

What is

vim?

What is vim?

- It is vi iMproved!
... but what is vi?
- It is a *visual, modal, grammar-driven* text editor.
... what the heck is a nonvisual text editor??!?!?
- Let's take a look at one!
 - ed - The original unix editor.

Example **ed** session

- The **ed** editor was developed in August 1969
 - Same month as Woodstock!
- Ken Thompson was the original author
- Interesting for historical context:
 1. Ken Thompson and Dennis Ritchie created the Unix operating system and the C programming language in ed. Think about that...
 2. Having a visual mode shows you the contents of your file as you are working on it is a MAJOR improvement

```
$ ed
a
This is an example of the ed editor.
You are now adding lines to a buffer.
End mode by a line with a period.
.
w some.txt
130
1p
This is an example of the ed editor.
1,3p
This is an example of the ed editor.
You are now adding lines to a buffer.
End mode by a line with a period.
2d
1,2p
This is an example of the ed editor.
End mode by a line with a period.
q
```

a: append mode

. on its own line
ends append
mode

w <filename>
writes the
contents to the
file

1p prints the
first line

1,3p prints lines
1 through 3

2d deletes the
second line

q quits

What is **vim**?

- **vim (1991)** - A **visual** text editor whose lineage traces back to **ed/ex**, and its direct predecessor **vi (1976)**.
 - Still *very* actively developed today!
- It is a modal / stateful text editor.
 - *normal* mode - editing with a **grammar-driven little language**
 - *insert* mode - your keystrokes are inserting text into the "buffer"
 - *visual* mode - mode allowing selection of text
 - *ex(ed)* mode - a colon : followed by a command is **ed's** language!
- Its little command language has a proper grammar.

What do *grammars* have to do with a *text editor*?

- Text editors you're used to (Eclipse, VSCode) *are not grammar-driven* :(
- With a well-designed **grammar** you can **compose** and express **ideas** that are *impossible to even imagine* in a grammarless world.
 - Like *any language* gaining fluency in a language takes practice.
- **vim**, is a text editor that is *is grammar-driven*!
 - You can do things in vim you don't yet know the language to even imagine!