



**Question 1** (Infinite String Wave Equation). Consider the wave equation on a string of infinite length:

$$\begin{cases} u_{tt} - c^2 u_{xx} = 0 & -\infty < x < \infty, \quad t > 0 \\ u(x, 0) = f(x) \\ u_t(x, 0) = g(x). \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

- (a) [8p] Suppose that  $F : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  and  $G : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  are twice differentiable functions (i.e.  $F'$ ,  $G'$ ,  $F''$  and  $G''$  all exist). Let  $u(x, t) = F(x - ct) + G(x + ct)$ . Show that

$$u_{tt} - c^2 u_{xx} = 0.$$

Since  $u_x = F'(x-ct) + G'(x+ct)$ ,  $u_{xx} = F''(x-ct) + G''(x+ct)$ ,  $u_t = -cF'(x-ct) + cG'(x+ct)$  and  $u_{tt} = c^2 F''(x-ct) + c^2 G''(x+ct)$  it follows that

$$u_{tt} - c^2 u_{xx} = c^2 F''(x-ct) + c^2 G''(x+ct) - c^2 (F''(x-ct) + G''(x+ct)) = 0$$

for all  $x, t$ .

- (b) [8p] Use the initial conditions to express  $f$  and  $g$  in terms of  $F$  and  $G$ .

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= u(x, 0) = F(x) + G(x), \\ g(x) &= u_t(x, 0) = -cF'(x) + cG'(x). \end{aligned}$$

- (c) [8p] Use your answer to part (b) to show that

$$\frac{1}{c} \int_0^x g(z) dz = -F(x) + G(x).$$

[HINT: You may assume that  $F(0) = G(0)$ ]

Integrating the second equation from (b), we get

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{c} \int_0^x g(z) dz &= \frac{1}{c} \int_0^x (-cF'(z) + cG'(z)) dz = \int_0^x -F'(z) + G'(z) dz \\ &= -F(x) + F(0) + G(x) - G(0) = -F(x) + G(x) \end{aligned}$$

by the hint.

- (d) [9p] Show that

$$F(x) = \frac{1}{2}f(x) - \frac{1}{2c} \int_0^x g(z) dz.$$

By (b) and (c), we have

$$\frac{1}{2}f(x) - \frac{1}{2c} \int_0^x g(z) dz = \frac{1}{2}(F(x) + G(x)) - \frac{1}{2}(-F(x) + G(x)) = F(x).$$

- (e) [9p] Show that

$$G(x) = \frac{1}{2}f(x) + \frac{1}{2c} \int_0^x g(z) dz.$$

Similarly

$$\frac{1}{2}f(x) + \frac{1}{2c} \int_0^x g(z) dz = \frac{1}{2}(F(x) + G(x)) + \frac{1}{2}(-F(x) + G(x)) = G(x).$$

(f) [8p] Finally, show that

$$u(x, t) = \frac{f(x - ct) + f(x + ct)}{2} + \frac{1}{2c} \int_{x-ct}^{x+ct} g(z) dz.$$

This is called *d'Alembert's solution* to (1).

By (a), (d) and (e), it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} u(x, t) &= F(x - ct) + G(x + ct) \\ &= \frac{1}{2}f(x - ct) - \frac{1}{2c} \int_0^{x-ct} g(z) dz + \frac{1}{2}f(x + ct) + \frac{1}{2c} \int_0^{x+ct} g(z) dz \\ &= \frac{f(x - ct) + f(x + ct)}{2} + \frac{1}{2c} \int_{x-ct}^{x+ct} g(z) dz. \end{aligned}$$

**Question 2** (Characteristics). Consider the PDE

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} + 2u \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} = 0 \tag{2}$$

with the initial condition

$$u(x, 0) = \begin{cases} 1 & x < 2 \\ 3 & x > 2. \end{cases} \tag{3}$$

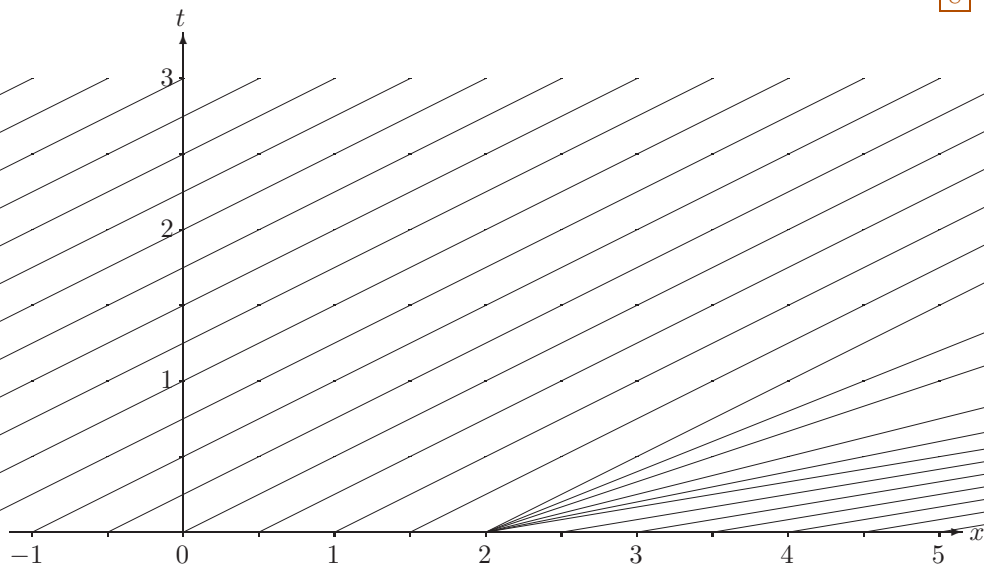
(a) [6p] Replace (2) by a system of 2 ODEs

$$\frac{du}{dt} = 0, \quad \frac{dx}{dt} = 2u$$

(b) [12p] Plot the characteristics ( $t$  against  $x$ ) for this problem.

The solution of  $u' = 0$  is  $u(x, t) = u(x(0), 0)$ , and the solution of  $x' = 2u(x(0), 0)$  is  $x(t) = x(0) + 2u(x(0), 0)t$ . Thus  $x(t) = x(0) + 2t$  or  $x(t) = x(0) + 6t$  depending on  $x(0)$ . I expect to see fan-like characteristics emanating from  $x(0) = 2$ . 4

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(c) [2p] Does this problem have *fan-like characteristics*, *shock wave characteristics*, *neither* or *both*?

[Mark  only one box.]

fan-like characteristics     shock wave characteristics     neither     both

(d) [18p] Solve

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} + 2u \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} = 0$$

subject to

$$u(x, 0) = \begin{cases} 1 & x < 2 \\ 3 & x > 2. \end{cases}$$

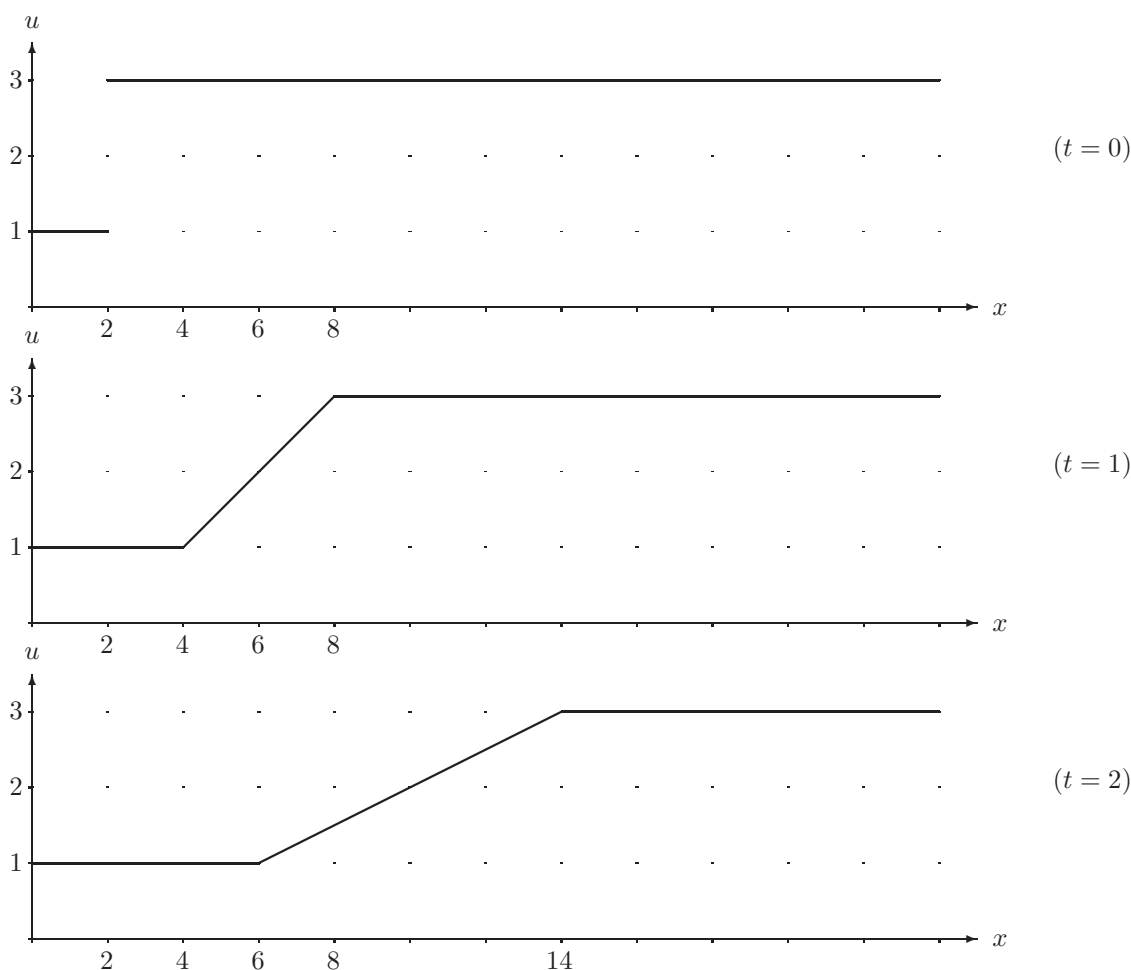
As above,  $u(x, t) = u(x(0), 0)$  and  $x(t) = x(0) + 2u(x(0), 0)t$ . Therefore

$$u(x, t) = \begin{cases} 1 & x < 2 + 2t \\ ??? & 2 + 2t < x < 2 + 6t \\ 3 & x > 2 + 6t. \end{cases}$$

For the middle interval, we use the equation  $x = x(0) + 2ut$  with  $x(0) = 2$  to calculate that  $u = \frac{x-2}{2t}$ . Therefore

$$u(x, t) = \begin{cases} 1 & x < 2 + 2t \\ \frac{x-2}{2t} & 2 + 2t < x < 2 + 6t \\ 3 & x > 2 + 6t. \end{cases}$$

(e) [3 × 4p] Sketch the graph ( $u$  against  $x$ ) of the solution at times  $t = 0$ ,  $t = 1$  and  $t = 2$ .



**Question 3** (General Solution). Consider the second order partial differential equation

$$\frac{1}{4}u_{xx} - \frac{1}{2}u_{xy} + \frac{1}{4}u_{yy} = y - x. \quad (4)$$

(a) [2p] Equation (4) is a

hyperbolic PDE;  parabolic PDE;  elliptic PDE.

(b) [1p] Equation (4) is a

homogeneous PDE;  non-homogeneous PDE.

(c) [1p] Equation (4) is a

linear PDE;  quasilinear PDE;  non-linear (and not quasilinear) PDE.

(d) [20p] Suppose that  $\xi = y - x$  and  $\eta = y + x$ . Show that

$$\frac{1}{4}u_{xx} - \frac{1}{2}u_{xy} + \frac{1}{4}u_{yy} = u_{\xi\xi}.$$

Since  $u_x = u_\xi \xi_x + u_\eta \eta_x = -u_\xi + u_\eta$  and  $u_y = u_\xi \xi_y + u_\eta \eta_y = u_\xi + u_\eta$ , it follows that  
 $u_{xx} = (u_x)_x = (-u_\xi + u_\eta)_x = -u_{\xi\xi} \xi_x - u_{\xi\eta} \eta_x + u_{\eta\xi} \xi_x + u_{\eta\eta} \eta_x = u_{\xi\xi} - 2u_{\xi\eta} + u_{\eta\eta}$ ,  
 $u_{xy} = (u_x)_y = (-u_\xi + u_\eta)_y = -u_{\xi\xi} \xi_y - u_{\xi\eta} \eta_y + u_{\eta\xi} \xi_y + u_{\eta\eta} \eta_y = -u_{\xi\xi} + u_{\eta\eta}$  and  
 $u_{yy} = (u_y)_y = (u_\xi + u_\eta)_y = u_{\xi\xi} \xi_y + u_{\xi\eta} \eta_y + u_{\eta\xi} \xi_y + u_{\eta\eta} \eta_y = u_{\xi\xi} + 2u_{\xi\eta} + u_{\eta\eta}$ .  
 Therefore

$$u_{xx} - 2u_{xy} + u_{yy} = u_{\xi\xi} - 2u_{\xi\eta} + u_{\eta\eta} + 2u_{\xi\xi} - 2u_{\eta\eta} + u_{\xi\xi} + 2u_{\xi\eta} + u_{\eta\eta} = 4u_{\xi\xi}.$$

Dividing by 4 gives the required result. [Alternately, students may use the  $A^*$ ,  $B^*$ , etc. formulae on page 2, if they explain what they are doing.]

(e) [20p] Find the general solution of  $u_{\xi\xi} = \xi$ .

Integrating the equation w.r.t.  $\xi$  gives

$$u_\xi = \int u_{\xi\xi} d\xi = \int \xi d\xi = \frac{1}{2}\xi^2 + F(\eta)$$

for some function  $F$ . Integrating w.r.t.  $\xi$  a second time gives

$$u(\xi, \eta) = \int u_\xi d\xi = \int \left( \frac{1}{2}\xi^2 + F(\eta) \right) d\xi = \frac{1}{6}\xi^3 + F(\eta)\xi + G(\eta)$$

for some function  $G$ .

(f) [6p] Now find the general solution of (4).

By parts (b) and (c), the general solution of the PDE is

$$u(x, y) = \frac{1}{6}(y - x)^3 + (y - x)F(y + x) + G(y + x).$$