Programming languages are essential for software development..  
 Allen Downey, in his book How To Think Like A Computer Scientist, writes:  
 Many computer languages provide a mechanism to call functions provided by shared libraries.  
In 1206, the Arab engineer Al-Jazari invented a programmable drum machine where a musical mechanical automaton could be made to play different rhythms and drum patterns, via pegs and cams.  
The choice of language used is subject to many considerations, such as company policy, suitability to task, availability of third-party packages, or individual preference.  
They are the building blocks for all software, from the simplest applications to the most sophisticated ones.  
Sometimes software development is known as software engineering, especially when it employs formal methods or follows an engineering design process.  
 In the 1880s, Herman Hollerith invented the concept of storing data in machine-readable form.  
By the late 1960s, data storage devices and computer terminals became inexpensive enough that programs could be created by typing directly into the computers.  
In the 9th century, the Arab mathematician Al-Kindi described a cryptographic algorithm for deciphering encrypted code, in A Manuscript on Deciphering Cryptographic Messages.  
Compilers harnessed the power of computers to make programming easier by allowing programmers to specify calculations by entering a formula using infix notation.  
 Some languages are very popular for particular kinds of applications, while some languages are regularly used to write many different kinds of applications.  
 Readability is important because programmers spend the majority of their time reading, trying to understand, reusing and modifying existing source code, rather than writing new source code.  
This can be a non-trivial task, for example as with parallel processes or some unusual software bugs.  
 The first step in most formal software development processes is requirements analysis, followed by testing to determine value modeling, implementation, and failure elimination (debugging).