The primary reason the world needs programming is that a computer is useless unless there is a computer program to tell it what to do. This is done with the aid of a programming language (1). Computers are everywhere in our everyday lives from your car to your refrigerator, from an aeroplane to your bank. Someone needs to tell these computers what to do in order for the item it is embedded in to be able to function.

In order to take advantage of all these items that rely on a programming language we need people skilled in those programming languages. This can involve several years of training and as technology moves on will at times need further training. It would increase the availability of people skilled in programming languages if everyone was to learn them as part of their schooling just like English and Maths. It is not necessary for everyone to learn it to an advanced level, but it would be helpful as technology progresses if everyone at least has an appreciation of programming and could do simple tasks which could make their life easier. An example would be calculating their taxes or household budget.

Programming is also used as part of the development cycle of the end product that uses programming. This could be creating the database that contains the data used by the computer program or running test scripts against the computer program in order to make sure it does what it should (2). There are many people in an IT department that perform these functions and each person specialises in one or more areas.

If you wanted to remove programming from our lives we would have to go back in time to the way things were many years ago – aeroplanes would have to be built and run without the help of computers, cars would have to be simplified to remove all the computers and technology that uses them (like engine management systems or satellite navigation systems. Banks would have to go back to using cheques and paper ledgers and credit/debit cards would cease to exist.

(1) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Programming_language>

(2) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_programming>