They are the building blocks for all software, from the simplest applications to the most sophisticated ones.  
It is usually easier to code in "high-level" languages than in "low-level" ones.  
Relatedly, software engineering combines engineering techniques and principles with software development.  
It affects the aspects of quality above, including portability, usability and most importantly maintainability.  
In 1801, the Jacquard loom could produce entirely different weaves by changing the "program" – a series of pasteboard cards with holes punched in them.  
For example, COBOL is still strong in corporate data centers often on large mainframe computers, Fortran in engineering applications, scripting languages in Web development, and C in embedded 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.  
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.  
Also, those involved with software development may at times engage in reverse engineering, which is the practice of seeking to understand an existing program so as to re-implement its function in some way.  
Provided the functions in a library follow the appropriate run-time conventions (e.g., method of passing arguments), then these functions may be written in any other language.  
Assembly languages were soon developed that let the programmer specify instruction in a text format (e.g., ADD X, TOTAL), with abbreviations for each operation code and meaningful names for specifying addresses.  
Unreadable code often leads to bugs, inefficiencies, and duplicated code.  
Many applications use a mix of several languages in their construction and use.  
They are the building blocks for all software, from the simplest applications to the most sophisticated ones.  
 Implementation techniques include imperative languages (object-oriented or procedural), functional languages, and logic languages.