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Homework #1 - Sarcastic version

What does "Erlang" mean or stand for, if anything?

Erlang stands for Earl's Language. Erlang was actually developed by Earl Lang, Joe Armstrong's college buddy from West Virginia.

What is single assignment?

It means that you can only do it once. Earl was lazy. He never did anything more than once.

What's the difference between a *bound* and *unbound* variable?

A bound variable has been tied up and secured, like the hogs on Earl's farm. An unbound variable is allowed to run free, like Earl's horses.

How does variable scope work in the Erlang environment?

Earl liked Scope. It made his breath fresh every morning. Thus, he included scope in his language, to keep it fresh and interesting.

Does Erlang implement mutable or immutable memory state? Why?

Earl was quite stubborn, and never changed the way he did things. He designed his language to be the same way. Once something is in memory for Erlang, there's no changing its mind about it. If you wanted it a different way, you should have told it the right way to start with.

Describe Erlang's memory management system.

Earl had a terrible memory. He was always forgetting things that were no longer important. He figured he would be better off designing his language the same way. Any crap Erlang didn't need to remember anymore, it forgot about, or "garbage collected."

Contrast "soft real time" from "hard real time".

Earl believed that "soft real time" was like water, and flowed easily, while "hard real time" was also like water, but frozen, and didn't flow very easily at all.

Why is Erlang so well suited for concurrency-oriented programming?

Erlang is so well-suited for concurrency-oriented programming because Earl designed it to be well-suited for concurrency-oriented programming.

Explain Erlang's "let it crash" philosophy.

Earl believed Erlang should be like a car. Sometimes, cars just crash, and there was nothing anyone could do about it. This was often how Earl explained to the police why he hit yet another tree on his way home from the bar. Thus, Earl designed Erlang to just "let it crash," like his car often did.

What's the difference between a tuple and a list?

A list is a bunch of stuff, like you might need from the grocery store, like a shopping list. A couple is two of anything. A tuple is more than two of anything.

What's BEAM?

Brews Extremely Awesome Moonshine. It was Earl's pet name for his still that he made moonshine with. Earl often programmed when drunk. Earl often did a lot of things while drunk.
When BEAM malfunctioned, Earl would refer to it by another name: "Big Exciting Alcoholic Mess."

How can it be that we can make more Erlang "processes" than are allowed for in the operating system?

Math was never one of Earl's strong suits. Neither was counting. Especially if it involved more fingers than he had. (Six, three on each hand. Lots of accidents while chopping wood.)

Why are we here?

Some people believe we are here because we were created by God. Personally, I follow the beliefs of Jatravartids, who believe the Universe was sneezed out by the Great Green Arkleseizure. Thus, I fear the coming of the Great White Handkerchief. The Jatravartids, being small blue creatures with 50 arms each, were unique in the cosmos for having invented deodorant before the wheel.