Introduction to Computer Graphics with WebGL

Ed Angel

Professor Emeritus of Computer Science

Founding Director, Arts, Research, Technology and Science Laboratory

University of New Mexico

Models and Architectures

Objectives

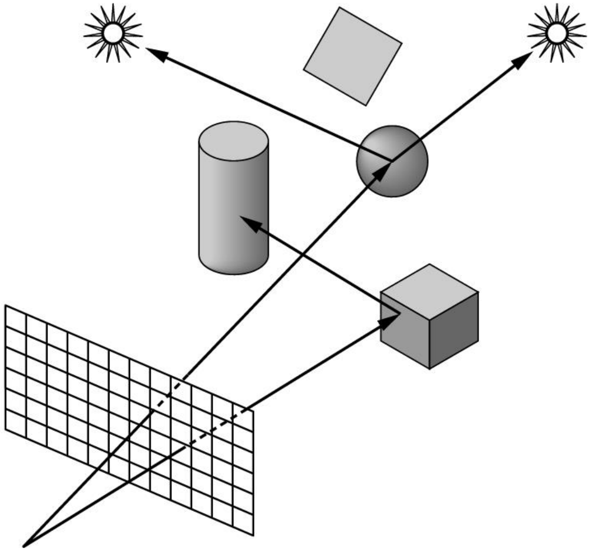
- Learn the basic design of a graphics system
- Introduce pipeline architecture
- Examine software components for an interactive graphics system

Image Formation Revisited

- Can we mimic the synthetic camera model to design graphics hardware software?
- Application Programmer Interface (API)
    - Need only specify
        - Objects
        - Materials
        - Viewer
        - Lights
- But how is the API implemented?

Physical Approaches

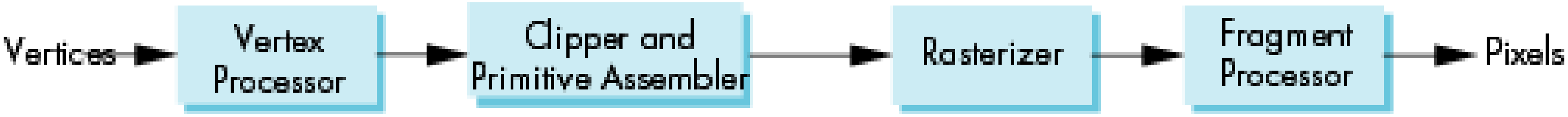
- **Ray tracing**: follow rays of light from center of projection until they either are absorbed by objects or go off to infinity
  - Can handle global effects
    - Multiple reflections
    - Translucent objects
  - Slow
  - Must have whole data base available at all times



- **Radiosity**: Energy based approach
  - Very slow

Practical Approach

- Process objects one at a time in the order they are generated by the application
  - Can consider only local lighting
- Pipeline architecture



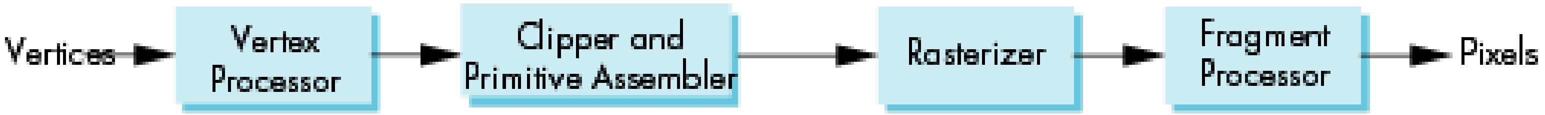
application program

display

- All steps can be implemented in hardware on the graphics card

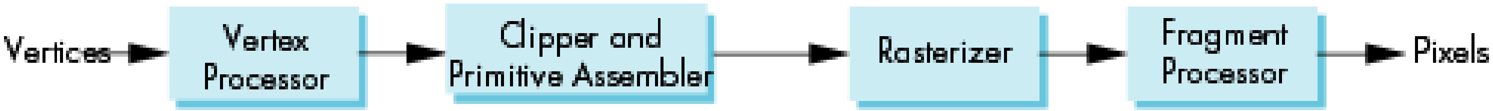
Vertex Processing

- Much of the work in the pipeline is in converting object representations from one coordinate system to another
  - Object coordinates
  - Camera (eye) coordinates
  - Screen coordinates
- Every change of coordinates is equivalent to a matrix transformation
- Vertex processor also computes vertex colors



Projection

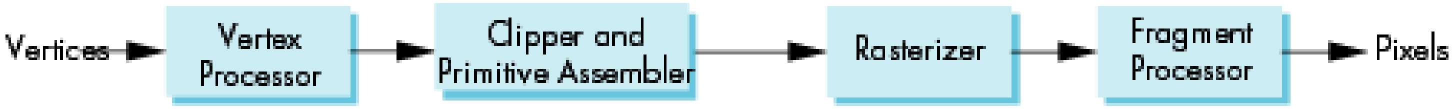
- *Projection* is the process that combines the 3D viewer with the 3D objects to produce the 2D image
    - Perspective projections: all projectors meet at the center of projection
    - Parallel projection: projectors are parallel, center of projection is replaced by a direction of projection



Primitive Assembly

Vertices must be collected into geometric objects before clipping and rasterization can take place

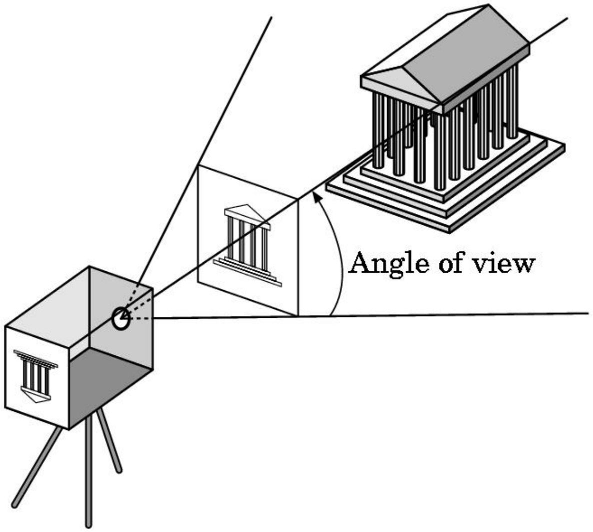
- Line segments
- Polygons
- Curves and surfaces

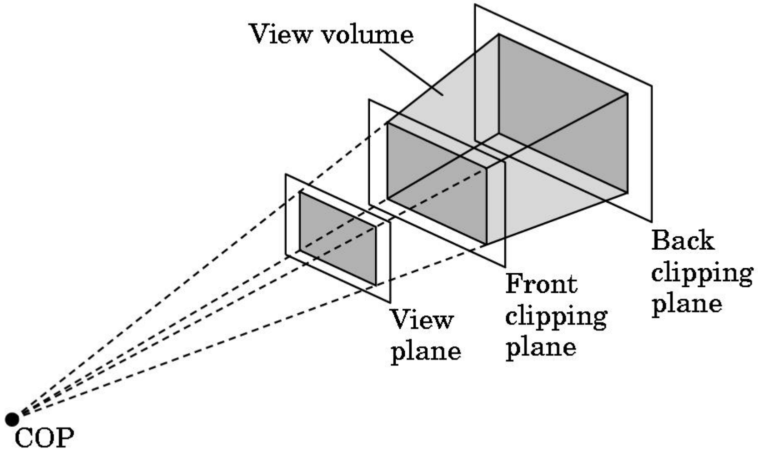


Clipping

Just as a real camera cannot “see” the whole world, the virtual camera can only see part of the world or object space

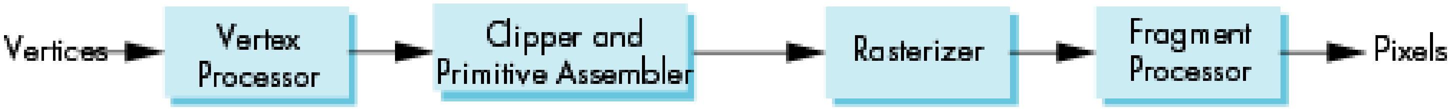
- Objects that are not within this volume are said to be *clipped* out of the scene





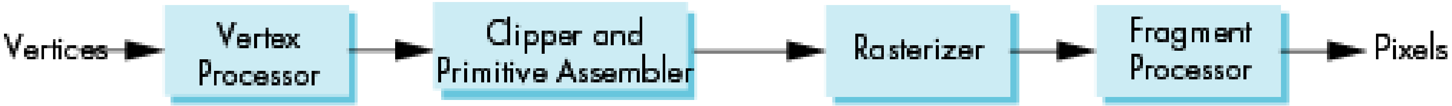
Rasterization

- If an object is not clipped out, the appropriate pixels in the frame buffer must be assigned colors
- Rasterizer produces a set of fragments for each object
- Fragments are "potential pixels"
  - Have a location in frame bufffer
  - Color and depth attributes
- Vertex attributes are interpolated over objects by the rasterizer



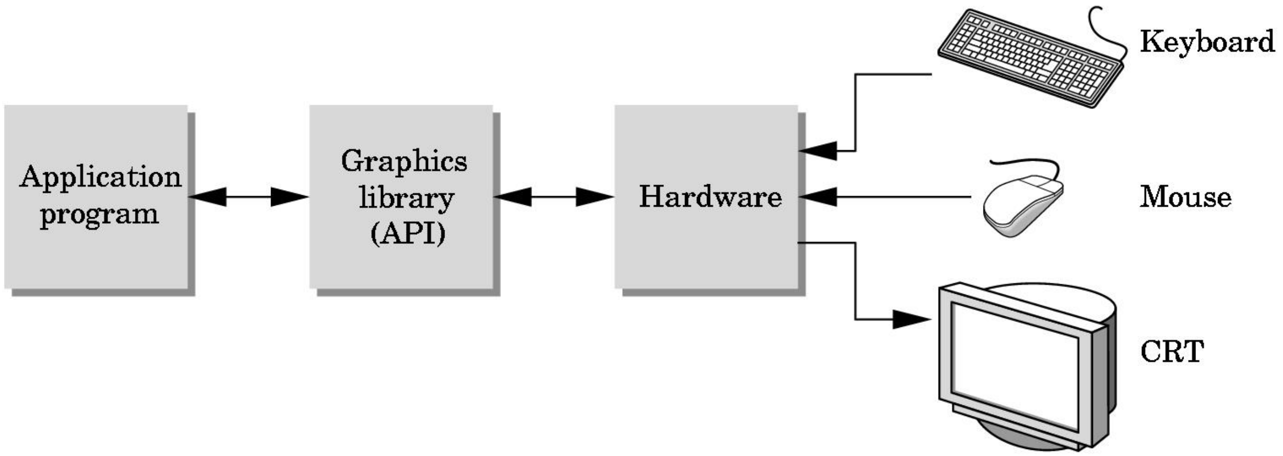
Fragment Processing

- Fragments are processed to determine the color of the corresponding pixel in the frame buffer
- Colors can be determined by texture mapping or interpolation of vertex colors
- Fragments may be blocked by other fragments closer to the camera
    - Hidden-surface removal



The Programmer’s Interface

- Programmer sees the graphics system through a software interface: the Application Programmer Interface (API)



API Contents

- Functions that specify what we need to form an image
  - Objects
  - Viewer
  - Light Source(s)
  - Materials
- Other information
  - Input from devices such as mouse and keyboard
  - Capabilities of system

Object Specification

- Most APIs support a limited set of primitives including
  - Points (0D object)
  - Line segments (1D objects)
  - Polygons (2D objects)
  - Some curves and surfaces
    - Quadrics
    - Parametric polynomials
- All are defined through locations in space or *vertices*

Example (old style)

type of object

location of vertex

```
glBegin(GL_POLYGON)
 glVertex3f(0.0, 0.0, 0.0);
 glVertex3f(0.0, 1.0, 0.0);
 glVertex3f(0.0, 0.0, 1.0);
glEnd( );
```

end of object definition

Example (GPU based)

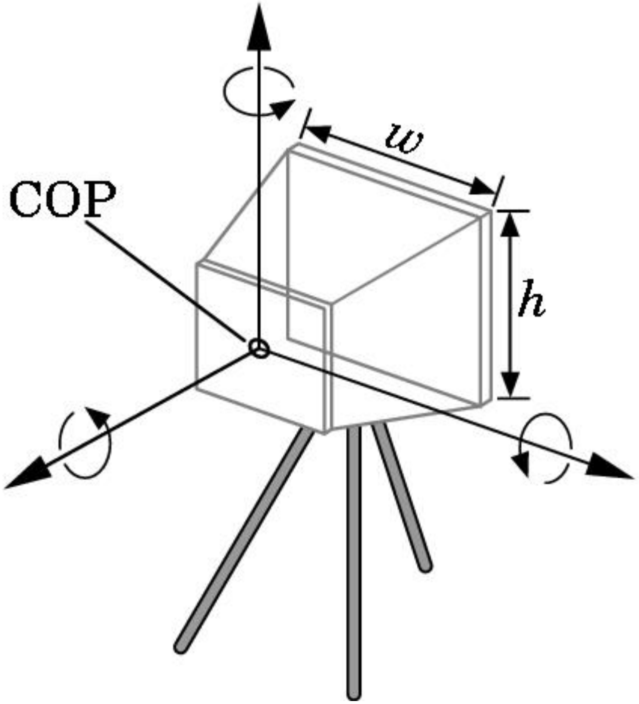
- Put geometric data in an array

```
var points = [
 vec3(0.0, 0.0, 0.0),
 vec3(0.0, 1.0, 0.0),
 vec3(0.0, 0.0, 1.0),
];
```

- Send array to GPU
- Tell GPU to render as triangle

Camera Specification

- Six degrees of freedom
  - Position of center of lens
  - Orientation
- Lens
- Film size
- Orientation of film plane



Lights and Materials

- Types of lights
  - Point sources vs distributed sources
  - Spot lights
  - Near and far sources
  - Color properties
- Material properties
  - Absorption: color properties
  - Scattering
    - Diffuse
    - Specular

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Programming with WebGL
Part 1: Background

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Objectives

- Development of the OpenGL API
- OpenGL Architecture
  - OpenGL as a state machine
  - OpenGL as a data flow machine
- Functions
  - Types
  - Formats
- Simple program

Early History of APIs

- IFIPS (1973) formed two committees to come up with a standard graphics API
  - Graphical Kernel System (GKS)
    - 2D but contained good workstation model
  - Core
    - Both 2D and 3D
  - GKS adopted as IS0 and later ANSI standard (1980s)
- GKS not easily extended to 3D (GKS-3D)
  - Far behind hardware development

PHIGS and X

- Programmers Hierarchical Graphics System (PHIGS)
  - Arose from CAD community
  - Database model with retained graphics (structures)
- X Window System
  - DEC/MIT effort
  - Client-server architecture with graphics
- PEX combined the two
  - Not easy to use (all the defects of each)

SGI and GL

- Silicon Graphics (SGI) revolutionized the graphics workstation by implementing the pipeline in hardware (1982)
- To access the system, application programmers used a library called GL
- With GL, it was relatively simple to program three dimensional interactive applications

OpenGL

The success of GL lead to OpenGL (1992), a platform-independent API that was

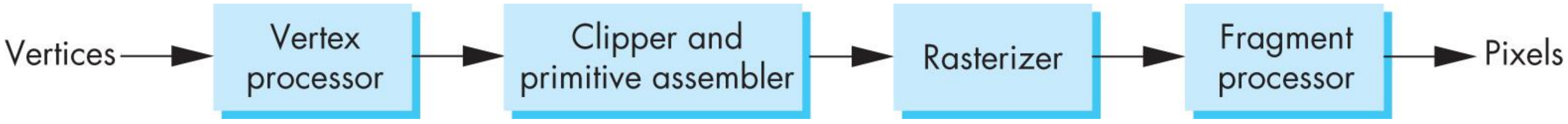
- Easy to use
- Close enough to the hardware to get excellent performance
- Focus on rendering
- Omitted windowing and input to avoid window system dependencies

OpenGL Evolution

- Originally controlled by an Architectural Review Board (ARB)
  - Members included SGI, Microsoft, Nvidia, HP, 3DLabs, IBM,…….
  - Now Kronos Group
  - Was relatively stable (through version 2.5)
    - Backward compatible
    - Evolution reflected new hardware capabilities
      - 3D texture mapping and texture objects
      - Vertex and fragment programs
  - Allows platform specific features through extensions

Modern OpenGL

- Performance is achieved by using GPU rather than CPU
- Control GPU through programs called shaders
- Application's job is to send data to GPU
- GPU does all rendering



Immediate Mode Graphics

- Geometry specified by vertices
  - Locations in space(2 or 3 dimensional)
  - Points, lines, circles, polygons, curves, surfaces
- Immediate mode
  - Each time a vertex is specified in application, its location is sent to the GPU
  - Old style uses **`glVertex`**
  - Creates bottleneck between CPU and GPU
  - Removed from OpenGL 3.1 and OpenGL ES 2.0

Retained Mode Graphics

- Put all vertex attribute data in array
- Send array to GPU to be rendered immediately
- Almost OK but problem is we would have to send array over each time we need another render of it
- Better to send array over and store on GPU for multiple renderings

OpenGL 3.1

- Totally shader-based
  - No default shaders
  - Each application must provide both a vertex and a fragment shader
- No immediate mode
- Few state variables
- Most 2.5 functions deprecated
- Backward compatibility not required
  - Exists a compatibility extension

Other Versions

- OpenGL ES
  - Embedded systems
  - Version 1.0 simplified OpenGL 2.1
  - Version 2.0 simplified OpenGL 3.1
    - Shader based
- WebGL
  - Javascript implementation of ES 2.0
  - Supported on newer browsers
- OpenGL 4.1, 4.2, …..
  - Add geometry, tessellation, compute shaders

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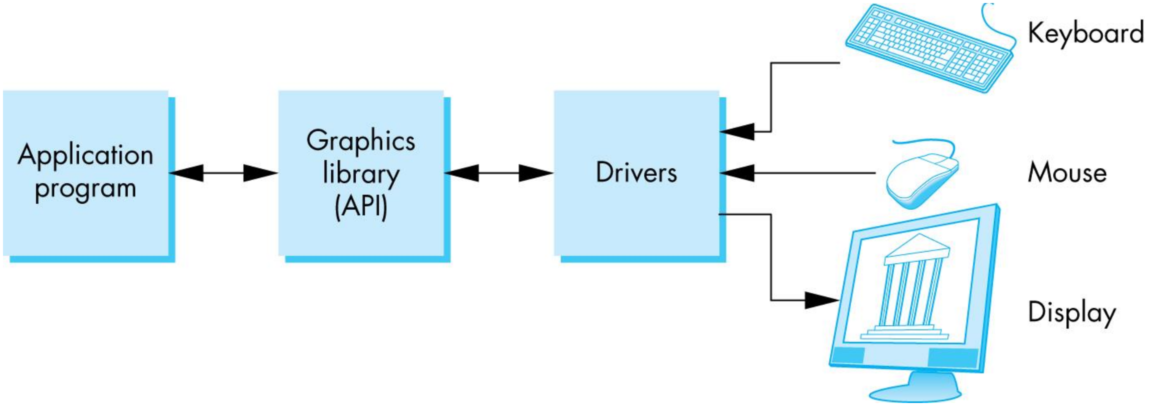
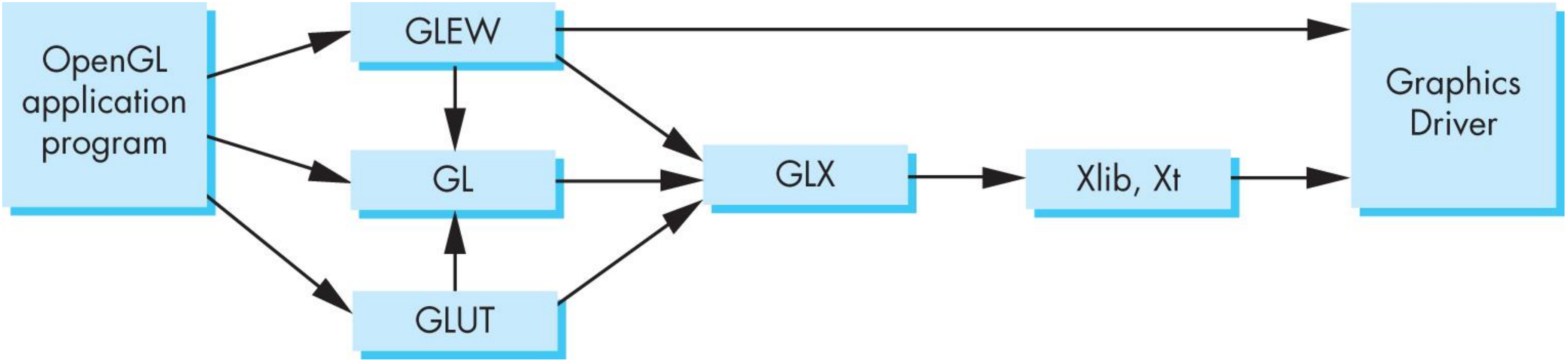
OpenGL Architecture

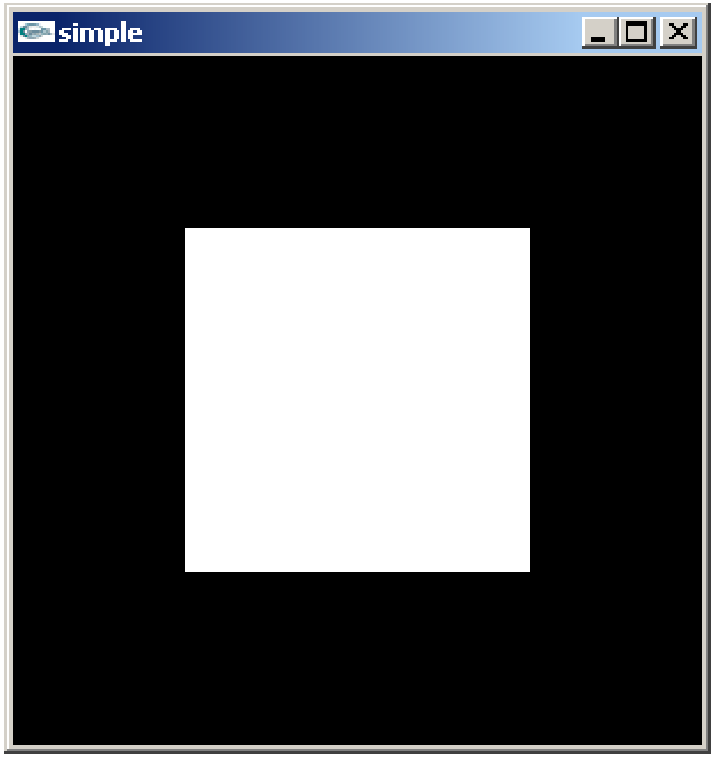


Software Organization



A OpenGL Simple Program

Generate a square on a solid background



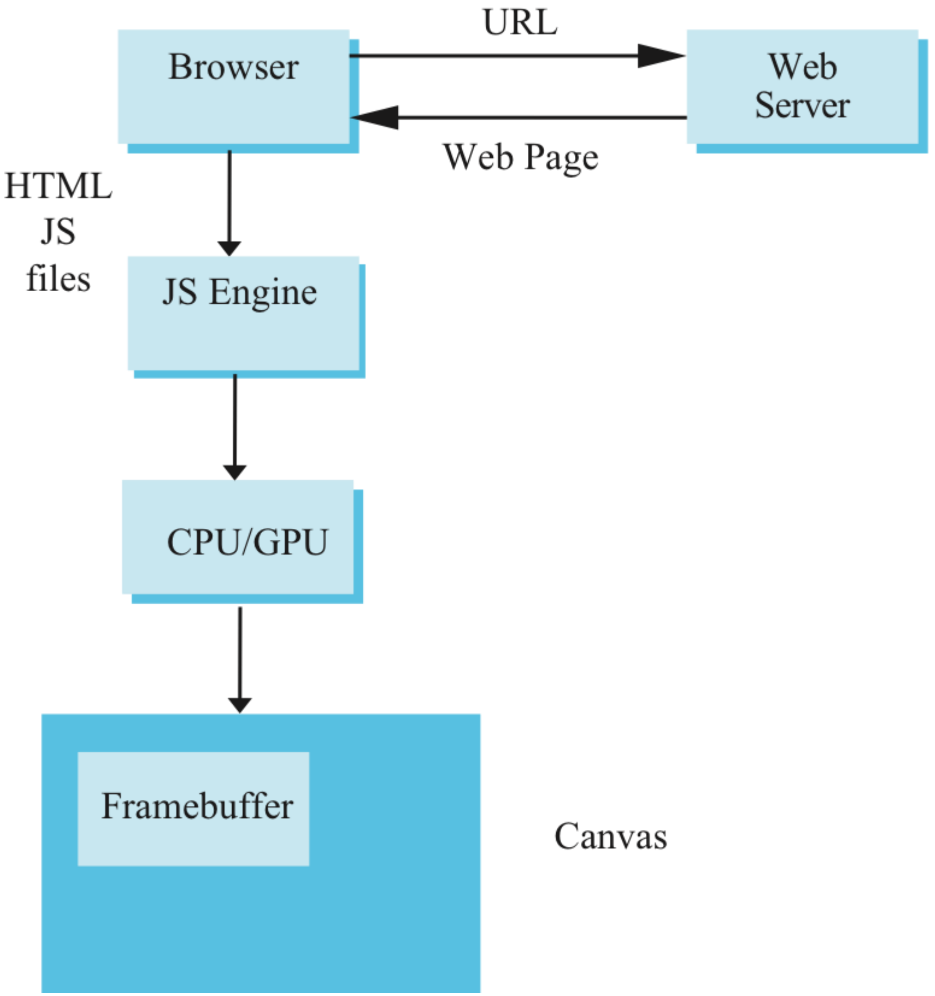
It used to be easy

```
#include <GL/glut.h>
void mydisplay(){
      glClear(GL_COLOR_BUFFER_BIT);
      glBegin(GL_QUAD;
            glVertex2f(-0.5, -0.5);
            glVertex2f(-0,5, 0,5);
            glVertex2f(0.5, 0.5);
            glVertex2f(0.5, -0.5);
      glEnd()
}
int main(int argc, char** argv){
      glutCreateWindow("simple");
      glutDisplayFunc(mydisplay);
      glutMainLoop();
}
```

What happened?

- Most OpenGL functions deprecated
  - immediate vs retained mode
  - make use of GPU
- Makes heavy use of state variable default values that no longer exist
  - Viewing
  - Colors
  - Window parameters
- However, processing loop is the same

Execution in Browser



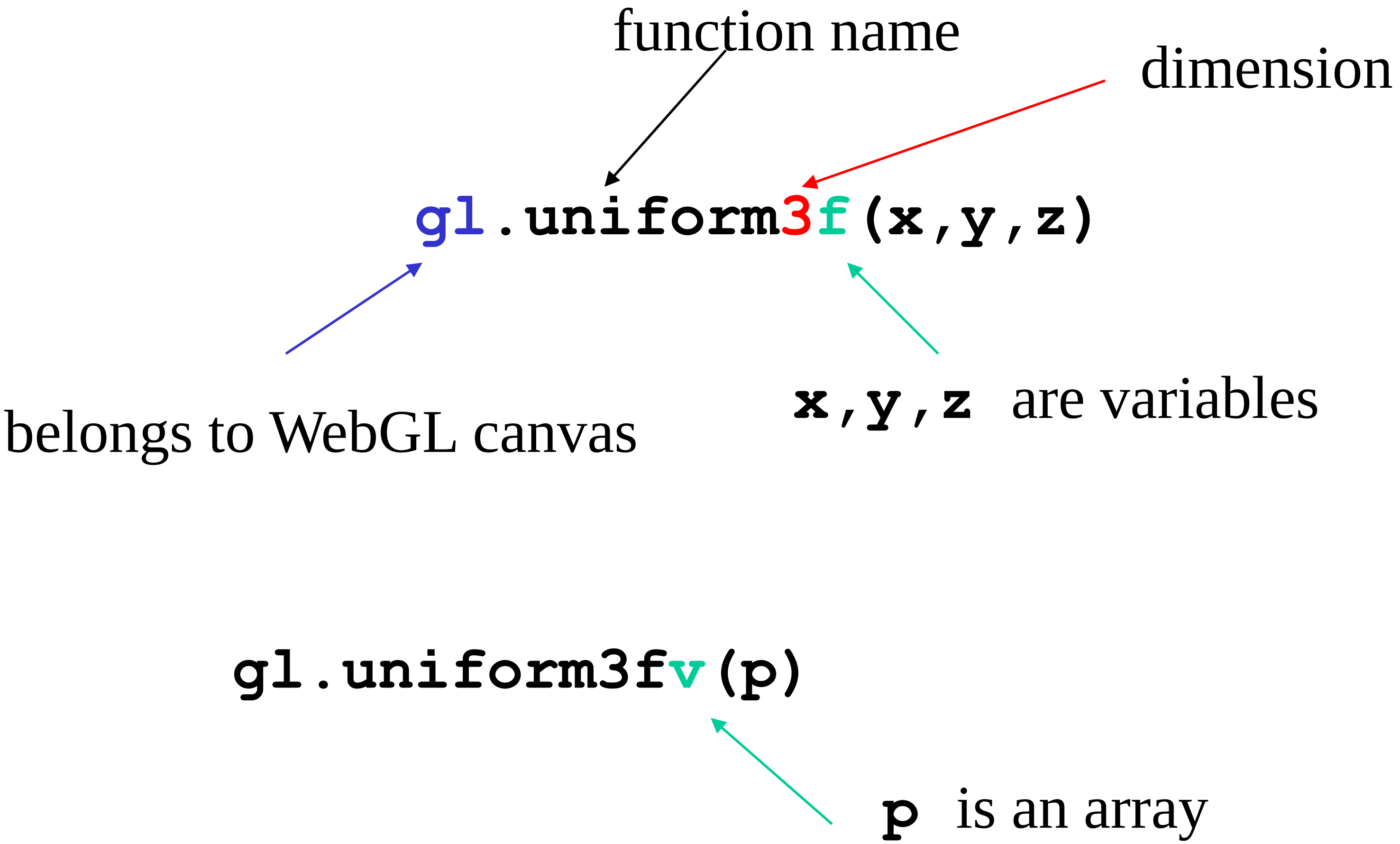
Event Loop

- Remember that the sample program specifies a render function which is a *event listener* or *callback* function
  - Every program should have a render callback
  - For a static application we need only execute the render function once
  - In a dynamic application, the render function can call itself recursively but each redrawing of the display must be triggered by an event

Lack of Object Orientation

- All versions of OpenGL are not object oriented so that there are multiple functions for a given logical function
- Example: sending values to shaders
  - **`gl.uniform3f`**
  - **`gl.uniform2i`**
  - **`gl.uniform3dv`**
- Underlying storage mode is the same

WebGL function format



function name

dimension

`gl.uniform3f(x,y,z)`

belongs to WebGL canvas

`x,y,z` are variables

`gl.uniform3fv(p)`

`p` is an array

WebGL constants

- Most constants are defined in the canvas object
    - In desktop OpenGL, they were in #include files such as **`gl.h`**
- Examples
    - **`desktop OpenGL`**
        - **`glEnable(GL_DEPTH_TEST);`**
    - **`WebGL`**
        - **`gl.enable(gl.DEPTH_TEST)`**
    - **`gl.clear(gl.COLOR_BUFFER_BIT)`**

WebGL and GLSL

- WebGL requires shaders and is based less on a state machine model than a data flow model
- Most state variables, attributes and related pre 3.1 OpenGL functions have been deprecated
- Action happens in shaders
- Job of application is to get data to GPU

GLSL

- OpenGL Shading Language
- C-like with
  - Matrix and vector types (2, 3, 4 dimensional)
  - Overloaded operators
  - C++ like constructors
- Similar to Nvidia’s Cg and Microsoft HLSL
- Code sent to shaders as source code
- WebGL functions compile, link and get information to shaders

Programming with OpenGL Part 2: Complete Programs

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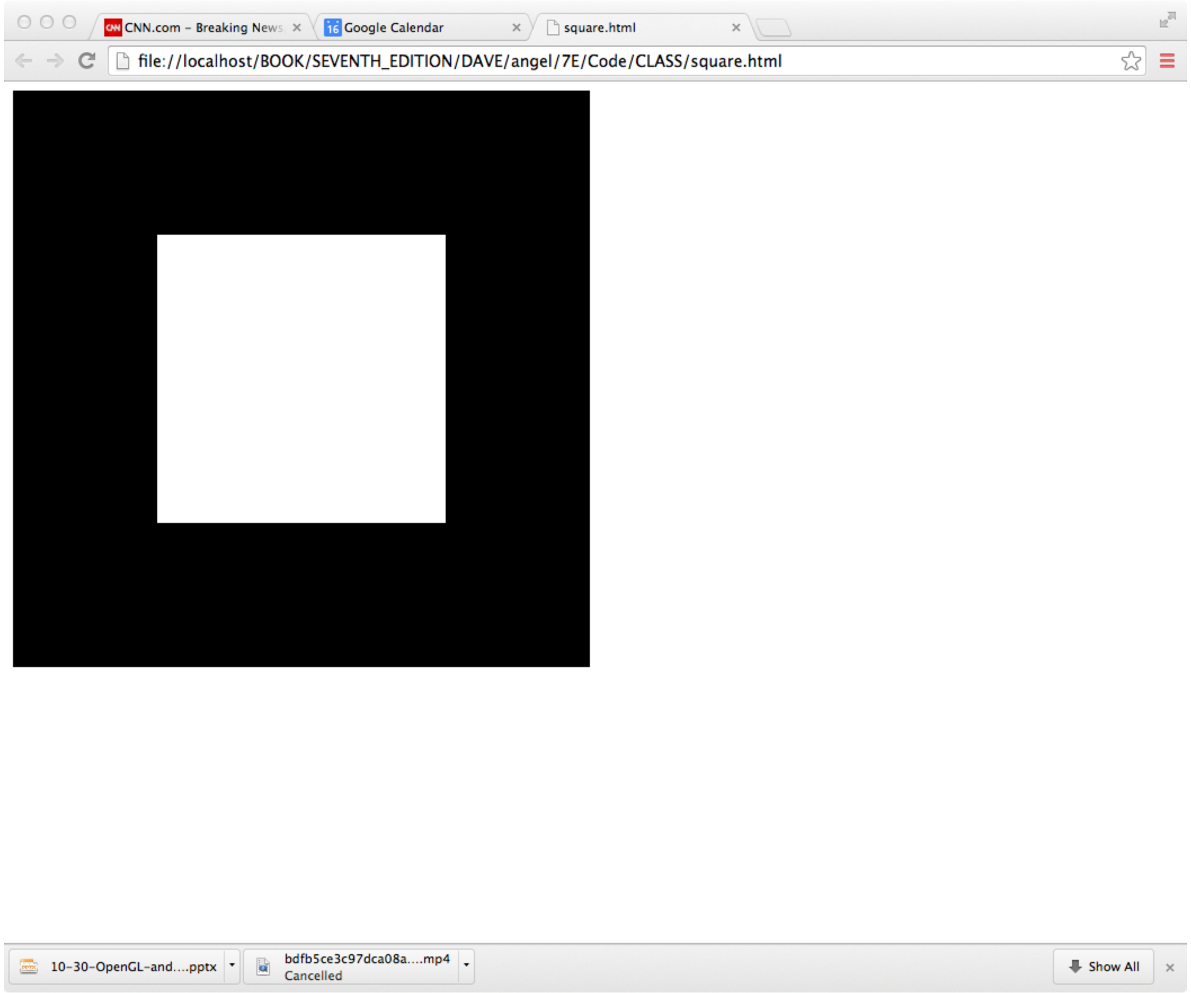
Professor of Emeritus of Computer Science

University of New Mexico

Objectives

- Build a complete first program
  - Introduce shaders
  - Introduce a standard program structure
- Simple viewing
  - Two-dimensional viewing as a special case of three-dimensional viewing
- Initialization steps and program structure

Square Program



WebGL

- Five steps
  - Describe page (HTML file)
    - request WebGL Canvas
    - read in necessary files
  - Define shaders (HTML file)
    - could be done with a separate file (browser dependent)
  - Compute or specify data (JS file)
  - Send data to GPU (JS file)
  - Render data (JS file)

square.html

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
<script id="vertex-shader" type="x-shader/x-vertex">
attribute vec4 vPosition;
void main()
{
    gl_Position = vPosition;
}
</script>

<script id="fragment-shader" type="x-shader/x-fragment">

precision mediump float;

void main()
{
    gl_FragColor = vec4( 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, 1.0 );
}
</script>
```

Shaders

- We assign names to the shaders that we can use in the JS file
- These are trivial pass-through (do nothing) shaders that which set the two required built-in variables
  - gl_Position
  - gl_FragColor
- Note both shaders are full programs
- Note vector type vec2
- Must set precision in fragment shader

square.html (cont)

```
<script type="text/javascript" src="../Common/webgl-utils.js"></script>
<script type="text/javascript" src="../Common/initShaders.js"></script>
<script type="text/javascript" src="../Common/MV.js"></script>
<script type="text/javascript" src="square.js"></script>
</head>

<body>
<canvas id="gl-canvas" width="512" height="512">
Oops ... your browser doesn't support the HTML5 canvas element
</canvas>
</body>
</html>
```

Files

- **`../Common/webgl-utils.js`**: Standard utilities for setting up WebGL context in Common directory on website
- **`../Common/initShaders.js`**: contains JS and WebGL code for reading, compiling and linking the shaders
- **`../Common/MV.js`**: our matrix-vector package
- **`square.js`**: the application file

square.js

```
var gl;
var points;

window.onload = function init(){
   var canvas = document.getElementById( "gl-canvas" );

    gl = WebGLUtils.setupWebGL( canvas );
    if ( !gl ) { alert( "WebGL isn't available" );
 }
    // Four Vertices

    var vertices = [
        vec2( -0.5, -0.5 ),
        vec2(  -0.5,  0.5 ),
        vec2(  0.5, 0.5 ),
        vec2( 0.5, -0.5)
    ];
```

Notes

- **`onload`**: determines where to start execution when all code is loaded
- canvas gets WebGL context from HTML file
- vertices use vec2 type in MV.js
- JS array is not the same as a C or Java array
    - object with methods
    - vertices.length // 4
- Values in clip coordinates

square.js (cont)

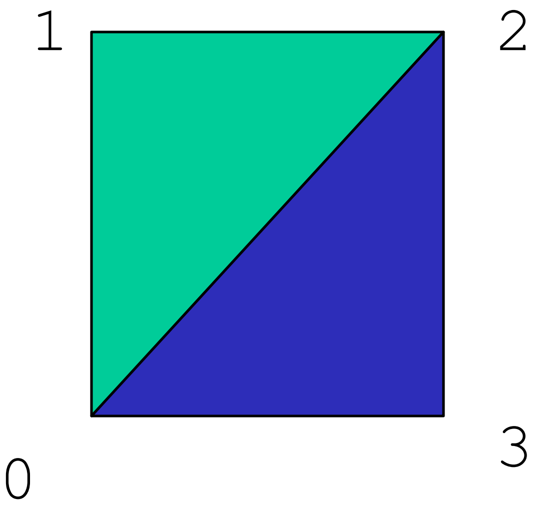
```
 //  Configure WebGL
 gl.viewport( 0, 0, canvas.width, canvas.height );
 gl.clearColor( 0.0, 0.0, 0.0, 1.0 );

  //  Load shaders and initialize attribute buffers
 var program = initShaders( gl, "vertex-shader", "fragment-shader"
);
 gl.useProgram( program );

  // Load the data into the GPU

 var bufferId = gl.createBuffer();
 gl.bindBuffer( gl.ARRAY_BUFFER, bufferId );
 gl.bufferData( gl.ARRAY_BUFFER, flatten(vertices), gl.STATIC_DRAW
);
  // Associate out shader variables with our data buffer
 var vPosition = gl.getAttribLocation( program, "vPosition" );
 gl.vertexAttribPointer( vPosition, 2, gl.FLOAT, false, 0, 0 );
 gl.enableVertexAttribArray( vPosition );
```

Notes

- **`initShaders`** used to load, compile and link shaders to form a program object
- Load data onto GPU by creating a **vertex buffer object** on the GPU
  - Note use of flatten() to convert JS array to an array of float32's
- Finally we must connect variable in program with variable in shader
  - need name, type, location in buffer

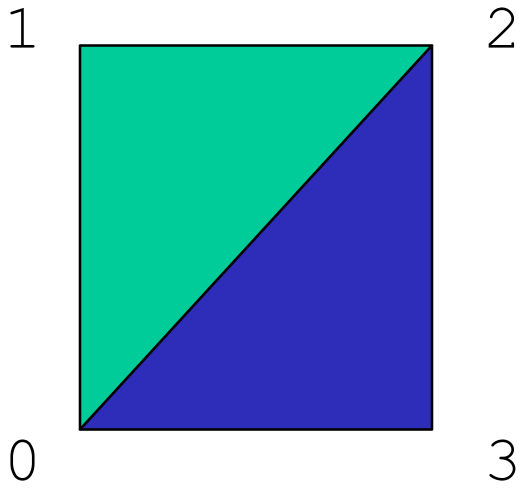
square.js (cont)

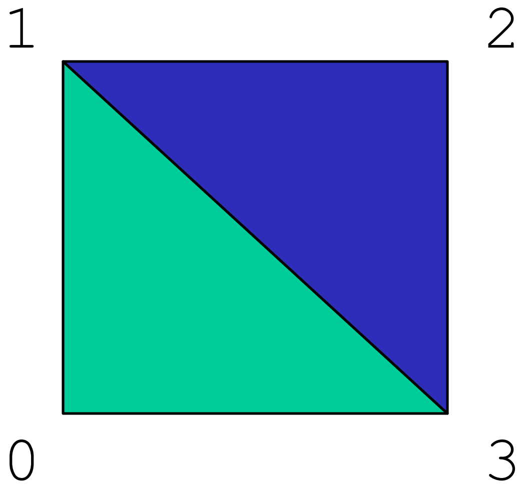
```
    render();
};

function render() {
    gl.clear( gl.COLOR_BUFFER_BIT );
    gl.drawArrays( gl.TRIANGLE_FAN, 0, 4 );
}
```



Triangles, Fans or Strips

```
gl.drawArrays( gl.TRIANGLES, 0, 6 ); // 0, 1, 2, 0, 2, 3

gl.drawArrays( gl.TRIANGLE_FAN, 0, 4 ); // 0, 1 , 2, 3
```





```
gl.drawArrays( gl.TRIANGLE_STRIP, 0, 4 ); // 0, 1, 3, 2
```

Programming with OpenGL
Part 2: Complete Programs

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Objectives

- Build a complete first program
  - Introduce shaders
  - Introduce a standard program structure
- Simple viewing
  - Two-dimensional viewing as a special case of three-dimensional viewing
- Initialization steps and program structure

Program Execution

- WebGL runs within the browser
  - complex interaction among the operating system, the window system, the browser and your code (HTML and JS)
- Simple model
  - Start with HTML file
  - files read in asynchronously
  - start with onload function
    - event driven input

Coordinate Systems

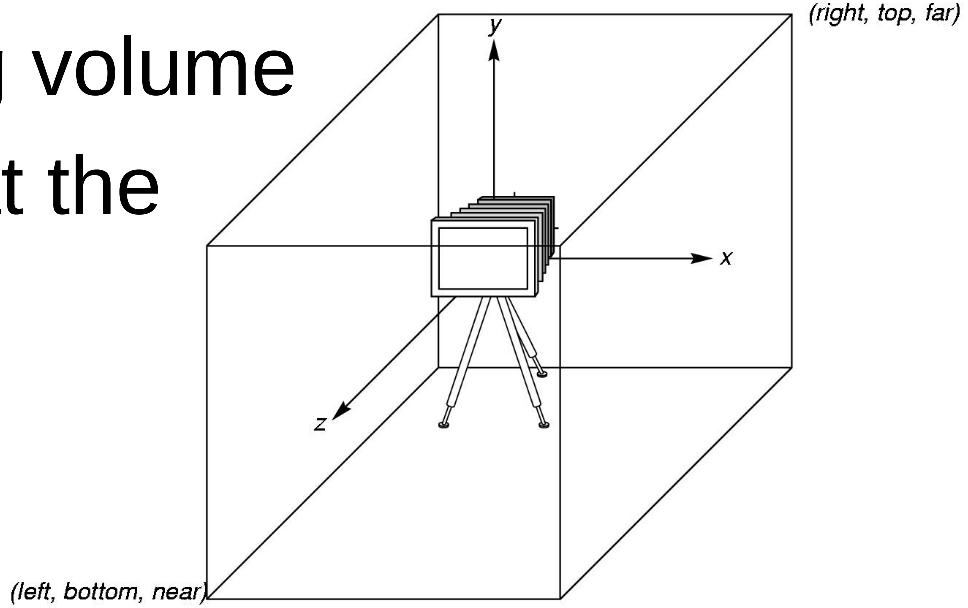
- The units in `points` are determined by the application and are called *object, world, model* or *problem coordinates*
- Viewing specifications usually are also in object coordinates
- Eventually pixels will be produced in *window coordinates*
- WebGL also uses some internal representations that usually are not visible to the application but are important in the shaders
- Most important is *clip coordinates*

Coordinate Systems and Shaders

- Vertex shader must output in clip coordinates
- Input to fragment shader from rasterizer is in window coordinates
- Application can provide vertex data in any coordinate system but shader must eventually produce gl_Position in clip coordinates
- Simple example uses clip coordinates

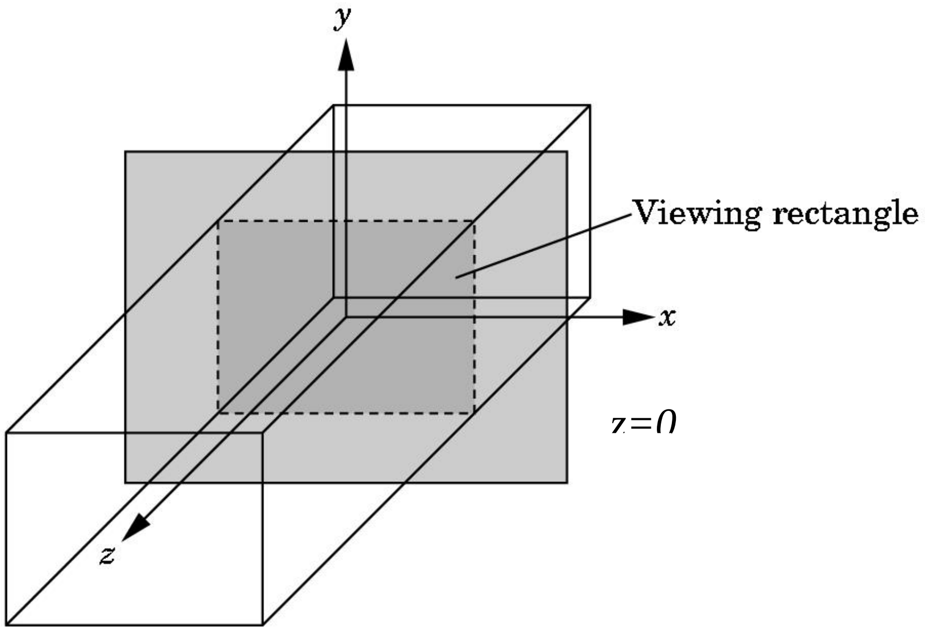
WebGL Camera

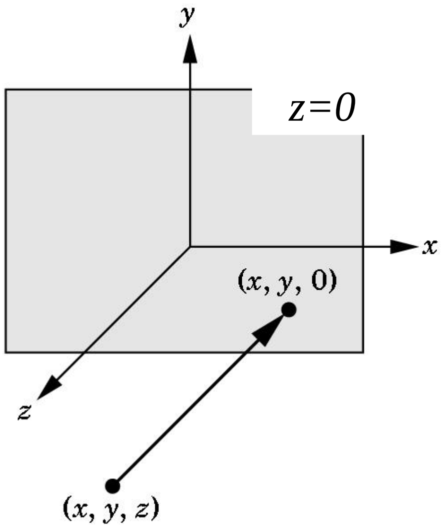
- WebGL places a camera at the origin in object space pointing in the negative z direction
- The default viewing volume is a box centered at the origin with sides of length 2



Orthographic Viewing

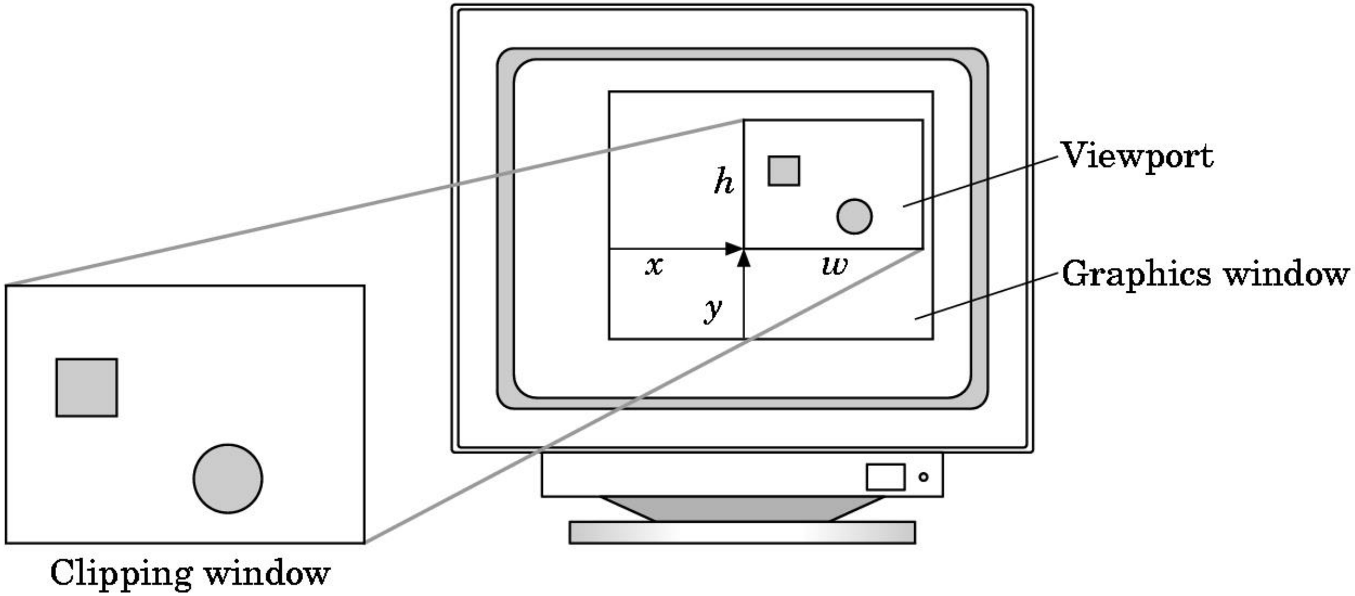
In the default orthographic view, points are projected forward along the *z* axis onto the plane *z=0*





Viewports

- Do not have use the entire window for the image: **`gl.viewport(x,y,w,h)`**
- Values in pixels (window coordinates)



Transformations and Viewing

- In WebGL, we usually carry out projection using a projection matrix (transformation) before rasterization
- Transformation functions are also used for changes in coordinate systems
- Pre 3.1 OpenGL had a set of transformation functions which have been deprecated
- Three choices in WebGL
  - Application code
  - GLSL functions
  - MV.js

First Assignment: Tessellation and Twist

- Consider rotating a 2D point about the origin

$$x' = x\cos\theta - y\sin\theta$$

$$y' = x\sin\theta + y\cos\theta$$

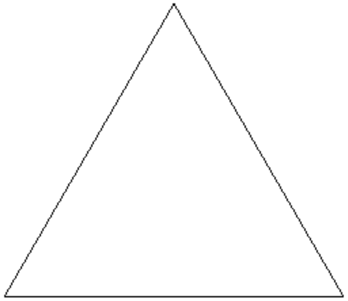
- Now let amount of rotation depend on distance from origin giving us **twist**

$$x' = x\cos(d\theta) - y\sin(d\theta)$$

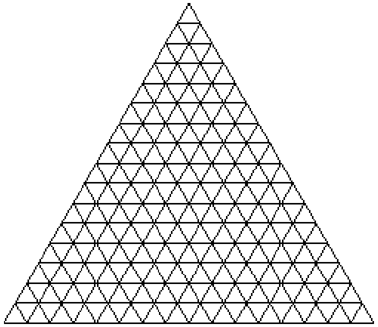
$$y' = x\sin(d\theta) + y\cos(d\theta)$$

$$d \propto \sqrt{x^2 + y^2}$$

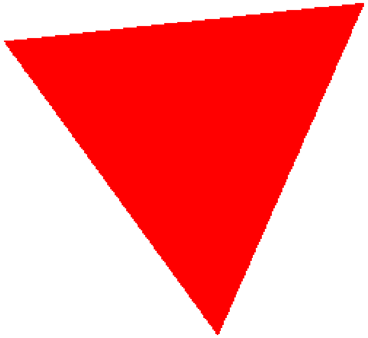
Example



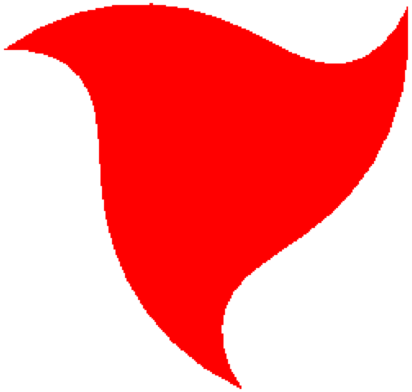
triangle



tessellated triangle



twist without tessellation



twist after tessellation