

GLOSSARY

3.1 COMPUTERS

CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT (CPU) The part of a computer which carries out the general-purpose instructions of *programs*, including arithmetic, logic, control and *input/output* operations.

GRAPHICS PROCESSING UNIT (GPU) The part of a computer which is designed to quickly produce images and animations such as in a *user interface*. Its electronic circuitry is far more efficient than a CPU at processing large blocks of visual data in parallel.

HARDWARE All the physical parts of a computer, as opposed to its *data* and *software*. Hardware components include *memory*, processors and *input/output* devices, usually all connected via a main circuit board called the motherboard.

INPUT/OUTPUT (I/O) The communication between a computer and the outside world, such as a human or another computer. Input devices include the mouse, keyboard, touchscreen, cameras, sensors (accelerometers, ambient light sensors), storage devices and *routers*. Output devices include screens, printers, speakers, storage devices and routers.

MEMORY Computer components which record and store *data*. Modern computers have fast, small and more expensive memory called random access memory (RAM) close to the CPU, and slower, cheaper memory called persistent storage further away.

OPERATING SYSTEM (OS) *Software* which manages the relationship between *hardware* and application *programs*, and supports a *user interface* for users to control applications. Operating systems include OS X, Windows, Linux, Android and iOS.

SOFTWARE Sets of rules or instructions, but different from *algorithms* in that they are written in precise language a computer can understand. A CPU understands a very limited set of simple instructions written in machine code. Very few programmers work at this level, so computer scientists have developed programming languages, which sit between the ideas in the algorithm and the computer's machine code.

USER INTERFACE (UI) The part of the *program* and *operating system* that the user sees on the screen. A graphical user interface provides easier-to-use visual tools to control applications.

RAM is used to store data temporarily so that programs can use it; it no longer stores data when it has no power. This is why some operating systems lose your work when you don't save it.

3.2 NETWORKS

CASCADING STYLE SHEETS (CSS) A language used to describe the presentation of a document written in HTML or other markup languages. CSS is designed to allow web designers to separate the content of web pages from their style (layout, fonts, colours).

HYPERTEXT MARKUP LANGUAGE (HTML) The language used to create most web pages. Web browsers can read HTML files and render them into web pages. HTML can refer web browsers to *cascading style sheets* to define the look and layout of the content on web pages.

HYPERLINK A reference to *data* that the reader can access to clicking or tapping on the displayed text or image. On the *World Wide Web*, hyperlinks connect *web pages*, files and other content.

INTERNET A vast network of computers connected via cables, phone networks and WiFi which supports many services including the *world wide web*, email and communications, all using shared protocols (TCP/IP) to communicate.

NETWORK A collection of connected computers which can exchange *data* using an agreed method (protocol). The computers can be connected with cables, or wirelessly, for example via WiFi or Bluetooth. A network in a small area like a home, a school or an office is called a local area network (LAN).

ROUTER A device which forwards *data* packets between different *networks* and other routers. Routers act like traffic directors, reading intended destinations for data packets and sending them on to the next part of their route.

SWITCH On a local network, a device which connects together *computers*, printers, *servers* and other devices, receiving and forwarding data between cables. They are different to *routers* because they don't deal with the entire route, only the next leg.

UNIFORM RESOURCE LOCATOR (URL) A type of web address which names a web resource (such as a web page), specifies its address and says how to get to it (a protocol). They can also be used to transfer files, send emails and access *databases*. Most *web browsers* display web page URLs in their address bar.

WEB BROWSER A *software* application for retrieving, presenting and traversing resources on the *world wide web*, and helping users to do so with a *user interface*. Web browsers include Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Opera and Safari.

WEB SERVER A device which stores, processes, receives and delivers web pages and other content to and from users, mainly for the *world wide web*. Users communicate with web servers via *web browsers*, which request content using the HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP).

WEBSITE A set of related web pages usually provided from a single domain, hosted on at least one *web server*. Websites are accessible via a network such as the *internet* through a URL.

WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW) An information space where documents and other web resources are identified by URLs, interlinked by *hyperlinks*, and can be accessed via the *internet*.

This is why URLs begin with <http://>. The URL has to tell web browsers not only which page to find but also how to get it – by using the HTTP.

3.3 DATA

ARRAY A *data* type composed of elements which are identified and selected by their key. Arrays are used in almost every *program* to make it easier to store a collection of related *variables* which are accessed by choosing their key when the program runs.

BINARY A number system which represents numeric values with two symbols, typically 0 and 1. Decimal numbers have place value in powers of 10 (1, 10, 100 etc.), whereas binary numbers have place value in powers of 2 (1, 2, 4, 8, 16 etc.). The binary number 10110 has a decimal value of $16 + 4 + 2 = 22$.

BIT The basic unit of *information*, symbolised as *b* or *bit*. It can have only one of two values, usually represented as a 0 or a 1.

BYTE A unit of *information* equal to eight *bits*, symbolised as *B*. Multiples of bytes can be symbolised with the standard unit prefixes *kilo-* and *mega-* etc., but there is confusion as to whether these prefixes mean powers of 1000, or powers of 1024 (2^{10}). For kB and MB the difference is small but it quickly becomes significant above that.

kilo means one thousand, mega means one million, giga means one billion, and tera means one trillion. There are prefixes for powers of 1024 (kibi, mebi and gibi) but few people use them.

DATA Any sequence of symbols which can convey meaning when interpreted. Data is not *information*: it is meaningless on its own. In computers, data is represented, stored and transferred using *binary*. Data structures, such as *arrays* and *objects*, can store data of different types, including numbers, images, strings of text and even other data structures.

DATABASE An organised collection of related *data*. A database management system is *software* that allows users to enter, store and retrieve data to allow *programs* to be run using it. Programs can use the data to make decisions for users to run complex systems.

INFORMATION *Data* with meaning. When data is structured and processed so that it can be interpreted, and decisions or conclusions can be made using it, it becomes information.

PIXEL The smallest controllable point in a digital image. Each pixel is represented by one or more *bits*. A one-bit-per-pixel image (1 bpp) has pixels of two colours: black or white; an 8 bpp image has 256 colours per pixel, and a 24 bpp ('Truecolor') image can combine 256 different shades of red, green and blue.

Eight bits can make 256 colours because an eight-digit binary number can represent any decimal number from 0 to 255.

SEARCH To identify *data* that satisfies one or more *conditions*, such as *web pages* containing supplied keywords, or files on a computer with certain properties.

3.4 CODING

ACTION *Commands* which are run on an *object*, and cause it to change behaviour. Actions like **UP**, **DOWN** or **STOP** can move an object. Actions are often called methods.

ALGORITHM A precisely defined procedure – a sequence of instructions, or a set of rules, for performing a specific task (e.g. changing a wheel or making a sandwich). While all correct algorithms should produce the right answer, some are more efficient than others. Computer scientists are interested in finding better algorithms, partly out of intellectual curiosity, and partly because they can make massive savings in cost and time.

ASSIGNMENT OPERATOR A type of *operator* that is used to set or change the value of a *variable*. An example is **SET TO** which changes a variable's value: **a SET TO 2** will change the value of the variable **a** to 2.

BLOCK *Commands* that are grouped together and are run when a condition is met or when an event occurs. One could have a **WHEN CLICKED** block: the commands in the block would be run when a mouse click occurs. In 2Code, commands in a block are given the same indentation and background colour to show they are part of the same block. In many programming languages, blocks of code are surrounded by curly brackets **{}**.

BUG A mistake in code that prevents the *program* from behaving in the way the coder intended.

COLLISION DETECTION Detecting when two *sprites* on the screen bump into each other. They are often used in a game to detect when a character hits a 'baddy'.

COMMAND A single instruction within a *program*. A program usually contains several commands. Sometimes commands are called statements.

CONCATENATION Adding text together: one could add two pieces of text **'The cat' + ' sat on the mat'** to create a single piece of text **'The cat sat on the mat'**.

CONDITION The trigger for a *command* to be run. For example, the trigger determines whether or not to run the **IF** or **ELSE** block in an if/else command or whether to keep repeating in a repeat until command. In **IF a = b THEN PRINT 'something' ELSE PRINT 'nothing'**, the condition is **a = b**.

Think of algorithms as being like recipes, with steps to follow in order. There can be several ways of cooking the same dish. Programs are collections of algorithms, like a recipe book.

CONDITIONAL OPERATOR An *operator* (represented by a symbol) which is interpreted as either **TRUE** or **FALSE** depending on the values either side of it. It is used as part of a *condition*. Examples are *equals* (as in **IF a = b**) which will be **TRUE** if the values of **a** and **b** are the same. Other examples are *not equals* (**!=**), *less than* (**<**) and *greater than* (**>**).

CONSOLE LOG An output window for a *program* that is used for *debugging*. It is usually a scrolling list of messages saying what the program is doing, or showing errors in the program.

DEBUGGER A tool that helps fix problems in code. Debuggers often have a *console log* and the ability to pause a *program*, step through code line by line and inspect *variables*. Often programmers spend as much time debugging as writing code.

EVENTS An occurrence that causes a *block* of code to be run. The event could be time related or could be some user *input* such as pressing a key or tapping the screen.

FUNCTIONS In coding, a named group of *commands* that can be run many times. To save repetition the commands can be put into a *function* and given a name. Calling the function (use its name) will run all the commands in that function. An example could be mixing: in a recipe, one might perform the function called mixing (which includes commands like picking up the spoon, holding the bowl and circling your hand) several times.

IF / ELSE A *command* that tests a *condition*. If the condition is true then the commands inside the **IF** *block* are run. If the condition is not true and there is an **ELSE** block, then the commands inside the **ELSE** block are run.

LOGICAL OPERATORS *Operators* that are used for combining *conditions*, allowing for complex tests to be made. The most common logical operators are **AND** and **OR**. A condition using a logical operator could be **IF a > 0 AND a < 10 THEN PRINT 'a is between 1 and 9'**. They are beyond the primary school curriculum but have been included in the 2Code *Gorilla advanced debug challenges*.

MATHEMATICAL OPERATOR An *operator* which is a mathematical statement, e.g. **+**, **-**, **×** and **÷**. The mathematical operator **+** in the code **a + 2** will evaluate to 4 if the *variable* **a** equals 2.

OBJECT An element in a *program* that can be created and manipulated using the object's *actions* or *properties*. In 2Code all the elements on the screen are objects.

Debugging is one of the most rewarding aspects of coding. It is an excellent way to promote resilience, collaboration and thinking logically.

In computer science, a function describes what you want to happen to an input to produce an output. An algorithm is one particular way of doing that.

Many programming languages have things also called functions, which are named groups of commands.

OPERATOR A symbol such as $+$, $=$ or **AND** that represents a process to apply to the objects on either side. For example, $a + b$ or **IF a OR b = 2**. In 2Code there are four types of operators: *assignment operators, conditional operators, mathematical operators and logical operators.*

PROGRAM A stored set of instructions written in a language understood by a computer that performs a specific task when executed. A computer requires programs to work, and typically executes the program's instructions in a *central processing unit*.

PROPERTIES Qualities that are associated with an *object*. Examples include colour, speed or angle. Properties of an object can be changed in a similar way to *variables* by using *assignment operators*.

REPETITION When a *program* repeats a set of *commands*, either a set number of times or until a condition is met. In 2Code this could be done using **REPEAT**, **REPEAT UNTIL** or by using a timer.

SELECTION A decision *command*, where a *program* chooses a different outcome depending on a *condition*, such as **REPEAT UNTIL** or **IF/ELSE**.

SPRITE An element on the screen, usually an image. Sprites are often animated and can be set to move around the screen. They are often used to represent characters within a game.

VARIABLE Things used to keep track of the things that can change while a *program* is running, for example, reading the on/off state of a switch, counting the number of swipes before running a *command*, or changing the numbers in a timer. The user, the program or another variable can change a variable value. In 2Code, variables can be either numbers or text.

Variables are like boxes that the computer can use to store information. Each variable needs to have a name, which should help the coder remember what it is. The information inside the box is called the variable value.