

Courtesy of Kalina Wong. Used with permission.

## KalinaWong5

Yes. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger. It's sort of like math. Few will claim affinity to it, yet it teaches us essential skills, skills beyond balancing equations and helping us fill out our taxes. Math teaches us a way of thinking, teaches us a process of problem solving. Learning to create a computer program will do the same. Students experience the process of design (i.e. thinking about who the users will be, what components will they need). Not only will students have to worry about the user interface, they'll also have to think about the structure and organization of the program itself -- the program that needs to be written. And, in writing the program, students will need to think about what's the best way to represent certain objects and what's the fastest way to implement a task. Then comes debugging...at the very least, "Where's Waldo?" will be a piece of cake after that. In the end, it's not necessary to make a career out of it, but the skills a person takes away gives him/her a new way of looking at the world.

And, as technology becomes more and more integrated into our daily lives, it would be useful to understand the know-how that goes behind the products we grow increasingly dependent upon -- to close the fluency gap (Resnick, 2001). Also, becoming fluent in computer language opens a door to unique possibilities that wouldn't be offered if instead you chose to learn French.