
Subject: Function Makes Unexpected Appearance
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 05 Mar 2009 00:25:17 GMT
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Folks,

This business today with STRUCT_ASSIGN is the second time this week something has popped up where I least expected it. There was even an article about the phenomenon this week, when a constant that appears in a rotating black hole equation all of a sudden showed up in a three-body problem:

<http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41310>

I keep running into the usefulness of Scale_Vector used in conjunction with Value_Locate. That combination just turns up in the oddest places, and always doing *exactly* the job I had in mind.

STRUCT_ASSIGN is another of those extremely useful functions that bails you out when you least expect it.

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Function Makes Unexpected Appearance
Posted by [ed.schmahl](#) on Sun, 08 Mar 2009 20:26:45 GMT
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David must have written this after a few beers, I thought, when I went to the link provided, and read interesting stuff about Black Holes and the Three-Body program. "But what the heck does this have to do with the STRUCT_ASSIGN procedure?" So I checked out the docs on STRUCT_ASSIGN. Cool program! Might even be useful, but I was too tired to think about the relation to black holes and the "wierd constant" of the 3-body problem, and went to bed.

About an hour later I woke up out of a sound sleep (David's messages can have this effect -- be warned), inadvertently awakening my gently snoring wife, and said to myself, "That's what David meant!"

```
BlackHole={a:randomn(10),wierd_constant:3.1415271818}  
ThreeBody={b:randomn(5),wierd_constant:3.1415271818}  
STRUCT_ASSIGN, /VERBOSE, BlackHole,ThreeBody  
print,ThreeBody,format='(2F15.10)'
```

Ed Schmahl,
New member of STRUCT_ASSIGN FANS ANONYMOUS

On Mar 4, 6:25 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:
> Folks,
>
> This business today with STRUCT_ASSIGN is the second time
> this week something has popped up where I least expected it.
> There was even an article about the phenomenon this week,
> when a constant that appears in a rotating black hole
> equation all of a sudden showed up in a three-body problem:
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> Cheers,
>
> David
> --
> David Fanning, Ph.D.
> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming:<http://www.dfanning.com/>
> Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Function Makes Unexpected Appearance
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sun, 08 Mar 2009 20:51:13 GMT
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ed.schmahl@gmail.com writes:

> David must have written this after a few beers, I thought, when I went
> to the link provided, and
> read interesting stuff about Black Holes and the Three-Body program.
> "But what the heck does this
> have to do with the STRUCT_ASSIGN procedure?" So I checked out the
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> constant" of the 3-body problem, and went to bed.
>
> About an hour later I woke up out of a sound sleep (David's messages
> can have this effect -- be warned), inadvertently awakening my gently
> snoring wife, and said to myself, "That's what David meant!"
>
> BlackHole=3D{a:randomn(10),wierd_constant:3.1415271818}
> ThreeBody=3D{b:randomn(5),wierd_constant:3.1415271818}
> STRUCT_ASSIGN, /VERBOSE, BlackHole,ThreeBody
> print,ThreeBody,format='(2F15.10)'
>
> Ed Schmahl,
> New member of STRUCT_ASSIGN FANS ANONYMOUS

Thank goodness. I *knew* I meant something, but I was having
a devil of a time remembering what it was! :-)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Function Makes Unexpected Appearance
Posted by [Brian Larsen](#) on Mon, 09 Mar 2009 12:19:16 GMT
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Hmm,

so I think I must still need one of these sleepy epiphanies.

I tried reading the documentation and while I understand each word in
he documentation I don't understand the sentences. But when David
says something is worthwhile it is in one's best interest to
understand even if I will never use it. Does anyone have an example
of this showing its usefulness and an explanation of what you would
have had to do otherwise?

Cheers,

Brian

Brian Larsen
Boston University
Center for Space Physics
<http://people.bu.edu/balarsen/Home/IDL>
