



Kids That Code Child oriented “Learning to Code”

Application Reviews
by Art Shapiro

About Art: I spent my entire career as an engineering code developer. I wrote engineering computer software. What I have found is to be an expert in writing code:

- you first need an education in the discipline that you are writing the software for,
- plus training in numerical methods.

This can not be accomplished by a 4 week “how to write computer code” class. However, you can start teaching the foundation in "logical thinking on code creation" to 5 year olds.

For a thought exercise example, write a sequence of instructions (i.e., code) on how to brush your teeth and give it to someone else to execute. Example:

1. An adult will start the code off by saying “put toothpaste on the toothbrush” as the first execution statement. This will lead to a computational fault unless you started execution in the bathroom with the toothbrush and toothpaste clearly visible.
2. A young child will start the code off by saying, “go to the bathroom” as the first execution statement.

I have been evaluating code training apps and materials for children. I test them out with my granddaughter Rheannon (just turned 6) to see what works. I haven’t found anything that is perfect. I wish I could merge some of the apps together to create the perfect learning environment. Over the next several posts I will critique several apps to start teaching code at the 5-6 year old level (i.e., pre-reading, icon syntax code commands) and then move on to more advanced learning environments where reading word syntax commands is necessary.