**Different Classes and Types of Computer Software**

Computer software is a general term used to describe a collection of computer programs, procedures and documentation that perform some tasks on a computer system. Software includes websites, programs, video games, etc.

There are different classes of computer software which are useful for several purposes.

*System Software* coordinates the complete system hardware and provides an environment or platform for all the other types of software to work in. It is the most basic type of software. It is essential for other programs, applications and the whole computer system to function.

*Application Software* is programs that help the user perform tasks of his/ her choice. They are non-essential software which are installed and run depending on the requirements in the software environment. (for example, MS Office, OpenOffice, media players, educational software, multimedia development software, antivirus software, etc.)

*Programming software* is used to write, test, debug, and develop other software programs and applications. They are used for creating the system and application software. //…//This software is used to translate programming languages into machine language code. Translators can be compilers, interpreters and assemblers. Different programming language editors, debuggers, compilers and Integrated Development Environments (IDE) are examples of programming software.

There are **five additional subcategories of software**. These are: Freeware; Shareware; Open Source Software; Closed Source Software; Utility Software.

*Freeware software* is any software that can be used for free. They can be downloaded and installed over the internet without any cost.

*Shareware* are paid programs, but are made available for free for a limited period of time known as ‘trial period’.

*Open Source* Software is a type of software that has an open-source code that is available to use for all users. It can be modified and shared with anyone for any purpose.

For *Closed Source Software*, the source code is the intellectual property of software publishers. Only the original authors can copy, modify and share the software. (.NET; Android; Microsoft Office; Adobe PhotoShop.)

Utility software is considered a subgroup of system software. They manage the performance of your hardware and application software. Some features of utility software include: Antivirus and security software; File compressor; Disk cleaner; Disk defragmentation software; Data backup software.

/ The software can be categorized based on the function they perform such as Application software, System software, Programming Software, and Driver software. They can also be classified based on different features such as the nature of source code, accessibility, and cost of usage./