Non-Negative Mod

timestreeminusfourzeouqyhuupfiqzuxqmmwibvevla

Solution

The title of this puzzle, "Non-Negative Mod” hints that some modular arithmetic should be done to solve the puzzle. Additionally, the words "timestreeminusfour” indicate the first instruction. The solver should realize that this is a simple affine cipher, where each letter is turned into a number 0-26, then apply the transformation to each number, and then transform them back to letters. Doing so would return the string "bugiybrviigujemvstimestreelustensggkuzihidw," which includes the text "timestreelusten.” Doing that function on the new string would result in the string "nscienjvicslweruwvpiuwmpfiwwdwsmwpxmccoshfifty," giving the answer, McCosh 50.

–Elaine Chou