	5	2	12	14	14	9

a1

a2

References and objects

- In Java, objects and arrays use reference semantics. Why?
  - *efficiency.*   Copying large objects slows down a program.
  - *sharing.*   It's useful to share an object's data among methods.

```
DrawingPanel panel1 = new DrawingPanel(80, 50);
DrawingPanel panel2 = panel1;    // same window
panel2.setBackground(Color.CYAN);
```
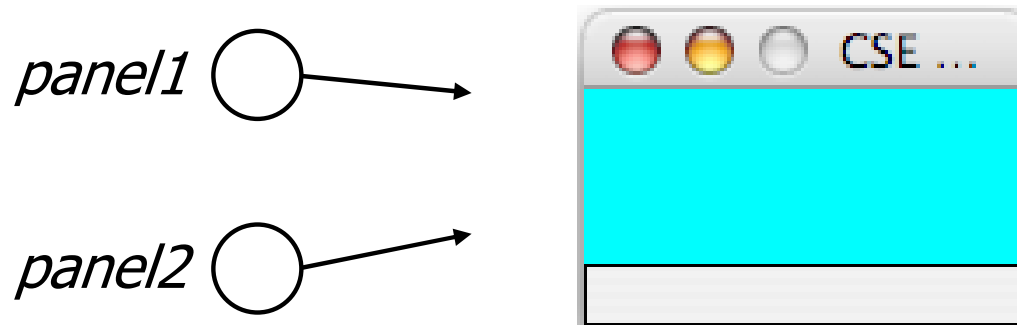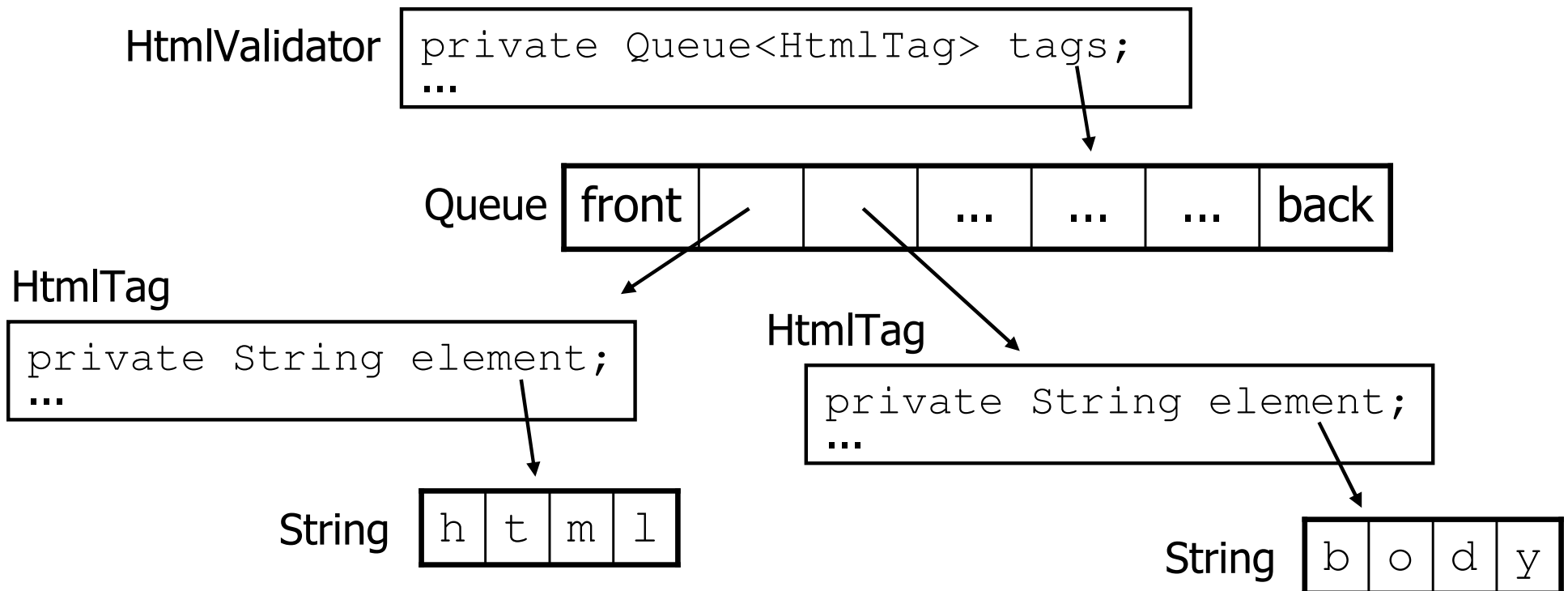
References as fields

- Objects can store references to other objects as fields.

  Example: Homework 3 (HTML Validator)
  - `HtmlValidator` stores a reference to a `Queue`
  - the `Queue` stores many references to `HtmlTag` objects
  - each `HtmlTag` object stores a reference to its element `String`

HtmlValidator
```
private Queue<HtmlTag> tags;
...
```

Queue | front | | | ... | ... | ... | back |

HtmlTag
```
private String element;
...
```

HtmlTag
```
private String element;
...
```

String | h | t | m | l |

String | b | o | d | y |

Null references

- **null :** A value that does not refer to any object.

    – The elements of an array of objects are initialized to `null`.
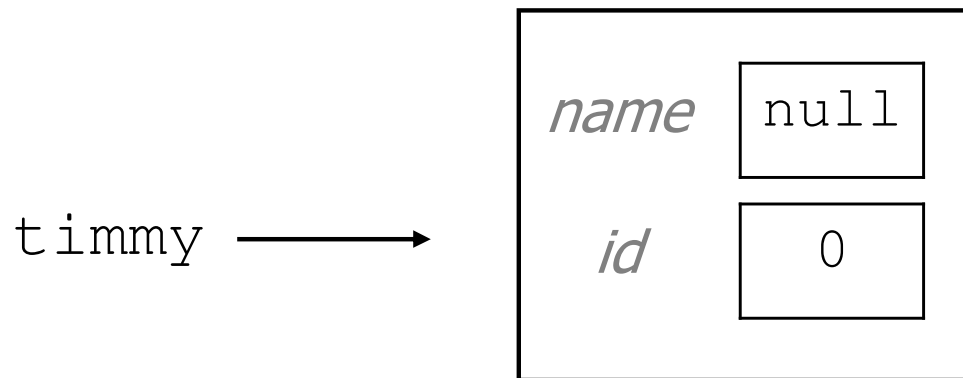
    ```
    String[] words = new String[5];
    ```

index	0	1	2	3	4
words ⟶ value	null	null	null	null	null
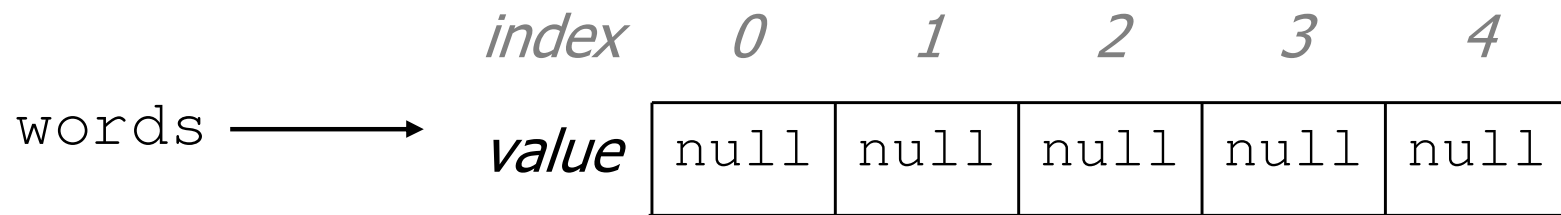
    – not the same as the empty string `""` or the string `"null"`
    – Why does Java have `null` ? What is it used for?

Null references

– Unset reference fields of an object are initialized to `null`.

```
public class Student {
    String name;
    int id;
}

Student timmy = new Student();
```

timmy ⟶

name	null
id	0

Things you can **do w/ `null`**

- store `null` in a variable or an array element
  ```
  String s = null;
  words[2] = null;
  ```

- print a `null` reference
  ```
  System.out.println(timmy.name);        // null
  ```

- ask whether a variable or array element is `null`
  ```
  if (timmy.name == null) { ...          // true
  ```

- pass `null` as a parameter to a method
 - some methods don't like `null` parameters and throw exceptions

- return `null` from a method (often to indicate failure)
  ```
  return null;
  ```

Dereferencing

- **dereference**: To access data or methods of an object.
  - Done with the dot notation, such as `s.length()`
  - When you use a `.` after an object variable, Java goes to the memory for that object and looks up the field/method requested.
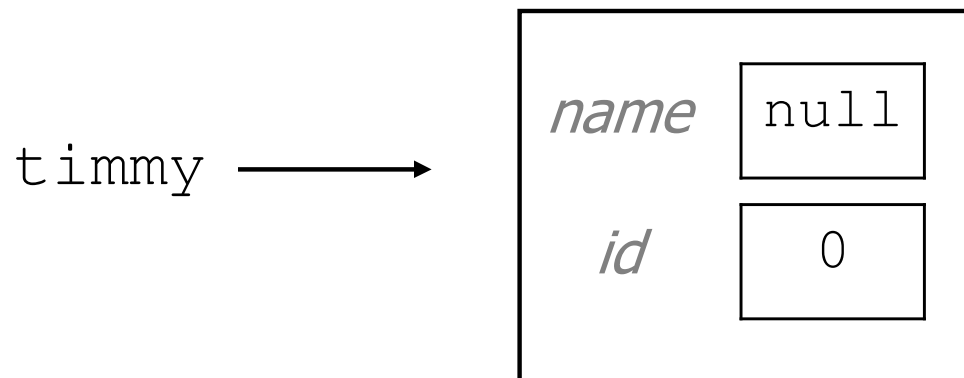
```
Student timmy = new Student();
timmy.name = "Timmah";
String s = timmy.name.toUpperCase();
```
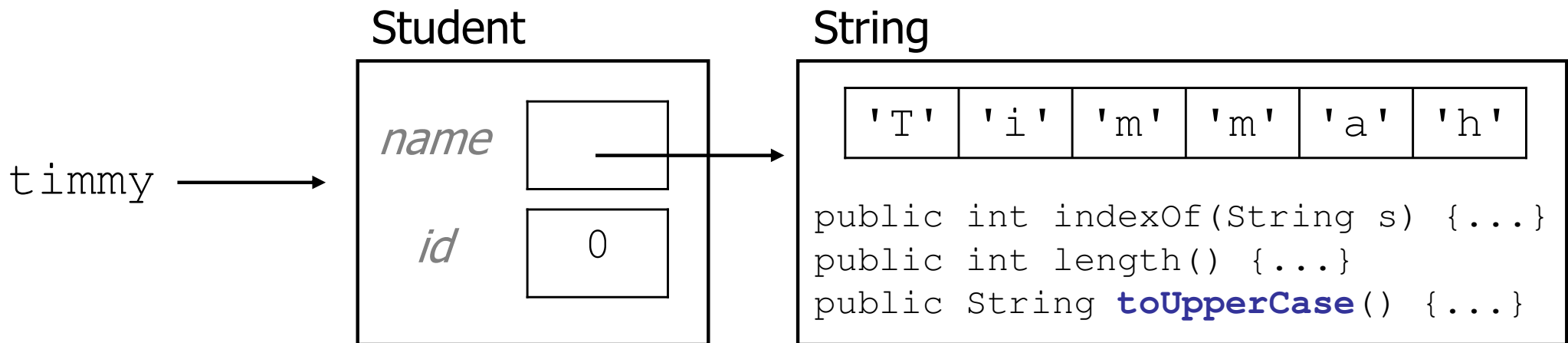
Null pointer exception

- It is illegal to dereference `null` (it causes an exception).
  - `null` does not refer to any object, so it has no methods or data.

```
Student timmy = new Student();
String s = timmy.name.toUpperCase();    // ERROR
```


timmy ──────────→

name	null
id	0

Output:
```
Exception in thread "main"
java.lang.NullPointerException
        at Example.main(Example.java:8)
```

References to same type

- What would happen if we had a class that declared one of its own type as a field?

```
public class Strange {
    private String name;
    private Strange other;
}
```
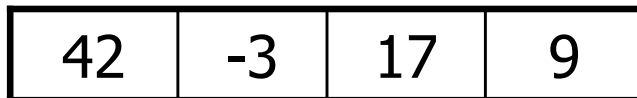
  – Will this compile?
    - If so, what is the behavior of the `other` field? What can it do?
    - If not, why not? What is the error and the reasoning behind it?

Linked data structures

- All of the collections we will use and implement in this course use one of the following two underlying data structures:

  - an **array** of all elements
    - `ArrayList, Stack, HashSet, HashMap`

42	-3	17	9

  - a set of **linked objects**, each storing one element, and one or more reference(s) to other element(s)
   - `LinkedList, TreeSet, TreeMap`

front ⟶ | 42 | → | -3 | → | 17 | → | 9 | null |

A list node class

```
public class ListNode {
    int data;
    ListNode next;
}
```

- Each list node object stores:
  - one piece of integer data
  - a reference to another list node

- `ListNode`s can be "linked" into chains to store a list of values:

data	next
42	

data	next
-3	

data	next
17	

data	next
9	null
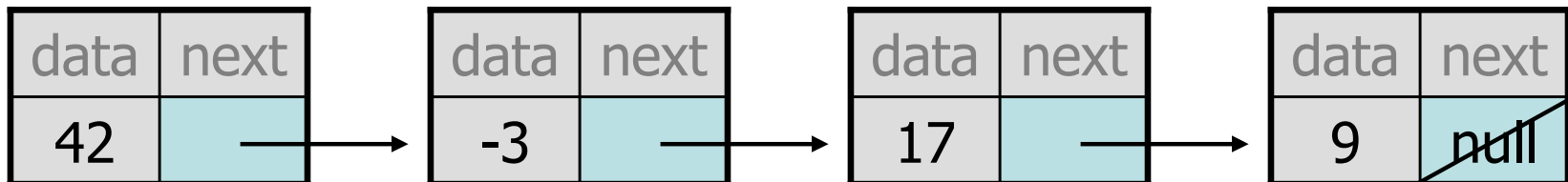
List node client example

```java
public class ConstructList1 {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        ListNode list = new ListNode();
        list.data = 42;
        list.next = new ListNode();
        list.next.data = -3;
        list.next.next = new ListNode();
        list.next.next.data = 17;
        list.next.next.next = null;
        System.out.println(list.data + " " + list.next.data
                            + " " + list.next.next.data);
        // 42 -3 17
    }
}
```
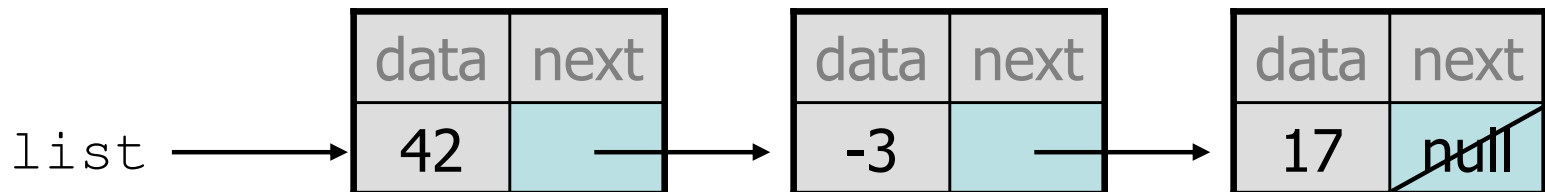
List node w/ constructor

```java
public class ListNode {
    int data;
    ListNode next;

    public ListNode(int data) {
        this.data = data;
        this.next = null;
    }

    public ListNode(int data, ListNode next) {
        this.data = data;
        this.next = next;
    }
}
```

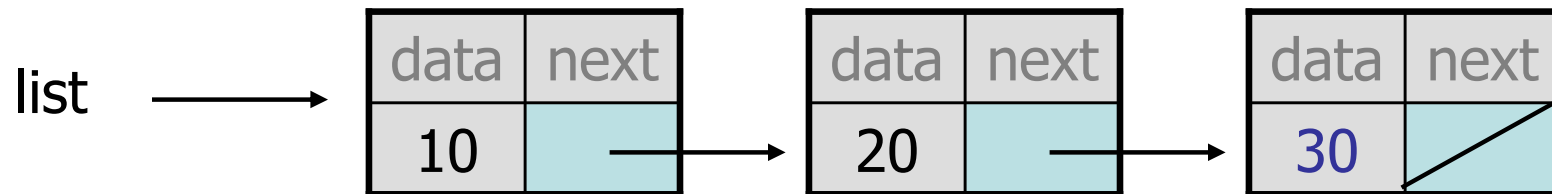– Exercise: Modify the previous client to use these constructors.

Linked node problem 1

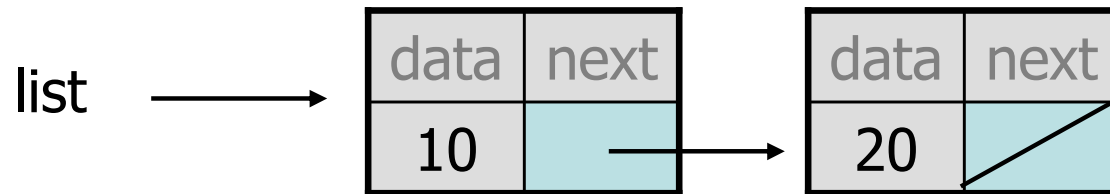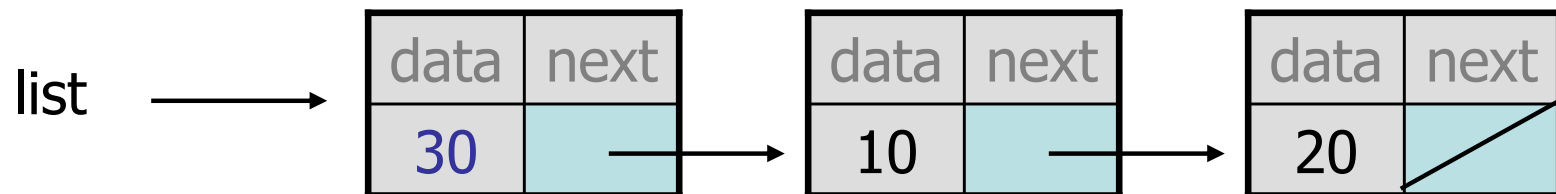- What set of statements turns this picture:
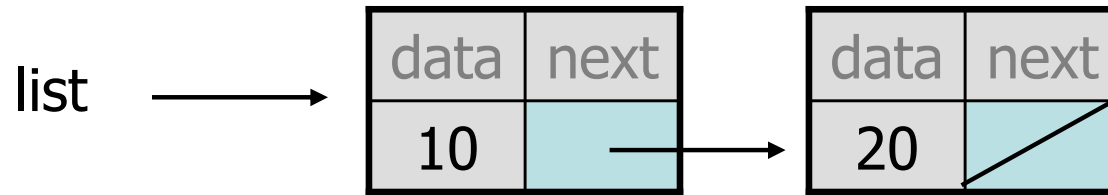
- Into this?

Linked node problem 2
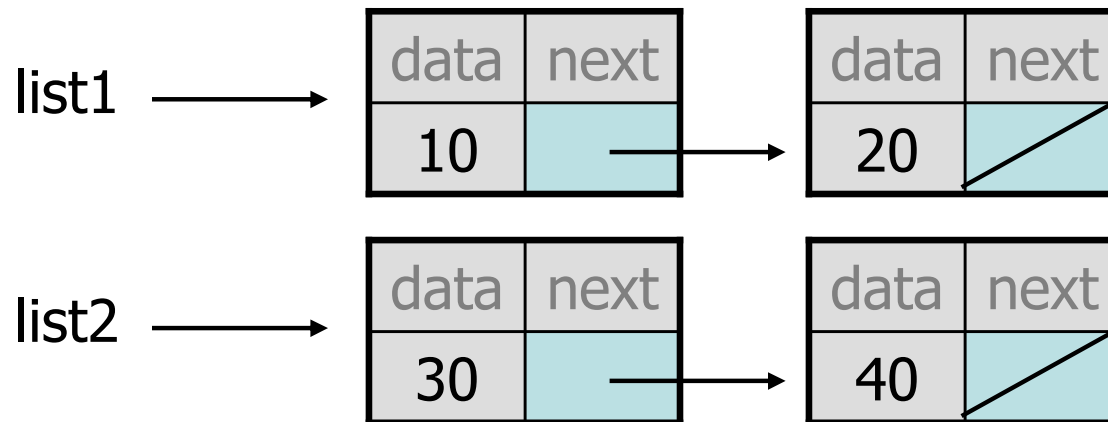
- What set of statements turns this picture:
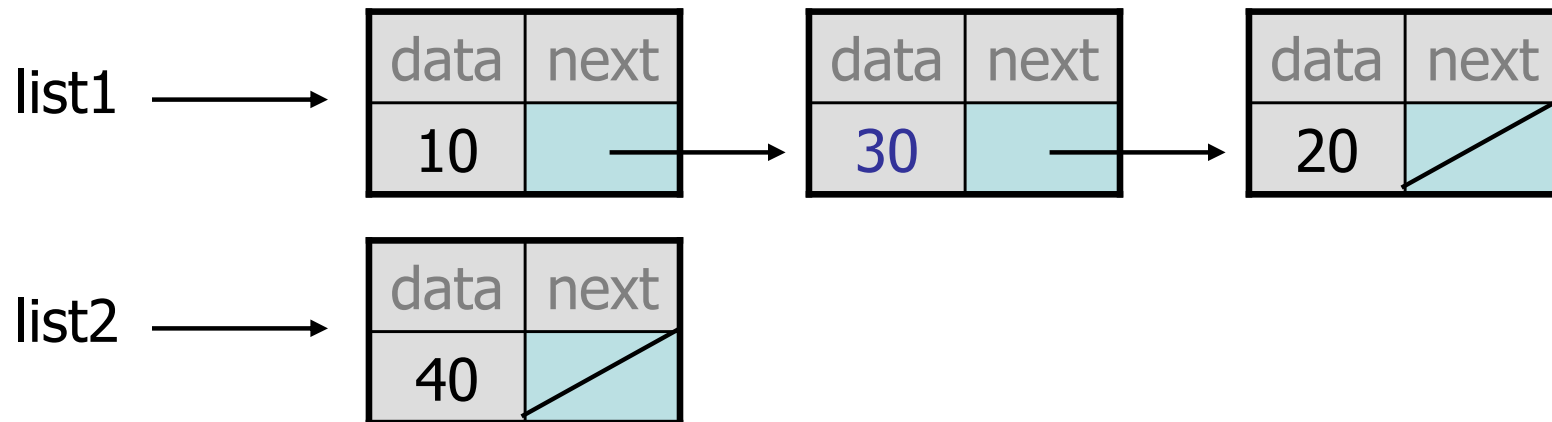

- Into this?

Linked node problem 3
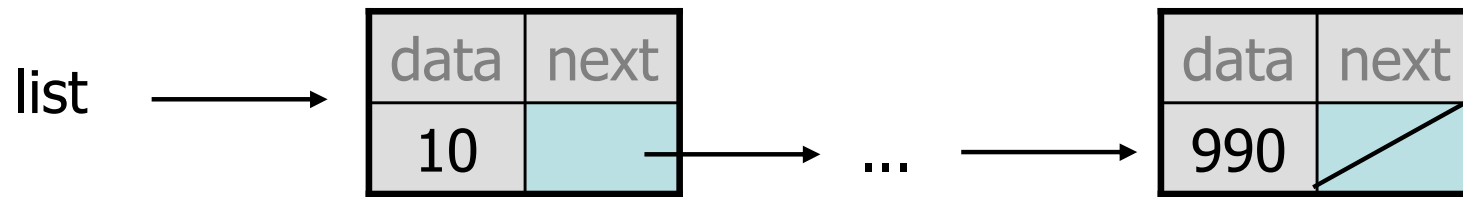
- What set of statements turns this picture:

- Into this?

Linked node problem 4

- What set of statements turns this picture:

- Into this?