

1.3 Cyclic groups

Definition 1 G is cyclic if $G = \langle a \rangle$ for some $a \in G$.

ex. $Z = \langle 1 \rangle = \langle -1 \rangle$ under $+$.

Theorem 1 Let G be a cyclic group. Then G is isomorphic to Z or Z_n for some $n \in \mathbb{N}$, under addition.

Proof. Suppose $G = \langle a \rangle = \{a^i \mid i \in \mathbb{Z}\}$, for some $a \in G$.

Define $f : Z \rightarrow G$ by $f(i) = a^i$

f is clear to be an epimorphism.

If f is isomorphism, then G is isomorphic to Z .

Suppose f is not isomorphism:

Let n be the least integer $n = j - i$ such that $j > i$ and $a^j = a^i$

Note $G = \{a^0, a^1, \dots, a^{n-1}\}$ and $|G| = n$.

Hence G is isomorphic to Z_n .