Reading assignment 1

**Due date:** On CDF by 13:10, Wednesday 23 September 2015.
*Late write-ups will not be accepted without a valid excuse.*
*This assignment is worth 5% of your final grade.*

**What to read**


**Reading guide:** Read sections 1–2; you can skip sections 3–5. In section 6, look at subsections (1)–(3) and (7)–(9), but don’t use them in your argument; consider subsections (4)–(6) carefully. Look at section 7, and give it some thought, especially from the second paragraph on page 458 (starting “The idea of a learning machine”) through to the end.

**What to write**

Consider the question “Could a machine ever use and understand language the way people do?”, and write a *brief* summary of the arguments on both sides of the question, from your perspective as an adult in 2015 of the common era. How could we resolve the question?

**Some points to consider:**

- Turing was asking a related but different question: “Could a machine think?”.
- A lot has been learned since 1950 about what machines can and can’t do. The research fields of artificial intelligence and machine learning have had many successes and failures.

**General requirements:** Your write-up should be typed, using 12-point font and 1.5-line spacing; it should fit on one side of a piece of paper. Submit one copy before the beginning of class, and keep a copy available for yourself, e.g., on your Android or Windows tablet, to use during the class discussion.