Ruby master - Feature #6130
inspect using to_s is pain
03/12/2012 08:21 AM - trans (Thomas Sawyer)

Status: Closed
Priority: Normal
Assignee: mame (Yusuke Endoh)
Target version: 2.0.0

Description
Every time I define #to_s on a class I have to remember to also redefine #inspect. It's annoying and has led me to waste hours debugging b/c the errors that can occur from it often seem strange and unrelated.

I think #inspect should have an independent definition that outputs the class name, object_id and when possible instance variable settings, and should have nothing to do with #to_s by default. We developers can always alias it as such if it is appropriate.

The only exception should be for classes that have literal representation in Ruby, such as Array, String, Hash, etc. In those cases the #inspect should give the literal representation.

Related issues:
Is duplicate of Ruby master - Bug #4453: Overriding #to_s changes #inspect

Associated revisions
Revision 795c29dc - 08/14/2012 10:20 AM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
Kernel#inspect: improve consistency and do not call #to_s.

A class can now benefit from the nice default #inspect even if it defines #to_s. Also, there is no more unexpected change in #inspect result. Internal structures have been adapted so they don't rely on the removed behavior (#inspect calling overridden #to_s).

- object.c (rb_obj_inspect): Kernel#inspect: do not call #to_s.
- test/ruby/test_object.rb (test_inspect): add tests for Kernel#inspect.
- bignum.c, io.c, numeric.c, object.c, proc.c, vm.c (Init_*): alias #inspect to #to_s where it was expected. [ruby-core:43238][Feature #6130]

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Revision e1aa72d4 - 08/14/2012 10:21 AM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)

update PP with recent Kernel#inspect change. Patch by Yusuke Endoh.

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git-svn-id: svn+ssh://ci.ruby-lang.org/ruby/trunk@36700 b2dd03c8-39d4-4d8f-98ff-823fe69b080e

Revision 36700 - 08/14/2012 10:21 AM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)

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Revision 780e7d09 - 08/15/2012 01:09 AM - naruse (Yui NARUSE)
Revert r36699 and r36700. [Feature #6130]
Revert "Kernel#inspect: improve consistency and do not call #to_s."
Revert "update PP with recent Kernel#inspect change. Patch by Yusuke Endoh."

r36699 cause test-all failure on test/drb/test_drb.rb and
test/drb/test_drbssl.rb. Run test-all before commit.

Moreover its ChangeLog formst is wrong: see CommitterHowto
https://bugs.ruby-lang.org/projects/ruby/wiki/CommitterHowto#ChangeLog
git-svn-id: svn+ssh://ci.ruby-lang.org/ruby/trunk@36701 b2dd03c8-39d4-4d8f-98ff-823fe69b080e

Revision 36701 - 08/15/2012 01:09 AM - naruse (Yui NARUSE)
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Revision td7dc23d - 08/15/2012 11:50 AM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
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NEWS: Add note about the change.

bignum.c, io.c, numeric.c, object.c, proc.c, vm.c (Init_[]): Adapt internal structures (by aliasing #inspect to #to_s) so they don't rely on the removed behavior (#inspect calling overridden #to_s).

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test/drb/drbtest.rb (DRbCore#teardown, DRbAry#teardown): adapt DRb tests with the new change (shirosaki). [ruby-core:47182][Bug #6866]

git-svn-id: svn+ssh://ci.ruby-lang.org/ruby/trunk@36709 b2dd03c8-39d4-4d8f-98f8-823fe69b080e

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History

#1 - 03/30/2012 02:00 AM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)
- Status changed from Open to Assigned
- Assignee set to matz (Yukihiro Matsumoto)

Thomas, you meant:
class Foo
def to_s; "foo"; end
end
x = Foo.new

p "==#{x}==" #=> "== foo ==", as you want

p x #=> "foo", but you want: #Foo:0xXXXX

, right? If so I agree, though it may be difficult in 2.0.

--
Yusuke Endoh mame@tsg.ne.jp

#2 - 03/30/2012 02:15 AM - trans (Thomas Sawyer)
Yep.

#3 - 03/31/2012 12:28 AM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
mame (Yusuke Endoh) wrote:

If so I agree, though it may be difficult in 2.0.

I also agree, default #inspect is nice and should not be overridden by #to_s.
If not possible for 2.0, I think it should still be considered later.

#4 - 03/31/2012 12:35 AM - matz (Yukihiro Matsumoto)
OK, I accept. The time for it would be up to the maintainer.

Matz.

#5 - 03/31/2012 08:56 AM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)
- Assignee changed from matz (Yukihiro Matsumoto) to mame (Yusuke Endoh)

That's great to hear!

As 2.0 release manager, I'm positive to import this change in 2.0.

I think it does not violate 2.0 compatibility policy; the format
of a return string of #inspect is not specially specified. This
changes only the format.

However, it should be postponed to 3.0 if it affects any actual
existing products. Please let me if you know such a case.

I'd like to hear your opinion,

--
Yusuke Endoh mame@tsg.ne.jp

#6 - 03/31/2012 08:58 AM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)

Please let me if you know such a case.
Oops. Please let me know such a case if you know.

#7 - 04/02/2012 09:42 PM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)

I'm not sure if it is trivial to fix this issue.
Could anyone please create a patch and study the behavior?

--
Yusuke Endoh mame@tsg.ne.jp

#8 - 04/10/2012 10:31 PM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
mame (Yusuke Endoh) wrote:
I'm not sure if it is trivial to fix this issue. Could anyone please create a patch and study the behavior?

I've been working on this and wondered what to do if there is no instance variable. Should it call (dynamically) #to_s? or always use Kernel#to_s which gives the class name and pointer (which would be called anyway if #to_s was not overridden)?

That's the first solution, use the nice #inspect output whenever there are instance variables. Another, lighter way would be to use #to_s for internal structures (and T_DATA, so classes defined in C extensions), but never for other types (all classes defined in Ruby).

What do you think?

#9 - 04/11/2012 07:56 AM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
- File 0001-object.c-rb_obj_inspect-Kernel-inspect-improve-consi.patch added

Eregon (Benoit Daloze) wrote:

I've been working on this and wondered what to do if there is no instance variable. Should it call (dynamically) #to_s? or always use Kernel#to_s which gives the class name and pointer (which would be called anyway if #to_s was not overridden)?

After some thoughts I believe it would not be worth changing the behavior if it was not fully consistent. So I propose this patch.

test-all pass with only two modifications in pretty_print tests, which relied on #inspect calling #to_s. The internal structures have been updated so #inspect is an alias of #to_s when it was not defined. The last modification is to define #inspect on the toplevel self (only #to_s was defined).

Of course, tests for the new behavior need to be added (I'll do later if the idea is approved).

What do you think?

#10 - 04/20/2012 07:00 AM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)

Benoit, thank you!

After some thoughts I believe it would not be worth changing the behavior if it was not fully consistent.

Agreed.

So I propose this patch.

I'll review. Please wait!

test-all pass with only two modifications in pretty_print tests, which relied on #inspect calling #to_s.

Good point. I was missing pretty_print. It must be also changed. Akr, do you have time?

--
Yusuke Endoh mame@tsq.ne.jp

#11 - 04/21/2012 02:41 AM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)

Hello,

So I propose this patch.

I'll review. Please wait!

Looks good to me. I'll commit it, except the change of test/test_pp.rb. Thanks! (It surprised me that your patch also passes rubyspec; rubyspec has no test for this behavior?)

Tanaka-san, I made a patch for pp. Unless there is no objection, I'll commit this too.

diff --git a/lib/pp.rb b/lib/pp.rb
index 94269ab..6e0c797 100644
--- a/lib/pp.rb
+++ b/lib/pp.rb
@@ -265,8 +265,7 @@ class PP < PrettyPrint
     module ObjectMixin
     # 1. specific pretty_print
     # 2. specific inspect
     # 3. specific to_s
     # 4. generic pretty_print

     # 3. generic pretty_print
     # A default pretty printing method for general objects.
     # It calls pretty_print_instance_variables to list instance variables.
@@ -283,18 +282,10 @@ class PP < PrettyPrint
         rescue NameError
     end
     begin
         to_s_method = method_method.call(:to_s)
         rescue NameError
     end
     if inspect_method && /(Kernel)#/ !~ inspect_method.inspect
 q.text self.inspect
 elsif !inspect_method && self.respond_to?(:inspect)
 q.text self.inspect
 elsif to_s_method && /(Kernel)#/ !~ to_s_method.inspect
 q.text self.to_s
 elsif !to_s_method && self.respond_to?(:to_s)
 q.text self.to_s
 else
 q.pp_object(self)
 end

diff --git a/test/test_pp.rb b/test/test_pp.rb
index fe65287..acd3e83 100644
--- a/test/test_pp.rb
+++ b/test/test_pp.rb
@@ -118,7 +118,6 @@ class PPInspectTest < Test::Unit::TestCase
     def a.to_s() "aaa" end
     result = PP.pp(a, "")
     assert_equal("aaa\n", result)
 end
 end

Yusuke Endoh mame@tsg.ne.jp

#12 - 04/21/2012 02:52 AM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)
Oh, yeah, Benoit. I'm happy if you write tests for the new behavior :-) 
Do you have a commit bit already?

---
Yusuke Endoh mame@tsg.ne.jp

#13 - 04/21/2012 03:14 AM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
Hello, mame (Yusuke Endoh) wrote:

  Looks good to me. I'll commit it, except the change of test/test_pp.rb. Thanks!

03/19/2020
Thank you for reviewing!

   Oh, yeah, Benoit. I'm happy if you write tests for the new behavior :-)
   Do you have a commit bit already?

No, I don't.

I'll write these tests ASAP.

   (It surprised me that your patch also passes rubyspec; rubyspec has no test for this behavior?)

I'd be happy to add some tests to rubyspec too.

#14 - 04/21/2012 07:54 AM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
I started writing the tests:
https://github.com/eregon/ruby/commit/f9ac4cd1daadd7c37c722c79a36296f3d161058b

I'll improve them tomorrow and write the ones for rubyspec too.

#15 - 05/26/2012 10:29 PM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
- File 0002-test-ruby-test_object.rb-test_inspect-add-tests-for-.patch added

I attach the updated tests (sorry about the delay :/).
Please comment is something is wrong.

After speaking with Yusuke, it seems best to not include a (complete) specification for #inspect in RubySpec yet, because the exact #inspect format might be an implementation detail.

However I'd like to add the behavior change (not calling #to_s anymore) to RubySpec after this has been merged.

#16 - 06/22/2012 05:47 AM - drbrain (Eric Hodel)
If there are no objections I will commit this Monday (unless Benoit gets a commit bit sooner)

#17 - 06/22/2012 07:36 PM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
- File 0002-test-ruby-test_object.rb-test_inspect-add-tests-for-.patch added

Updated patch for the tests according to nobu's comment in
https://github.com/eregon/ruby/commit/f9ac4cd1daadd7c37c722c79a36296f3d161058b#commitcomment-1490653.

#18 - 07/23/2012 11:30 PM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)
I suggested giving Benoit a commit bit at the developer meeting (7/21),
and maiz agreed.

Benoit, could you send your PGP public key to cvs-admin AT ruby-lang.org?
See the following procedure in detail:

Then, please commit your patch yourself.

I'd like to thank you for your continuing contribution!

--
Yusuke Endoh mame@tsg.ne.jp

#19 - 08/14/2012 07:20 PM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)
- Status changed from Assigned to Closed
- % Done changed from 0 to 100

This issue was solved with changeset r36699.
Thomas, thank you for reporting this issue.
Your contribution to Ruby is greatly appreciated.
May Ruby be with you.
Kernel#inspect: improve consistency and do not call #to_s.

A class can now benefit from the nice default #inspect even if it defines #to_s. Also, there is no more unexpected change in #inspect result. Internal structures have been adapted so they don’t rely on the removed behavior (#inspect calling overridden #to_s).

- object.c (rb_obj_inspect): Kernel#inspect: do not call #to_s.
- test/ruby/test_object.rb (test_inspect): add tests for Kernel#inspect.
- bignum.c, io.c, numeric.c, object.c, proc.c, vm.c (Init_*): alias #inspect to #to_s where it was expected. [ruby-core:43238][Feature #6130]

#20 - 08/14/2012 08:15 PM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)

Hi,

mame (Yusuke Endoh) wrote:

I suggested giving Benoit a commit bit at the developer meeting (7/21), and matz agreed.

[...]

Then, please commit your patch yourself.

I'd like to thank you for your continuing contribution!

I just committed as r36699 and I committed your PP patch as r36700.

Thank you for proposing it!

Files

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<tr>
<th>File Name</th>
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<td>7.48 KB</td>
<td>04/11/2012</td>
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