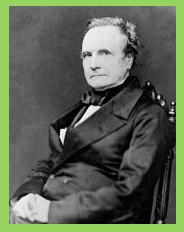
Digital Humanities
Lecture 2
February 24
2025
Mario Verdicchio

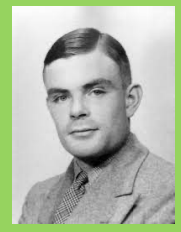
CHAP. 1 - 4

VERDICCHIO M., ***L'INFORMATICA PER LA COMUNICAZIONE***, FRANCO ANGELI, MILANO, 2023 (TERZA EDIZIONE)

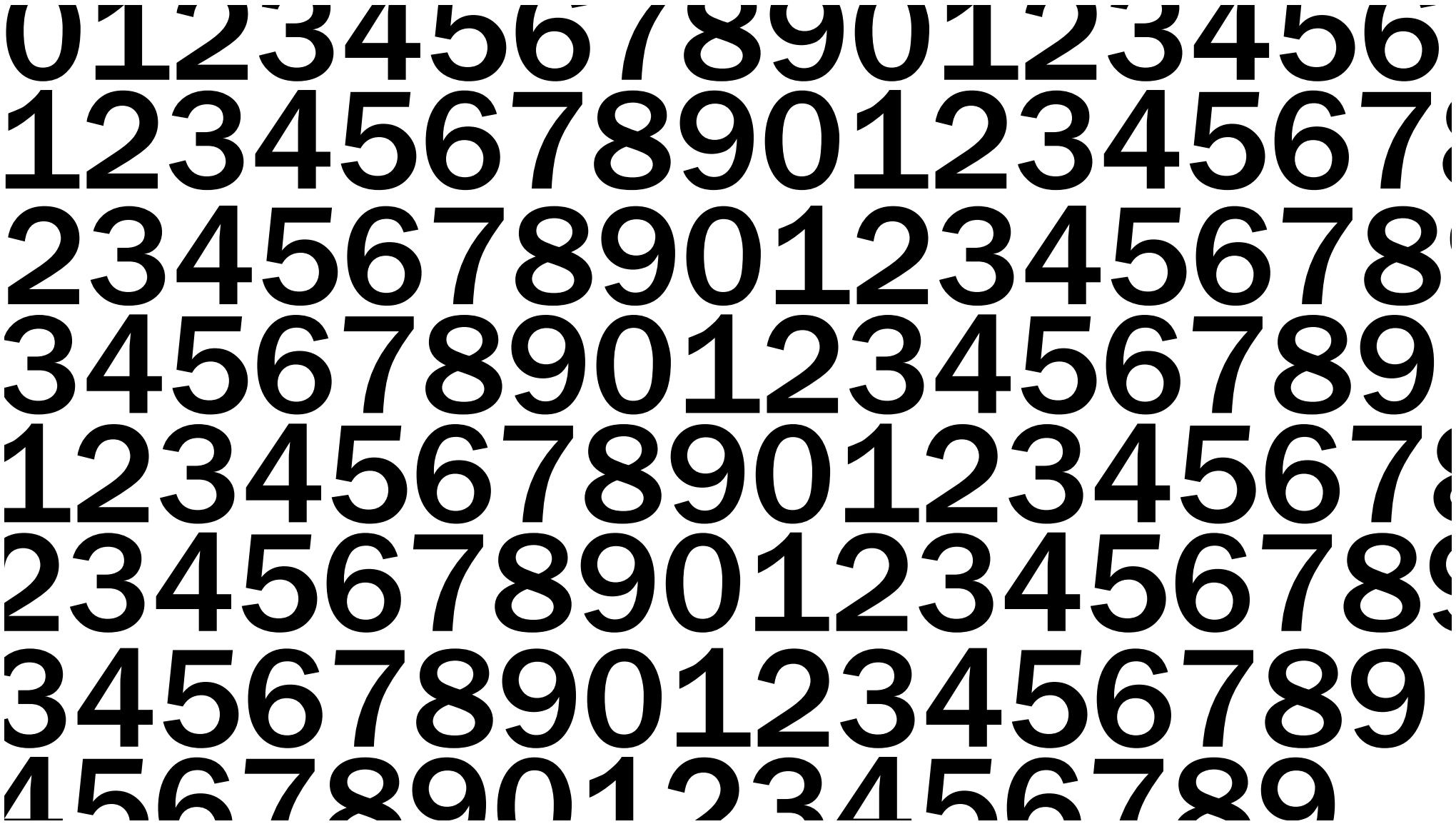
1 - 4

COMPUTATION





Digital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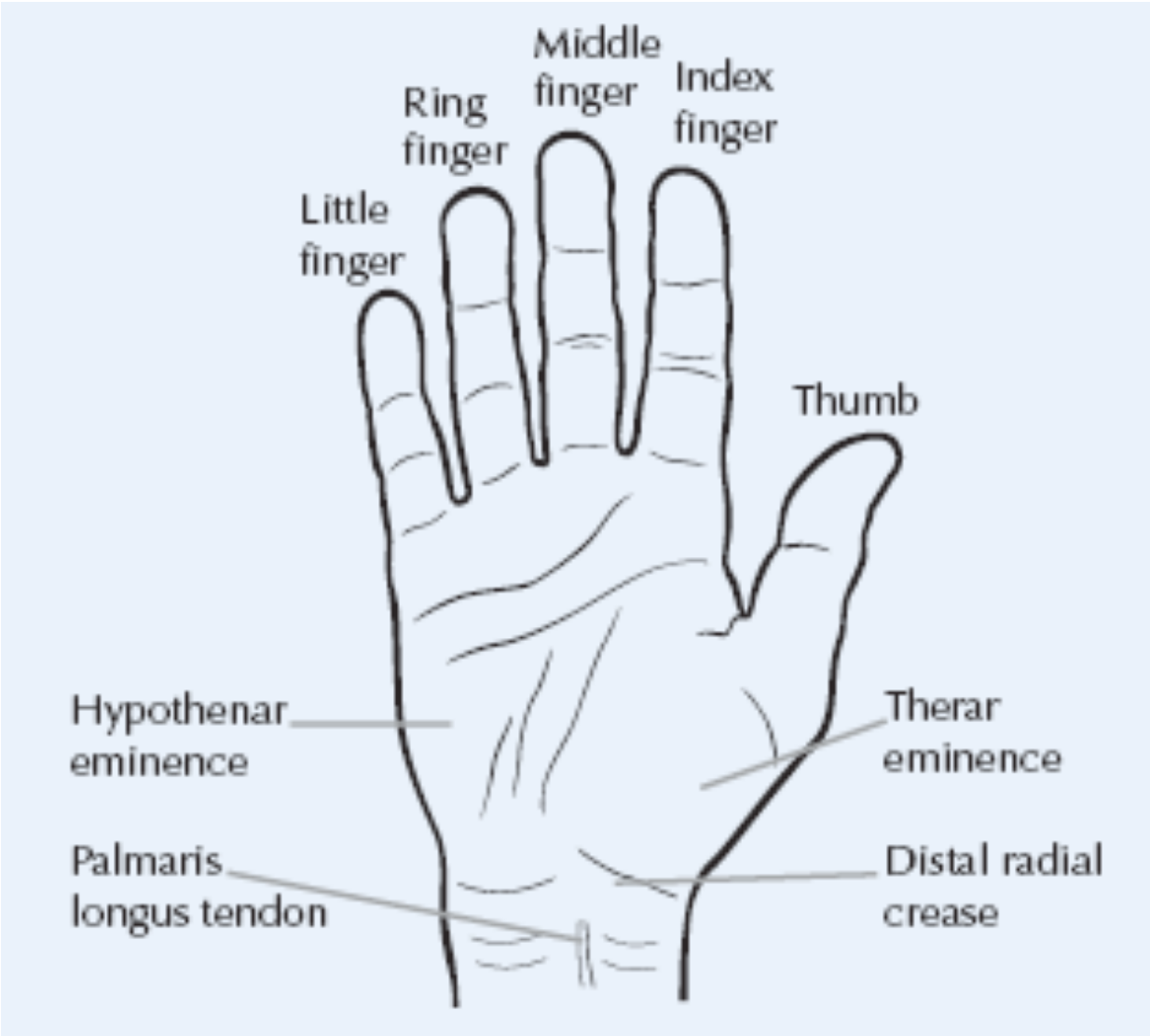

Middle finger
Index finger
Ring finger
Little finger
Thumb
Hypothenar eminence
Therar eminence
Palmaris longus tendon
Distal radial crease

3

4

5

5

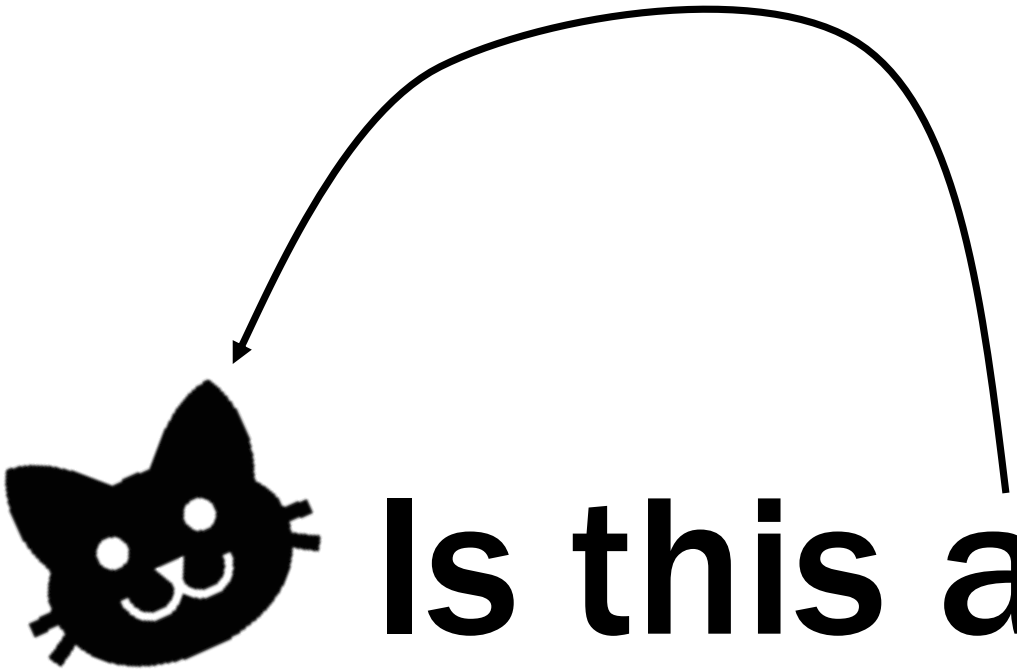
5

5

Digital

Humanities

WAIT!



Is this a cat?

Is this a cat?

Ceci n'est pas une pipe.

“The Treachery of Images” oil on canvas by René Magritte, 1929
Ceci n'est pas une pipe.

Ceci n'est pas une pipe.
Is this a pipe?

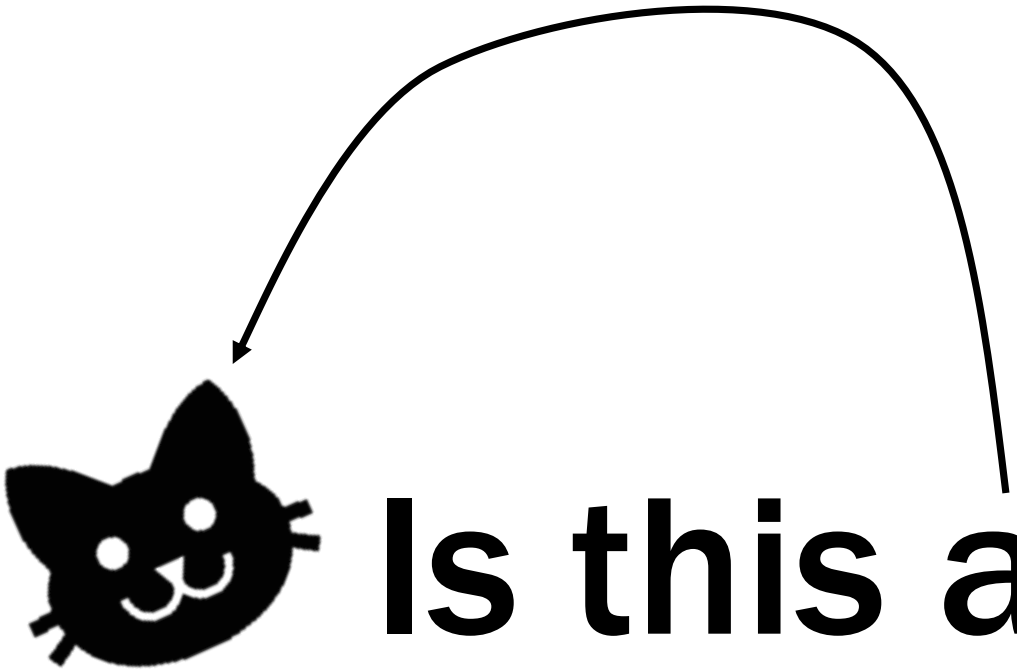
Is this a Swatch?

Ceci n'est pas une pipe
WAIT!

Ceci n'est pas une pipe.

THIS IS NOT A TEXT

“The impossibility of a treachery of texts” ~~oil on canvas~~ by me, today.



Is this a cat?

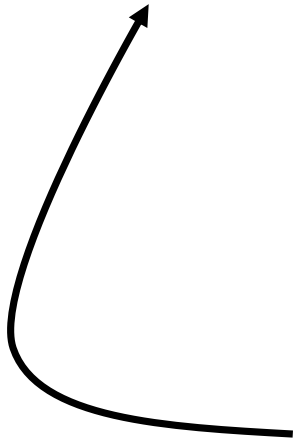
NO!
IT'S AN ICON!

Is this a cat?

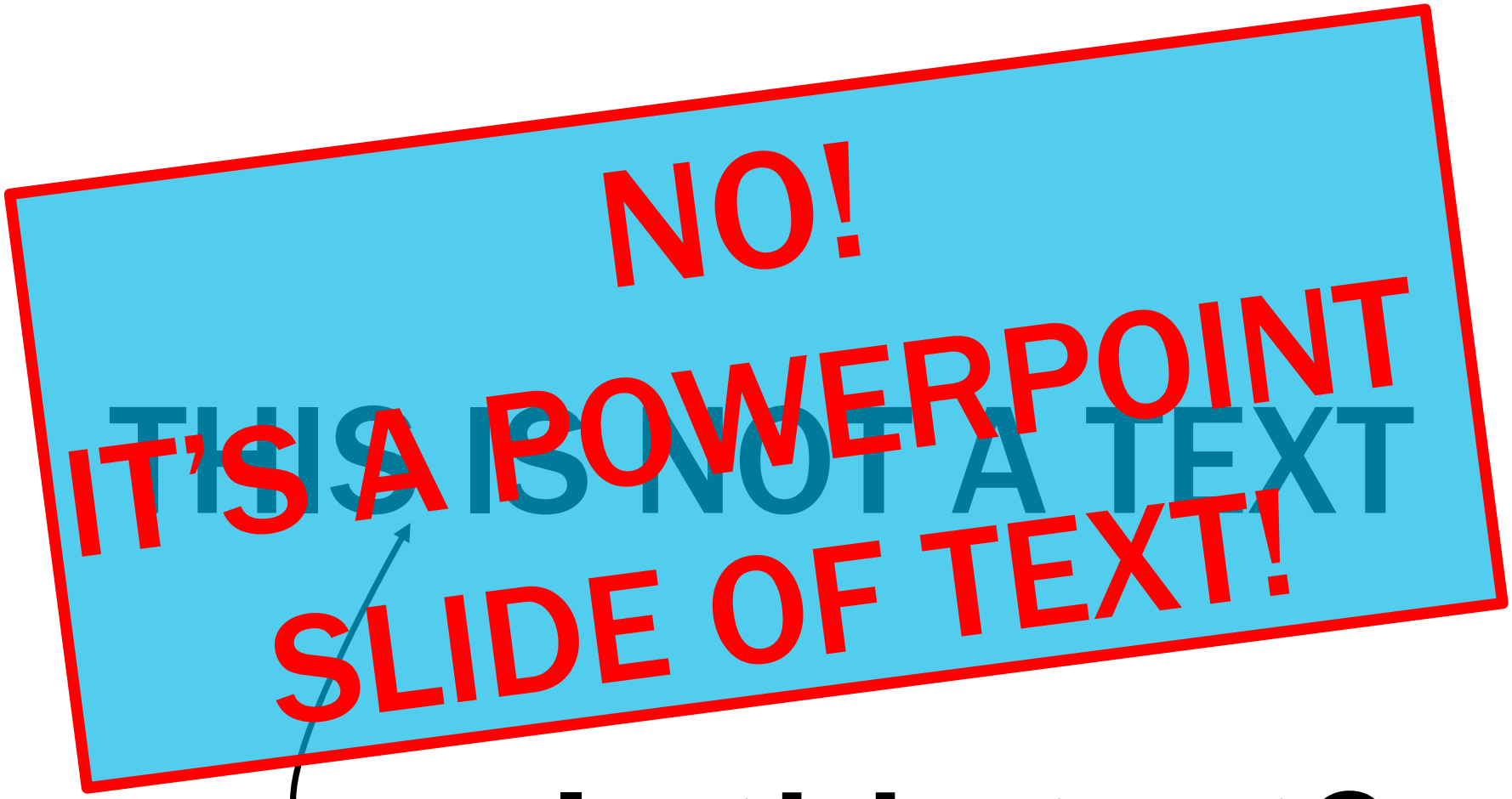
Is this a cat?

Is this a cat?

THIS IS NOT A TEXT



Is this text?



Is this text?

NO!
IT'S POWERPOINT
THIS IS NOT A TEXT
SLIDE OF TEXT!
BUT... YOU CAN
STILL READ IT!

Is this text?

DIGITAL IMAGE OF A CAT

👍 very cute

👍 doesn’t poop

👍 doesn’t need food

👎 cannot cuddle

DIGITAL TEXT

THIS IS NOT A TEXT

DIGITAL TEXT

THIS IS NOT A TEXT

👍 you can read it

THIS IS TEXT

What is the difference?

Physical cats
exist.
On the left,
a physical cat is
depicted.
A depiction of a cat
is not a cat.

Does physical text exist? Whether it exists or not, on the right

THIS IS TEXT

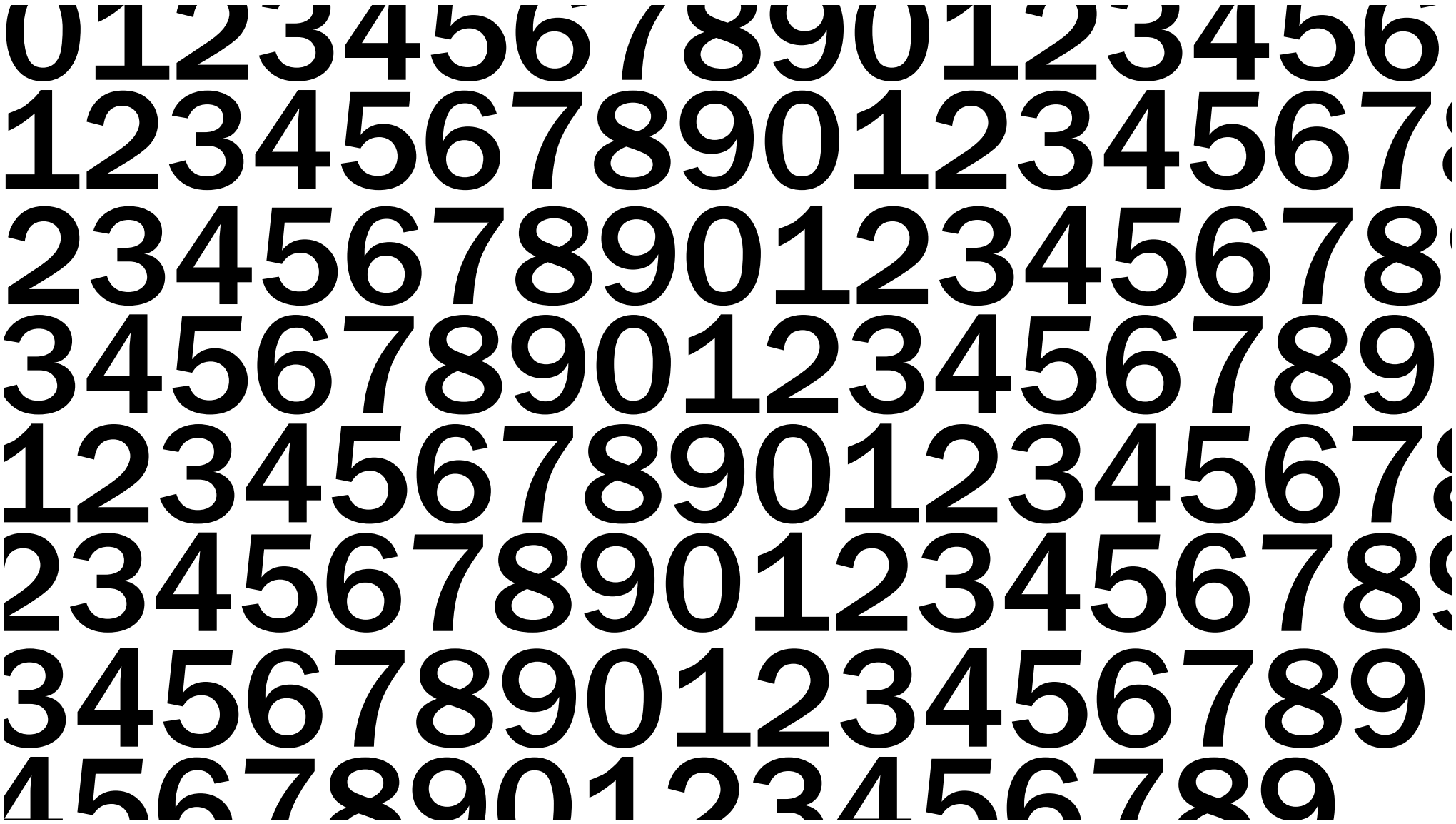
is a depiction of text. A depiction of text is also text.

“Love” sculpture by Robert Indiana, 1970

“Love” US postage stamp design by Robert Indiana, 1973

THIS
IS
TEXT

SIGNS
PEOPLE
AGREE
ON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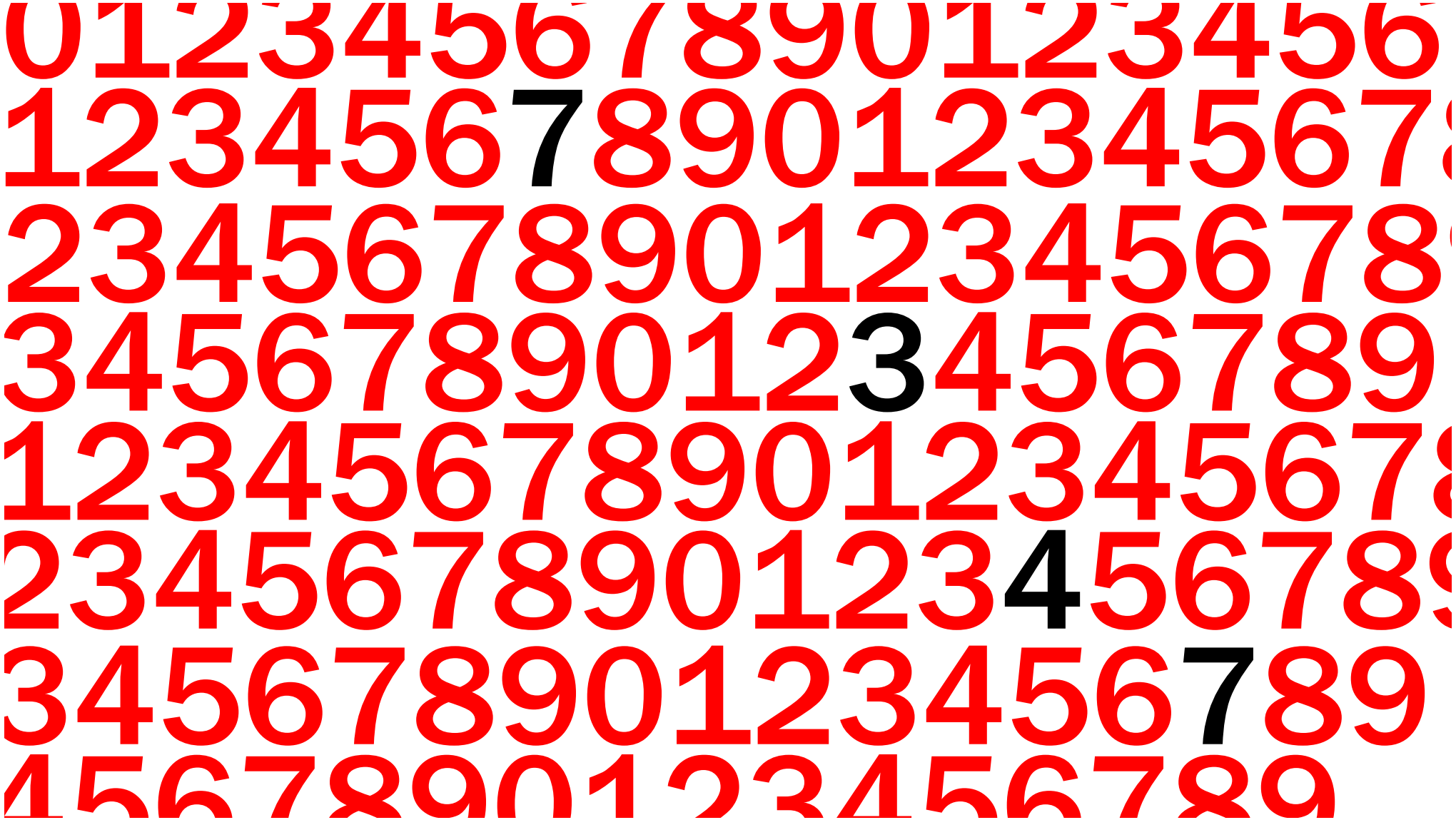
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TEXT

ANALYSIS
ANNOTATION
CONVERSION
EDITING
ENCODING
MINING
PROCESSING
RECOGNITION
TRANSCRIPTION
VISUALIZATION

TEXT

ANALYSIS
ANNOTATION
CONVERSION
EDITING
ENCODING
MINING
PROCESSING
RECOGNITION
TRANSCRIPTION
VISUALIZATION

ENCODING
is
EVERYTHING*

ENCODING
is
EVERYTHING*

*in digital technology

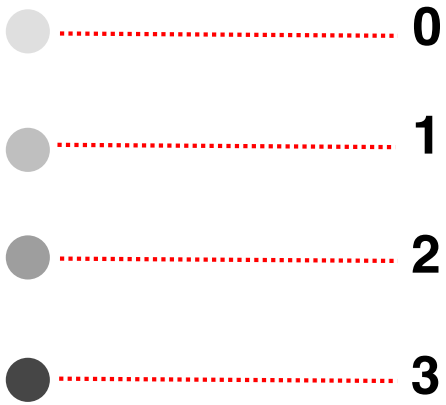
ENCODING [ɪnˈkəʊdɪŋ]: biunivocal correspondence between a set of entities of any kind and a set of natural numbers.

biunivocal correspondence

between a set of entities of any kind

and a set of natural numbers.

ENCODING



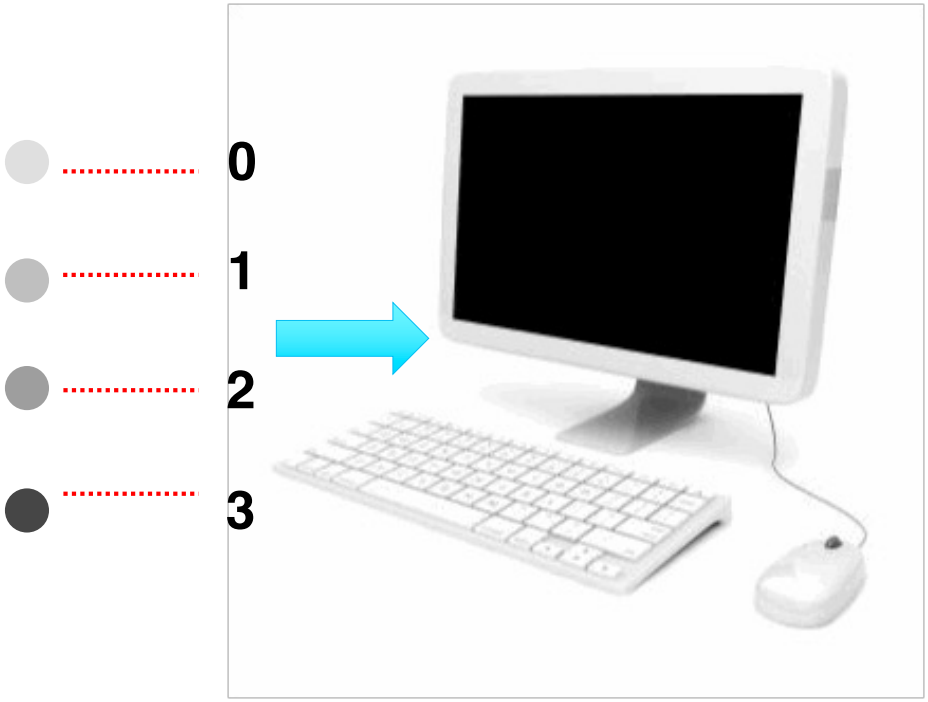
That's all Folks! *

***from a conceptual perspective**

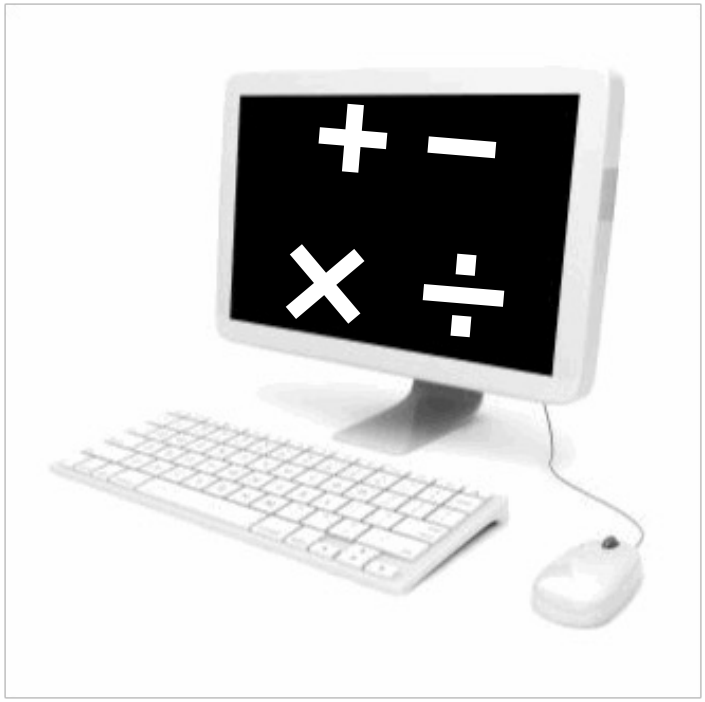
A computer.

It only works with numbers.

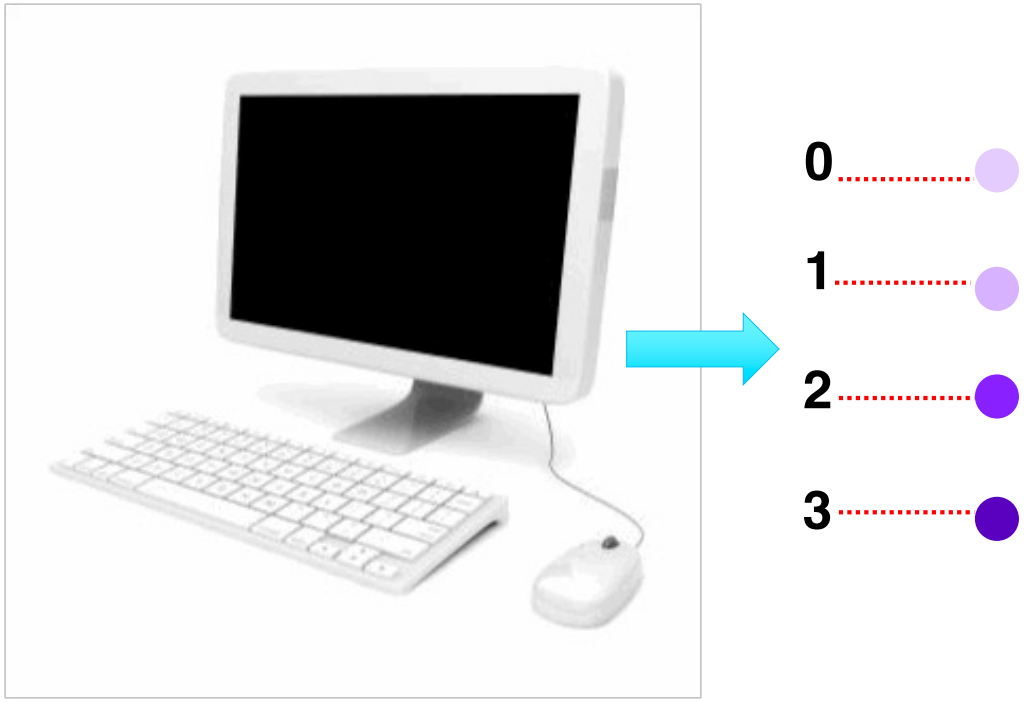
It cannot work with anything else.



Input needs to be ENCODED.



The computer works.

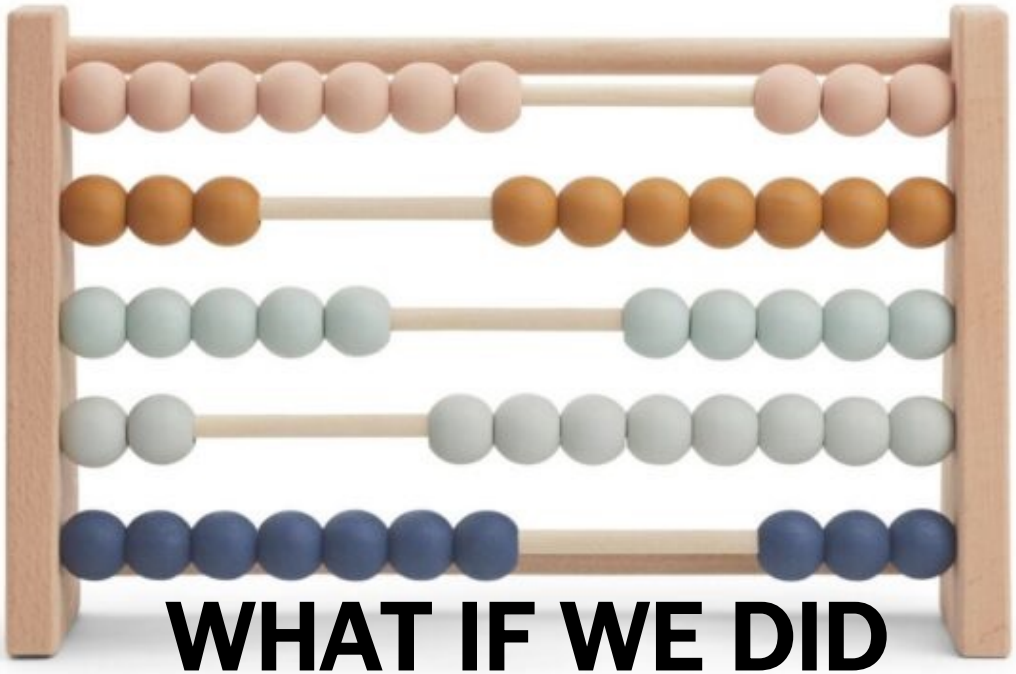


Output needs to be DECODED.

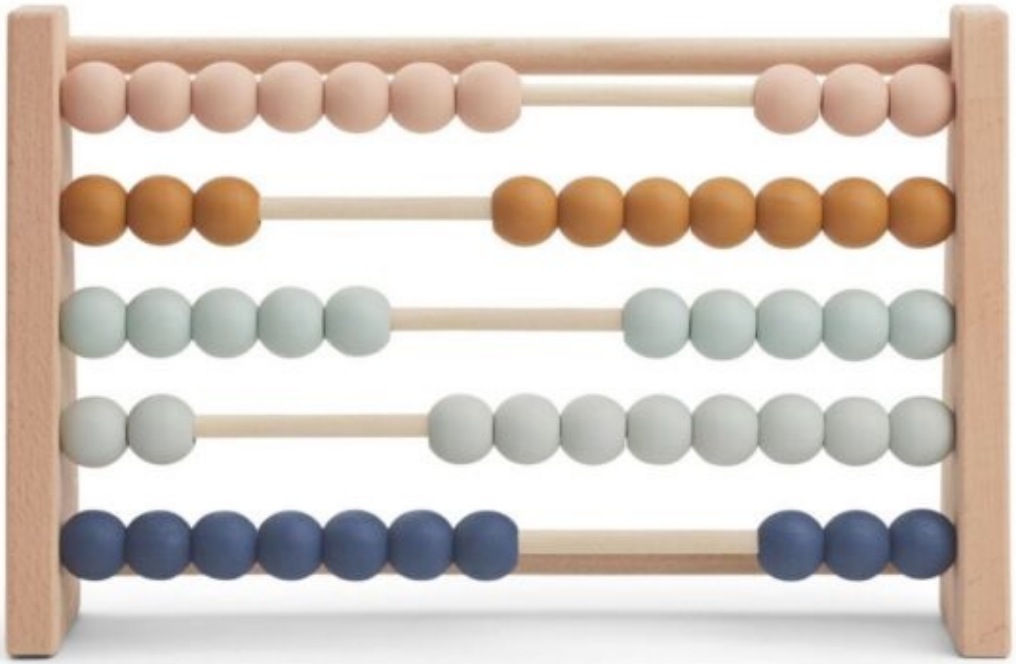
COMPUTER SCIENCE

WAIT!

THIS IS HOW DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY WORKS

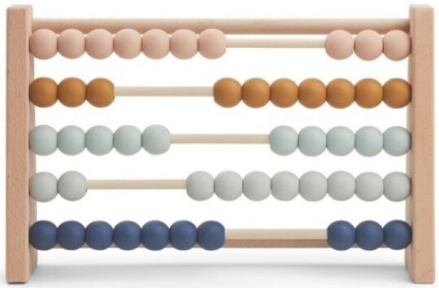


WHAT IF WE DID COMPUTATION ON AN ABACUS?

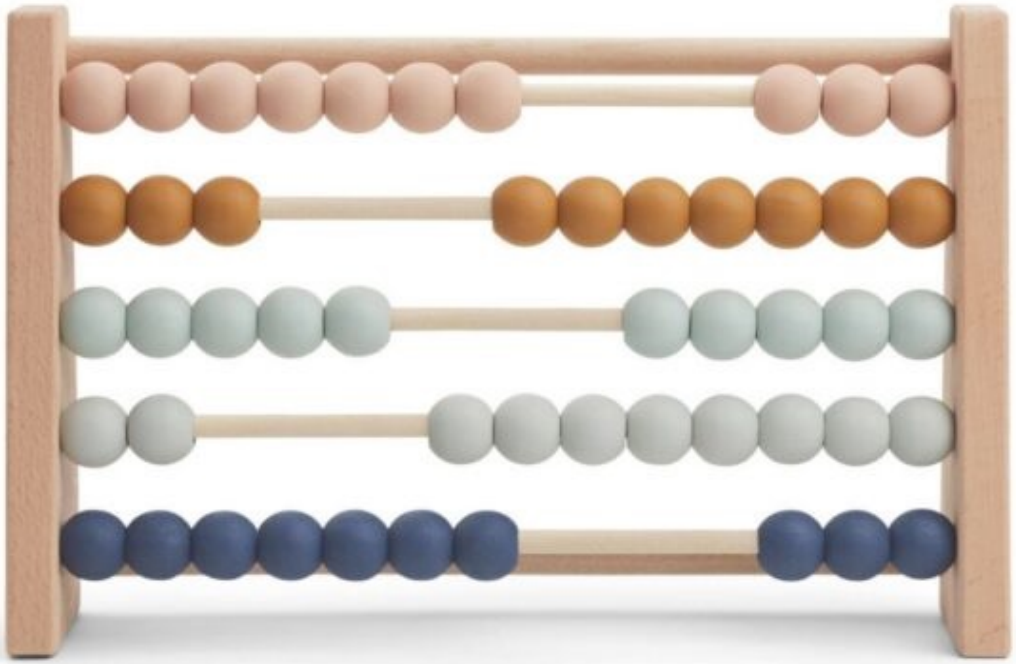


ABACUS:
THE OTHER ANALOG COMPUTER

FINGERS:
THE FIRST ANALOG COMPUTER

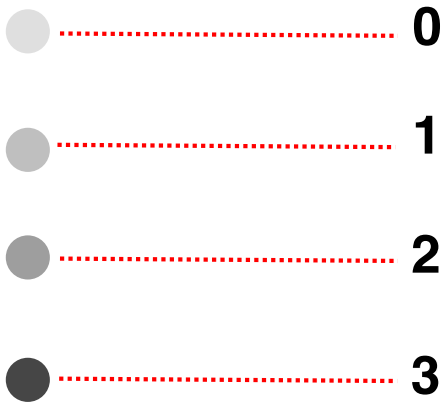


VS.

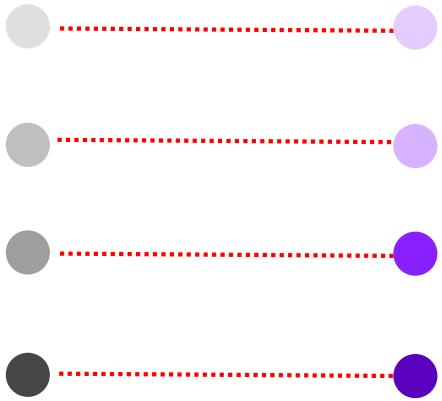


WHAT IF WE DID COMPUTING ON ABACUSES? (ABACI?)

ENCODING?

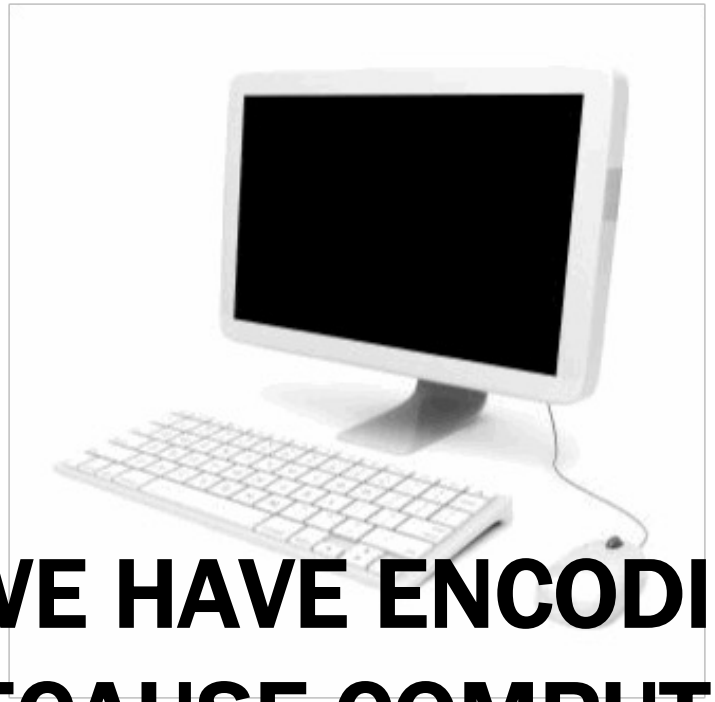


~~ENCODING?~~



~~ENCODING?~~

WE HAVE ENCODING BECAUSE COMPUTERS ARE DIGITAL



WE HAVE ENCODING
BECAUSE COMPUTERS
HAPPEN TO BE DIGITAL