

9 Algorithm Design and Problem-solving

– Part 1

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Vocabulary 词汇

Write each word three times. 把每个单词抄写三遍。

English	中文	Write it 3 times (English)
Computational thinking	计算思维	_____
decomposition	分解	_____
abstraction	抽象	_____
algorithm	算法	_____
sequence	顺序	_____
selection	选择	_____
iteration	迭代	_____
flowchart	流程图	_____
pseudocode	伪代码	_____
variable	变量	_____

Recall

You have solved problems step by step before. Bring this with you:

- A clear set of steps can be followed by someone else to get the same result.
- You have read simple flowcharts.

At AS we learn to think like a computer scientist and to write algorithms carefully — the planning that comes before any code.

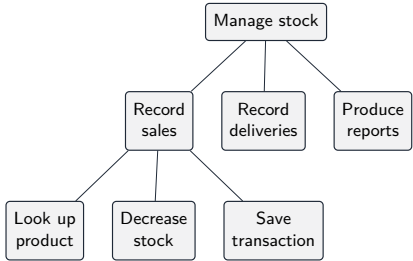
New ideas

Read these first. Each idea has a short worked example. Then do the Practice.

■ 1 Computational thinking

Computational thinking 计算思维 means solving a problem in a clear, step-by-step way that a computer could follow. Two key skills:

- **decomposition** 分解: break a big problem into smaller, easier parts;
- **abstraction** 抽象: keep only the details that matter and ignore the rest.



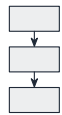
Worked example. To build a quiz app, decomposition splits it into “ask a question”, “check the answer” and “keep the score”; abstraction ignores the screen colour and font, which do not affect how it works.

■ 2 Algorithms and the three building blocks

An **algorithm** 算法 is a set of clear, ordered steps that always finishes. Every algorithm is built from just three structures:

- **sequence** 顺序: steps done in order;
- **selection** 选择: choose between paths with IF;
- **iteration** 迭代: repeat steps with a loop.

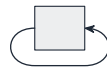
sequence



selection



iteration

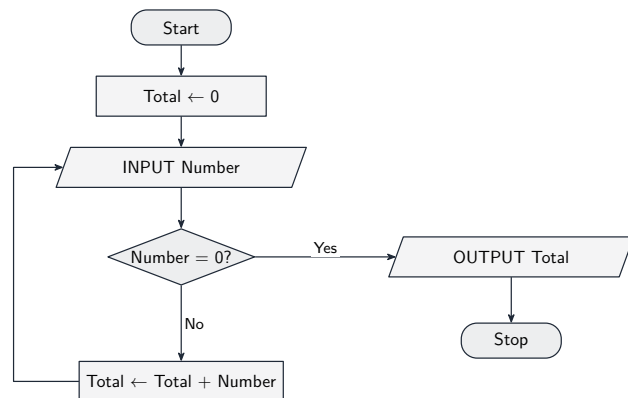


Worked example. “Keep asking for a password until it is correct” uses all three: read the input (sequence), check it (selection), and repeat while it is wrong (iteration).

Watch out: an algorithm must always *finish*. A loop needs a condition that eventually becomes false — or it runs forever.

■ 3 Writing it down

We plan an algorithm as a **flowchart** 流程图 or in **pseudocode** 伪代码 (code-like English).



Pseudocode stores values in a **variable** 变量:

```

INPUT age
IF age >= 18 THEN
    OUTPUT "adult"
ELSE
    OUTPUT "minor"
ENDIF
  
```

Worked example. If `age` is 20, the test `age >= 18` is true, so this outputs “adult”.

Practice

9.1 Explain what decomposition means.

[1]

9.2 Explain what abstraction means.

[1]

9.3 State which building block an IF ... ELSE statement is.

[1]

9.4 Name the three building blocks of any algorithm.

[3]

9.5 Write pseudocode that inputs two numbers and outputs their sum.

[3]

9.6 Explain why breaking a large program into smaller parts (decomposition) makes it easier to write and test.

[2]

9.7 Challenge. Write pseudocode that keeps inputting numbers until a 0 is entered, then outputs their total.

[3]