

## Technology superstars ask kids to code

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The biggest names in technology want today's children to learn computer programming. Other stars, from the world of sport, entertainment,

fashion, etc., also say kids need to learn to code. People like Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Microsoft founder Bill Gates have appeared in a video to tell children coding is fun. Dropbox creator Drew Houston believes coding is like learning to play a musical instrument or playing a sport: "It starts out being very [scary], but you kind of get the hang of it over time," he said. Black Eyed Peas member will.i.am also appeared in the video. He said: "Great coders are today's rock stars." Basketball star and coder Chris Bosh told kids he thought coding was cool.

The video is from Code.org - a non-profit foundation that wants schools to give children more lessons on computer programming. Its website says: "Every student in every school should have the opportunity to learn to code." The site contains dozens of quotes from high-profile figures. The first is from the late Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple, who said a long time ago: "I think everybody...should learn how to program a computer because it teaches you how to think." Video game designer Gabe Newell explained how coding can really change children's lives. He said: "The programmers of tomorrow are the wizards of the future. You're going to look like you have magic powers."

Sources: PC Mag / CNET

### Writing

*Computer programming is as important as reading, writing and maths. All schools should teach it.* Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*biggest names / technology / entertainment / musical instrument / coding / rock stars / foundation / computer programming / quotes / Apple / game designer / magic powers*

### True / False

- a) The longest names in technology want children to learn coding. T / F
- b) The article says people like Facebook's CEO and Microsoft's founder. T / F
- c) The creator of Dropbox said learning to code was like playing sport. T / F
- d) Musician will.i.am said great coders are the same as rock stars. T / F
- e) Code.org is hoping to make a lot of money from its website. T / F
- f) The code.org website has quotes from 12 famous people. T / F
- g) Steve Jobs said everybody should learn computer programming. T / F
- h) A game designer said coders look like they have magical powers. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. programming     | a. frightening |
| 2. founder         | b. people      |
| 3. scary           | c. trendy      |
| 4. get the hang of | d. abilities   |
| 5. cool            | e. chance      |
| 6. children        | f. dead        |
| 7. opportunity     | g. coding      |
| 8. figures         | h. kids        |
| 9. late            | i. creator     |
| 10. powers         | j. learn       |

### Discussion - Student A

- a) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'computer programmer'?
- b) How important is coding?
- c) Do you think children should learn coding in school?
- d) What do you think is fun about coding?
- e) Why might learning to code be like playing a sport?
- f) Do you think being a coder is better than being a doctor or lawyer?
- g) Do you think you could quickly get the hang of coding?
- h) What do you think of the idea of great coders being like rock stars?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. The biggest names                   | a. foundation            |
| 2. from the world                      | b. the hang of it        |
| 3. coding is like learning to play a   | c. was cool              |
| 4. you kind of get                     | d. high-profile figures  |
| 5. Bosh told kids he thought coding    | e. in technology         |
| 6. a non-profit                        | f. wizards of the future |
| 7. dozens of quotes from               | g. musical instrument    |
| 8. it teaches you how                  | h. powers                |
| 9. The programmers of tomorrow are the | i. of sport              |
| 10. look like you have magic           | j. to think              |

## Discussion – Student B

- What is computer programming?
- Which tech company would you love to work for?
- Are you surprised that only 1 in 10 U.S. schools teach programming?
- What do you think of the quote from Steve Jobs?
- How might coding make you feel like you have magic powers?
- Are coders really just nerds and geeks or are they great?
- What would you do if you were a coder?
- What questions would you like to ask the owners of Code.org?

## Spelling

- computer p o i m r n m g g r a
- the world of sport, e t n i r m e a n e t t n, fashion, etc.
- Microsoft e f n d u r o Bill Gates
- a musical u n t s e m t r n i
- will.i.am also r e a p p d a e in the video
- Basketball star and r d c o e
- a non-profit d i f t n o a n o u
- the y i p r u t n p o o t to learn to code
- dozens of o u q t e s
- high-profile s f g e i u r
- s a w z d i r of the future
- have a c g m i powers

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. i	3. a	4. j	5. c
6. h	7. e	8. b	9. f	10. d

## Role Play

**Coding teacher** - You believe coding is one of the most important things kids can learn. Tell the others three reasons why. You think children should learn coding for two hours a day at school instead of subjects like art, history and foreign languages. Coding will change the world.

**Tech-hating parent** - You don't understand why people are talking so much about coding. Coding is for geeks and nerds. You want your children to learn useful things like art, history and foreign languages. Tell the others three reasons why. Also tell them coding will never change anything in the world.

**English teacher** - You learning English is the most important thing your students can do. Tell the others three reasons why. English is the world language. Everyone can get a good job with English. Coding jobs do not pay good money. You think coding should never be a school subject.

**Kid** - You love technology. You really want to be a coder. Tell the others three reasons why. Your school subjects are boring because you cannot create anything. You want to learn coding so you can change the future and work for cool companies like Apple or Google.

## Speaking – Tech Companies

Which company would you like to work for? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| • Apple   | • Microsoft  |
| • Google  | • Facebook   |
| • Twitter | • Blackberry |
| • Samsung | • Sony       |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.