

4. [10 points] Consider the solution curve $y(x)$ to the differential equation $\frac{dy}{dx} = 1 + xy^2$ that goes through the point $(1, 1)$.

(a) [2 points of 10] Is this differential equation separable? Explain in one or two sentences.

Solution:

This is not separable. In order to separate variables we have to be able to get all of the “ y ”s on one side of the equation, multiplying the dy , and all of the “ x ”s on the other, multiplying the dx . Because of the additive factor of one on the right-hand side this is not possible.

(b) [5 points of 10] Use Euler’s Method with three steps to approximate y when $x = 1.6$.

Solution:

If we’re taking three steps, our step size is $\Delta x = 0.2$. At $(x, y) = (1, 1)$ the slope is $\frac{dy}{dx} = 2$, so we estimate $y(1.2) \approx 1 + 0.2(2) = 1.4$. Continuing, we obtain the following table of values:

x	y	dy/dx	so that
1	1	2	$y(1.2) \approx 1 + 0.2(2) = 1.4$
1.2	1.4	$1 + (1.2)(1.4)^2 = 3.352$	$y(1.4) \approx 1.4 + 0.2(3.352) = 2.0704$
1.4	2.0704	$1 + (1.4)(2.0704)^2 \approx 7.001$	$y(1.6) \approx 2.0704 + 0.2(7.001) \approx 3.471$

Thus, we estimate that $y(1.6) \approx 3.471$.

(c) [3 points of 10] Do you expect the real value of $y(1.6)$ to be greater than or less than the estimate you found in part (b)? Why?

Solution:

We note that the slopes that we generated in the approximations (column 3 in the table above) are increasing. We therefore expect that the Euler estimates will undershoot the actual values at every step, and that the estimate $y(1.6) \approx 3.471$ is an underestimate.