Parent Guide

@twinklparents

We're excited to share this activity with you. If you are interested in finding more engaging, fun and interesting activities for you and your children, then check out these links to different areas of the Twinkl Parents website.

games

crafts

puzzles

experiments

word searches

What is this resource and how do I use it?

Know your outputs from your operating systems, your variables from your viruses? If the answer is no, don't worry. Use this glossary to find the words and phrases your primary school child might use or come across when it comes to computing, along with definitions of each one.

What skills does this practise?

- Computing
- Thinking
- Fine Motor Skills

Further Activity Ideas and Suggestions

Choose key terms and their definitions from the glossary and write them on separate pieces of paper. Mix them up and see if your child can match the term with the definition. These Computing Definition Word Cards are another great way to support your child's knowledge of computer-related vocabulary, as is this fun activity sheet.

Parents Blog

Twinkl Kids' TV

Homework Help

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Computing Glossary: An A to Z for Parents and Carers

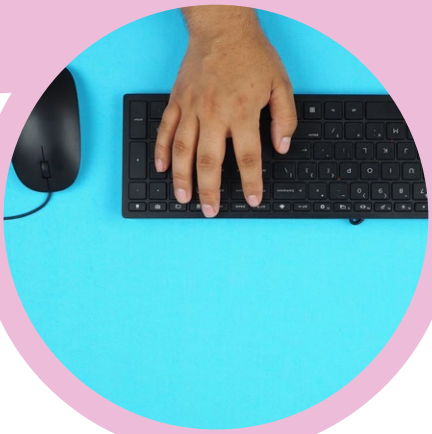
Know your boolean operators from your browsers, your algorithms from your abstractions? If the answer is no, don't worry, you are not alone. This glossary is here to help. Below you can find the words and phrases your primary school child might use or come across when it comes to computing with explanations about what each term means.

A

Abstraction: This is the process by which unnecessary details are hidden in order to simplify things that may be very complex. For example, a games console may have a few buttons for players to press on its surface but underneath is a complex mechanism allowing users to control the game.

Algorithm: A set of steps or instructions a computer follows in a set order to solve a problem or create a desired outcome. For example, the Met Office uses algorithms to model weather patterns and to make weather forecasts and predictions.

B



Binary: A type of language computers use. It is a system where numbers and values are expressed by two numbers - 0 and 1. Computers use binary to store data including software, documents and music.

Boolean operators: Boolean operators are words you put into a search engine (see below) to combine phrases to make a search more specific or general. The three basic boolean operators are 'and', 'or' and 'not'. 'And' and 'not' narrow a search, whereas 'or' widens a search to include either of the words you are looking for.

Browser: Software (see below) on your computer that allows you to access the World Wide Web. It retrieves information and displays web pages on your laptop, computer or mobile device. Think of a browser like a door to the web.

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C

Coding: Coding is how we communicate with computers. Coding tells a computer program which actions to perform to create a particular outcome. Writing a code is like creating a set of step-by-step instructions that tell the computer what to do.

Communication technology: Anything we use to communicate with others is classified as communication technology. This includes mobile phones, tablets and laptop computers.

Computational thinking: This helps us to take a complicated problem and break it down into smaller parts to look for patterns and to see possible ways to solve it. It is important to use computational thinking when programming a computer.

D

Data: Put simply, data is information. Examples of data include numbers, graphs, images, statistics, audio clips or software programs.

Debug: The process by which errors in a computer program are detected and corrected so that the program works properly and achieves the correct outcome.

Decomposition: This is part of the process of computational thinking. It involves breaking a large, complex problem down into smaller parts. When solutions to the smaller problems are found, they can be put together to create a solution to the larger problem.

Digital content: Anything created, viewed or edited on a computer is digital content. This includes text, images, sound, videos, emails and chats.

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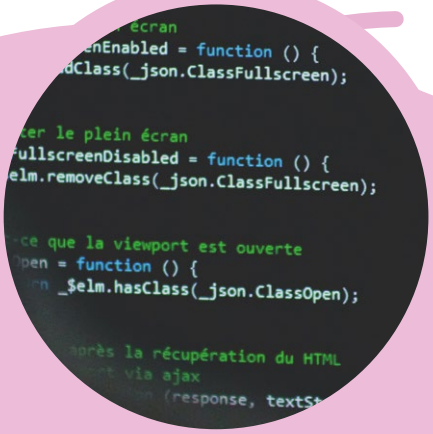
F

Function: In computing, functions are blocks of code that tell the computer to perform a specific task. Functions can be used over and over again, meaning the programmer does not have to write the entire code out multiple times.



H

Hardware: These are the physical parts that the computer system needs to operate. Examples of hardware include the computer's monitor, mouse, keyboard, speakers and the central processing unit (CPU).

HTML: HTML stands for Hypertext Markup Language. It's a coding language used to create and structure web content. You can place HTML codes around specific content to make it appear a certain way, for example to make it to act as a hyperlink (a link that takes you to another web page), to make the font appear bigger or smaller or to appear as italics. Like any language, HTML codes and what they do need to be learnt.

I

Information technology: The use of computers to create, store, retrieve, exchange and process electronic information and data.

Input: An input is any data or information provided to a computer. This can be provided by, for example, a keyboard, microphone or camera.

Internet: A global network of computers facilitating communication and access to data.

Internet Service Provider (ISP): The company that connects the devices in your home to the Internet for a fee.

IP Address: A unique numerical number assigned to your device so that it can connect and communicate with other devices on the Internet and transfer data.

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L

Local Area Network (LAN): Computers that are geographically close to each other which are connected together, for example at school or in an office building.

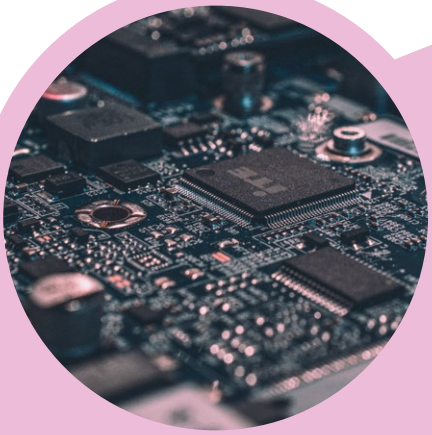
M

Malware: Software that is designed to deliberately damage or gain unauthorised access to a computer system.

N

Network: A group of linked computers within a building or area

O



Operating System: Computer software that manages the general operation of a computer. Operating systems provide an interface (a program allowing a user to interact with the computer), making it easier for users to operate and use the computer. Operating systems also allow the computer to run multiple applications at the same time and manage the computer's memory.

Output: Information that comes out of a computer. This may be in the form of information on a screen, audio through speakers or through an item printed via a printer.

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P

Phishing: The process of sending electronic communications claiming to be from a legitimate source with the intent of obtaining personal details, for example user names, passwords or bank details. These details may then be used fraudulently.

Profile: The personal information a user displays on social media platforms. This information might include the person's age, contact details, photos and interests.

Program: A stored set of instructions written in programming language designed to tell a computer how to achieve a result.

R

Remote access: This is where a computer or network is accessed from a location outside where the user is operating the computer. For example, a helpdesk technician may need to gain remote access to a computer in order to fix a problem.

Repetition: When one or more instructions in a program are repeated. For example, programming a character to walk in a video game would involve repeated instructions.

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S

Scam: A method of extracting money or information fraudulently through online communications such as emails.

Screen grab: A way of taking a picture of a computer or mobile phone screen to capture the information on it at that particular time.

Search Engine: Software that searches the Internet for information in the form of text, pictures, sound or video. The user types keywords or phrases into the search engine according to the information they want to find out. They may use 'boolean operators' (see above) to widen or narrow a search.

Sequence: The method of placing programming instructions in the correct order so that the desired end result is achieved.

Server: A computer or system that provides services, data or programmes to other computers over a network. The device that makes a request from the server and receives a response from it is called a 'client'.

Simulate: This is where a computer models or mimics the appearance and behaviour of a real-life system. For example, a flight simulator is a device that artificially re-creates the environment of an aeroplane flight and is used as a training tool for pilots.

T

Trojans: Software that is made to look legitimate but is actually a piece of malware (see above). Trojans are often used by hackers to gain access to systems in order to carry out criminal activities.

Trolling: Sending derogatory or malicious messages publicly online to another user. The originator of the message is called a 'troll'. Trolling is often carried out anonymously.

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U

Uniform Resource Locator (URL): An address for a specific website, page or file on the Internet. URLs are typed into the browser's address bar to tell it to load the particular resource.

V

Variable: A piece of information in a program that is able to change. This may be needed to show, for example, a changing time or score.

Virus: A type of malware (see above); a malicious code or program written specifically to alter the way a computer operates. Computer viruses can spread to other devices, for example through email and text message attachments and downloads.

W

Wired: Where computers and other devices are connected using cables. These cables are used to transfer data between computer systems and devices.

Wireless: Where computers and other devices transfer data through the air using radio waves without the use of cables.

World Wide Web: An interconnected collection of web pages accessible through the Internet.