Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

Techies Urge Kids to Learn Code

March 18, 2013

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/2013/03/techies-urge-kids-to-learn-code/

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension

PROCEDURE

1. WARM UP
Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

2. MAIN ACTIVITY
Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

3. DISCUSSION
Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.

INITIATING QUESTIONS

1. What are some skills that you will need when you graduate school and start to look for jobs?

2. Does your school provide any classes in computer science?

3. Do you know any computer code? If so, how did you learn?

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What does computer code do?
It instructs a computer to do certain tasks and functions

2. Who is the founder of Microsoft, who also spoke in the video?
Bill Gates

3. What is the name of the organization that these tech pioneers are endorsing?
Code.org

4. Which Miami Heat basketball player says he faced teasing in school for being a computer nerd?

Chris Bosh

5. What math does Bill Gates say you need to know in order to code?
"Addition. Subtraction. That's about it."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. Do you think all students should learn how to code? Why or why not?

2. What might be a benefit of knowing code, even if you don't work in a field where you need it?

3. Do you think learning code will be more important or less important in the future? Why?

Extension Activity
Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.

Student Worksheet

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