CS105 Introduction to Information Retrieval

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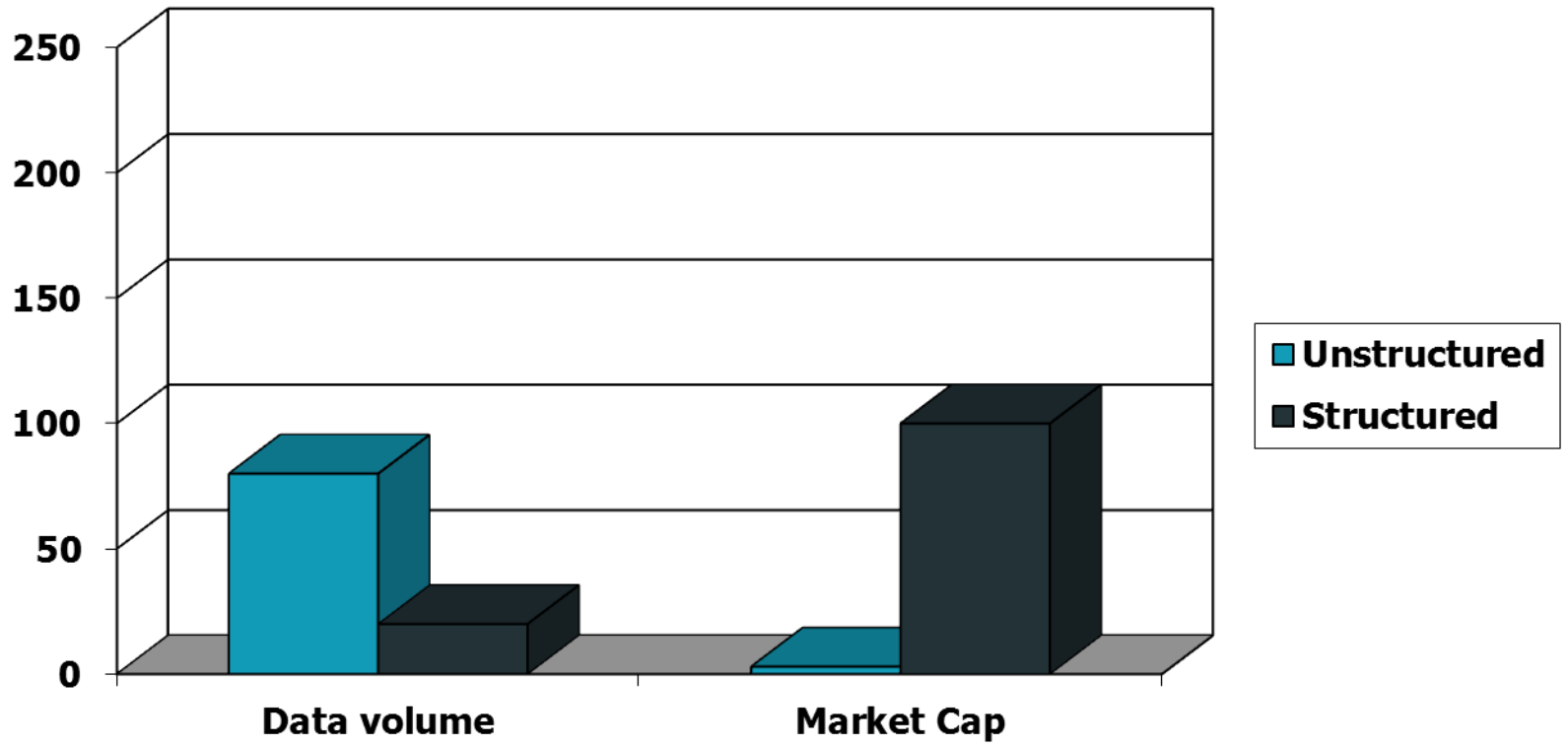
Slides are modified from:
http://www.stanford.edu/class/cs276/

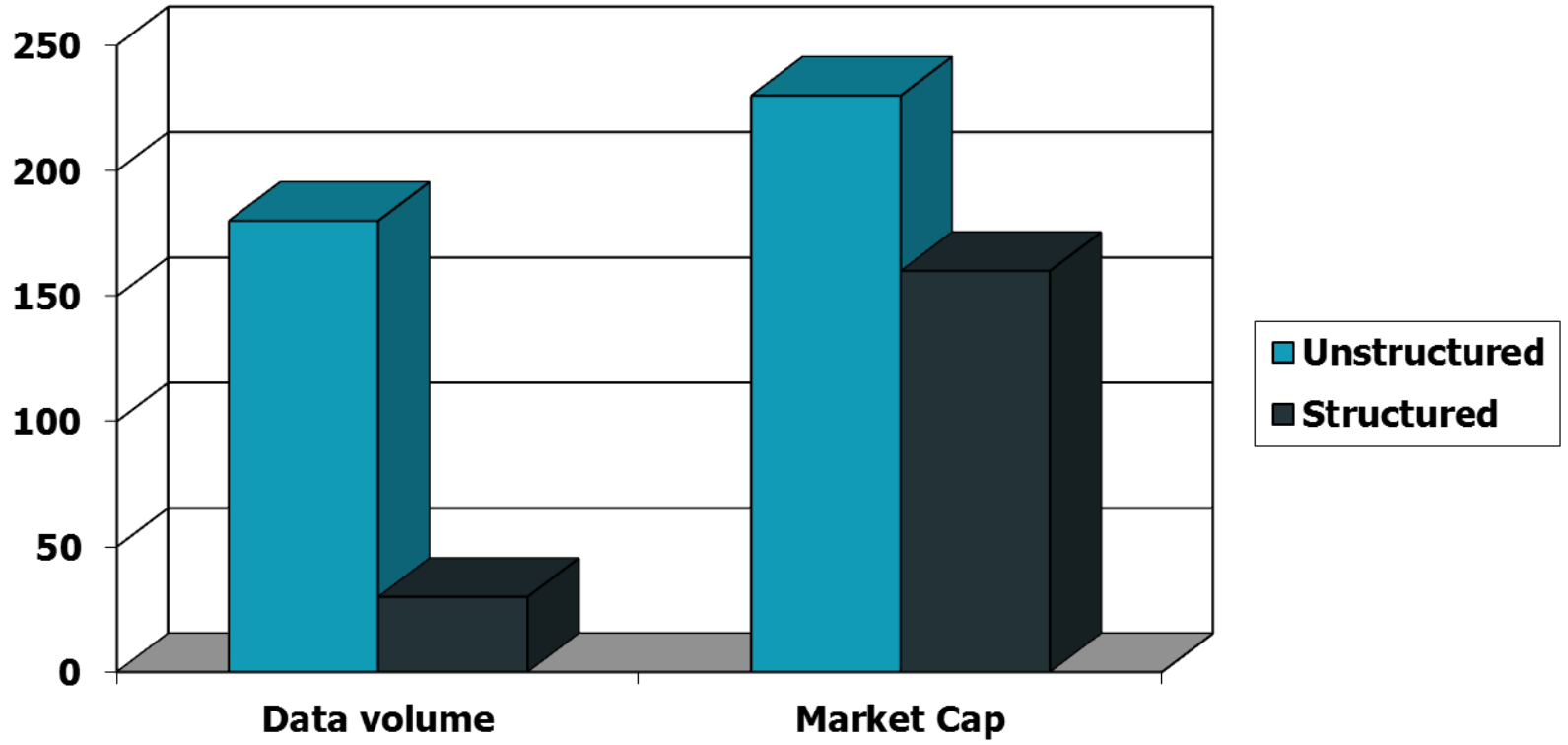
Information Retrieval

- Information Retrieval (IR) is finding material (usually documents) of an unstructured nature (usually text) that satisfies an information need from within large collections (usually stored on computers).
  - These days we frequently think first of web search, but there are many other cases:
    - E-mail search
    - Searching your laptop
    - Corporate knowledge bases
    - Legal information retrieval

Unstructured (text) vs. structured (database) data in the mid-nineties



Unstructured (text) vs. structured (database) data today

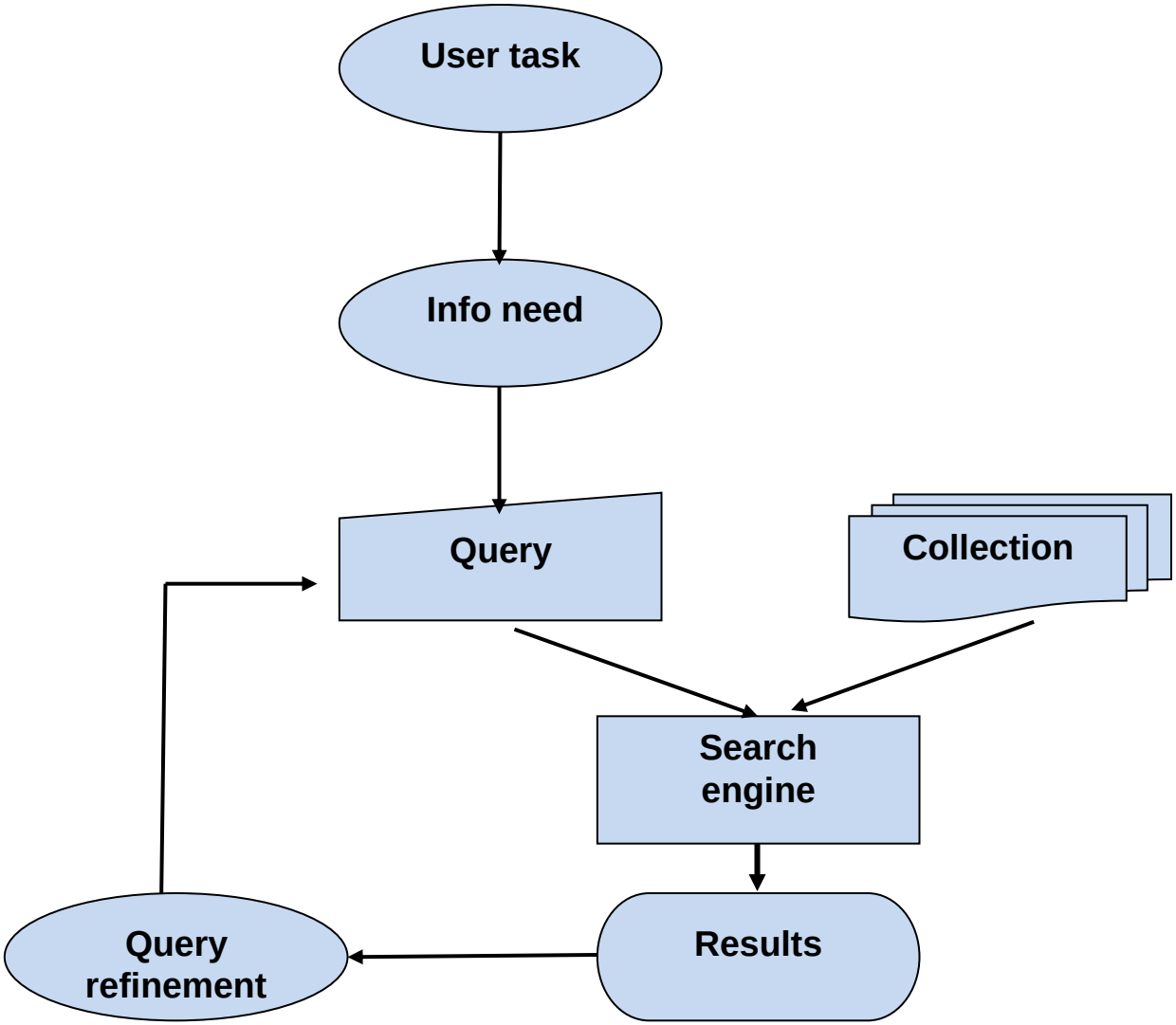


Basic assumptions of Information Retrieval

- Collection: A set of documents
  - Assume it is a static collection for the moment

- Goal: Retrieve documents with information that is relevant to the user's information need and helps the user complete a task

The classic search model



How good are the retrieved docs?

- *Precision* : Fraction of retrieved docs that are relevant to the user's information need
- *Recall* : Fraction of relevant docs in collection that are retrieved

Term-document incidence

Unstructured data in 1620

- Which plays of Shakespeare contain the words ***Brutus*** *AND* ***Caesar*** but *NOT* ***Calpurnia***?
- One could **`get`** all of Shakespeare's plays for ***Brutus*** and ***Caesar,*** then strip out lines containing ***Calpurnia***?
- Why is that not the answer?
  - Slow (for large corpora)
  - *NOT* ***Calpurnia*** is non-trivial
  - Other operations (e.g., find the word ***Romans*** near ***countrymen***) not feasible
  - Ranked retrieval (best documents to return)

Term-document incidence matrices

	Antony and Cleopatra	Julius Caesar	The Tempest	Hamlet	Othello	Macbeth
Antony	1	1	0	0	0	1
Brutus	1	1	0	1	0	0
Caesar	1	1	0	1	1	1
Calpurnia	0	1	0	0	0	0
Cleopatra	1	0	0	0	0	0
mercy	1	0	1	1	1	1
worser	1	0	1	1	1	0

1 if play contains word, 0 otherwise

Brutus** AND **Caesar** BUT NOT **Calpurnia

Bigger collections

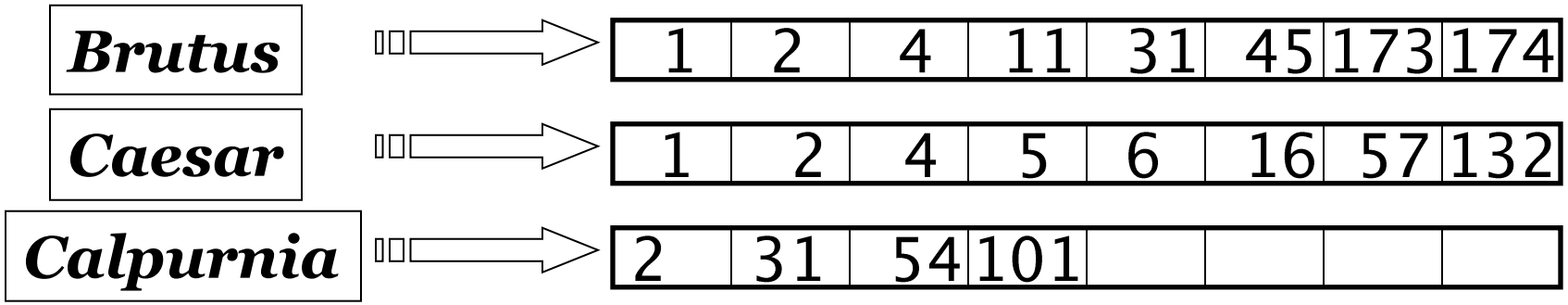
- 500K (distinct words) x 1M (documents) matrix has half-a-trillion 0's and 1's.
- But it has no more than one billion 1's.
  - matrix is extremely sparse.
- What's a better representation?
  - We only record the 1 positions.

Inverted Index

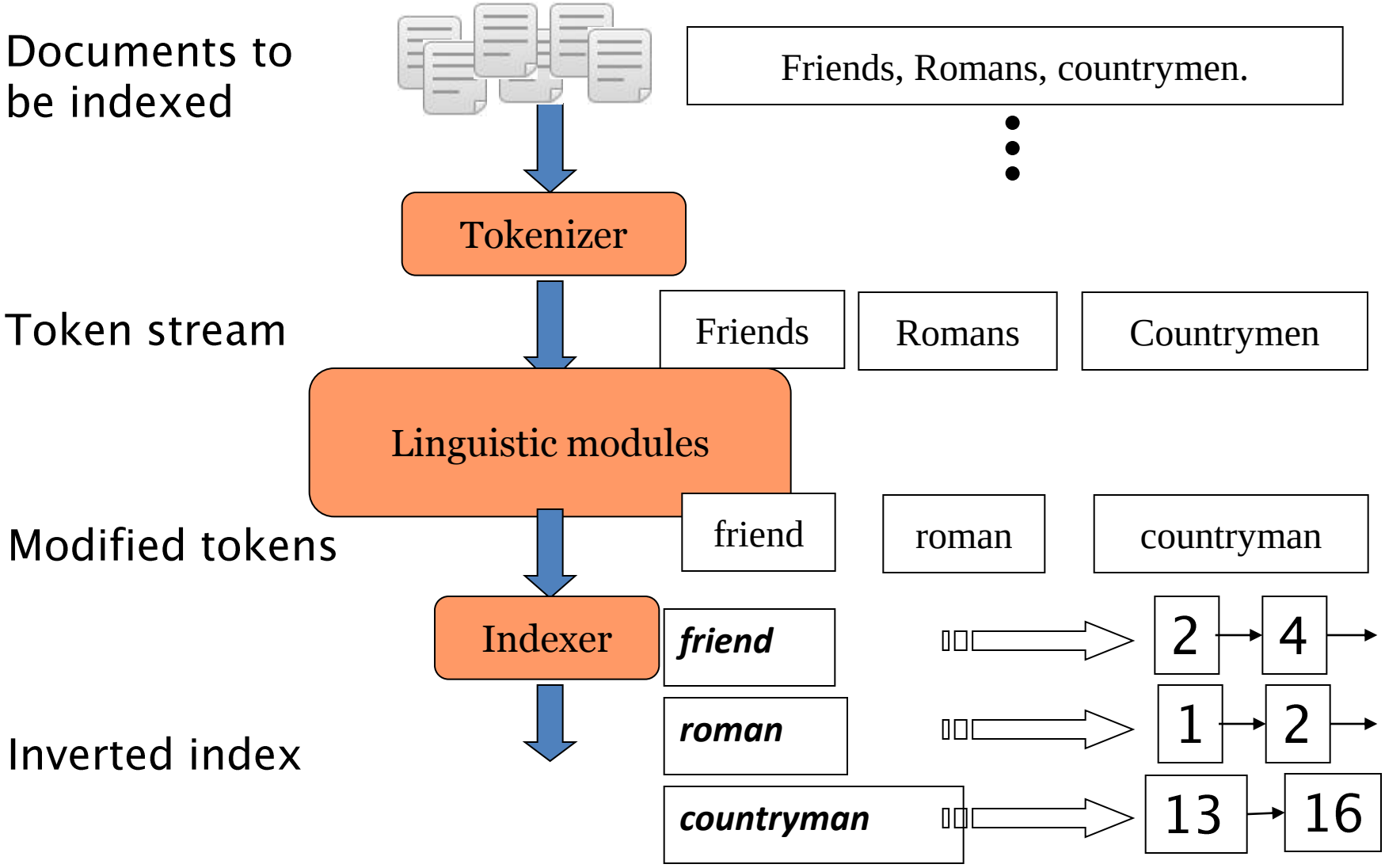
The key data structure underlying modern IR

Inverted index

- For each term *t*, we must store a list of all documents that contain *t*.
  - Identify each doc by a **docID**, a document serial number



Inverted index construction



Initial stages of text processing

- Tokenization
  - Cut character sequence into word tokens
    - Deal with ***"John's"***, ***a state-of-the-art solution***
- Normalization
  - Map text and query term to same form
    - You want ***U.S.A.*** and ***USA*** to match
- Stemming
  - We may wish different forms of a root to match
    - ***authorize***, ***authorization***
- Stop words
  - We may omit very common words (or not)
    - ***the, a, to, of***

Indexer steps: Token sequence

- Sequence of (Modified token, Document ID) pairs.

Doc 1

I did enact Julius Caesar I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Doc 2

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus hath told you Caesar was ambitious

Term	docID
I	1
did	1
enact	1
julius	1
caesar	1
I	1
was	1
killed	1
i'	1
the	1
capitol	1
brutus	1
killed	1
me	1
so	2
let	2
it	2
be	2
with	2
caesar	2
the	2
noble	2
brutus	2
hath	2
told	2
you	2
caesar	2
was	2
ambitious	2

Indexer steps: Sort

- Sort by terms
  - And then docID

Core indexing step

Term	docID
I	1
did	1
enact	1
julius	1
caesar	1
I	1
was	1
killed	1
i'	1
the	1
capitol	1
brutus	1
killed	1
me	1
so	2
let	2
it	2
be	2
with	2
caesar	2
the	2
noble	2
brutus	2
hath	2
told	2
you	2
caesar	2
was	2
ambitious	2

Term	docID
ambitious	2
be	2
brutus	1
brutus	2
capitol	1
caesar	1
caesar	2
caesar	2
did	1
enact	1
hath	1
I	1
I	1
i'	1
it	2
julius	1
killed	1
killed	1
let	2
me	1
noble	2
so	2
the	1
the	2
told	2
you	2
was	1
was	2
with	2

Indexer steps: Dictionary & Postings

- Multiple term entries in a single document are merged.
- Split into Dictionary and Postings
- Doc. frequency information is added.

Term	docID
ambitious	2
be	2
brutus	1
brutus	2
capitol	1
caesar	1
caesar	2
caesar	2
did	1
enact	1
hath	1
I	1
I	1
i'	1
it	2
julius	1
killed	1
killed	1
let	2
me	1
noble	2
so	2
the	1
the	2
told	2
you	2
was	1
was	2
with	2

term	doc. freq.	→	postings lists
ambitious	1	→	2
be	1	→	2
brutus	2	→	1 → 2
capitol	1	→	1
caesar	2	→	1 → 2
did	1	→	1
enact	1	→	1
hath	1	→	2
i	1	→	1
i'	1	→	1
it	1	→	2
julius	1	→	1
killed	1	→	1
let	1	→	2
me	1	→	1
noble	1	→	2
so	1	→	2
the	2	→	1 → 2
told	1	→	2
you	1	→	2
was	2	→	1 → 2
with	1	→	2

Why frequency?
Will discuss later.

Query processing with an inverted index

The index we just built

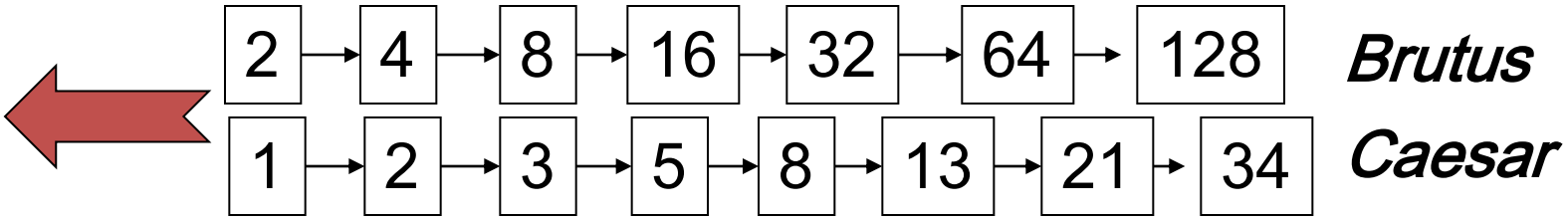
- How do we process a query?
  - Later - what kinds of queries can we process?

Query processing: AND

- Consider processing the query:

  Brutus *AND* ***Caesar***

  – Locate ***Brutus*** in the Dictionary;
    - Retrieve its postings.
  – Locate ***Caesar*** in the Dictionary;
    - Retrieve its postings.
  – "Merge" the two postings (intersect the document sets):



IR System Components

- Text processing forms index words (tokens).
- Indexing constructs an *inverted index* of word to document pointers.
- Searching retrieves documents that contain a given query token from the inverted index.
- Ranking scores all retrieved documents according to a relevance metric.