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.  
In the 9th century, the Arab mathematician Al-Kindi described a cryptographic algorithm for deciphering encrypted code, in A Manuscript on Deciphering Cryptographic Messages.  
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.  
This can be a non-trivial task, for example as with parallel processes or some unusual software bugs.  
Compilers harnessed the power of computers to make programming easier by allowing programmers to specify calculations by entering a formula using infix notation.  
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.  
FORTRAN, the first widely used high-level language to have a functional implementation, came out in 1957, and many other languages were soon developed—in particular, COBOL aimed at commercial data processing, and Lisp for computer research.  
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.  
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.  
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.  
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 New languages are generally designed around the syntax of a prior language with new functionality added, (for example C++ adds object-orientation to C, and Java adds memory management and bytecode to C++, but as a result, loses efficiency and the ability for low-level manipulation).  
It affects the aspects of quality above, including portability, usability and most importantly maintainability.  
Relatedly, software engineering combines engineering techniques and principles with software development.  
Use of a static code analysis tool can help detect some possible problems.