The purpose of programming is to find a sequence of instructions that will automate the performance of a task (which can be as complex as an operating system) on a computer, often for solving a given problem.  
This is interpreted into machine code.  
However, with the concept of the stored-program computer introduced in 1949, both programs and data were stored and manipulated in the same way in computer memory.  
However, Charles Babbage had already written his first program for the Analytical Engine in 1837.  
Later a control panel (plug board) added to his 1906 Type I Tabulator allowed it to be programmed for different jobs, and by the late 1940s, unit record equipment such as the IBM 602 and IBM 604, were programmed by control panels in a similar way, as were the first electronic computers.  
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.  
However, because an assembly language is little more than a different notation for a machine language, two machines with different instruction sets also have different assembly languages.  
Scripting and breakpointing is also part of this process.  
Some text editors such as Emacs allow GDB to be invoked through them, to provide a visual environment.  
One approach popular for requirements analysis is Use Case analysis.  
Trial-and-error/divide-and-conquer is needed: the programmer will try to remove some parts of the original test case and check if the problem still exists.  
He gave the first description of cryptanalysis by frequency analysis, the earliest code-breaking algorithm.  
Many programmers use forms of Agile software development where the various stages of formal software development are more integrated together into short cycles that take a few weeks rather than years.  
Methods of measuring programming language popularity include: counting the number of job advertisements that mention the language, the number of books sold and courses teaching the language (this overestimates the importance of newer languages), and estimates of the number of existing lines of code written in the language (this underestimates the number of users of business languages such as COBOL).  
  
The first compiler related tool, the A-0 System, was developed in 1952 by Grace Hopper, who also coined the term 'compiler'.