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..  
There exist a lot of different approaches for each of those tasks.  
Unreadable code often leads to bugs, inefficiencies, and duplicated code.  
Many factors, having little or nothing to do with the ability of the computer to efficiently compile and execute the code, contribute to readability.  
 Auxiliary tasks accompanying and related to programming include analyzing requirements, testing, debugging (investigating and fixing problems), implementation of build systems, and management of derived artifacts, such as programs' machine code.  
 Following a consistent programming style often helps readability.  
For example, when a bug in a compiler can make it crash when parsing some large source file, a simplification of the test case that results in only few lines from the original source file can be sufficient to reproduce the same crash.  
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.  
 In the 1880s, Herman Hollerith invented the concept of storing data in machine-readable form.  
 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 1801, the Jacquard loom could produce entirely different weaves by changing the "program" – a series of pasteboard cards with holes punched in them.  
 Computer programmers are those who write computer software.  
Trade-offs from this ideal involve finding enough programmers who know the language to build a team, the availability of compilers for that language, and the efficiency with which programs written in a given language execute.  
However, Charles Babbage had already written his first program for the Analytical Engine in 1837.  
Scripting and breakpointing is also part of this process.