

Classe 3 Sirio, CLIL Informatica. Free Software

I'm Richard Stallman. 25 years ago I founded the Free Software movement.

Free Software is software that respects the user's freedom and the social solidarity of his community. Non free programs are proprietary software; that is, they take away the users' freedom keeping them divided and helpless.

Divided because they are forbidden from sharing the program, and helpless because the users don't have the source code of the program. That is, they cannot change it, they cannot find out what the program is really doing, and it can do very bad things.

Free Software means that the user has the 4 essential freedoms:

Freedom 0 is the freedom to run the program for any purpose.

Freedom 1 is the freedom to study the source code of the program and change it to make it do what you wish.

Freedom 2 is the freedom to help your neighbor; that is, the freedom to make and distribute exact copies of the program whenever you want.

And freedom 3 is the freedom to contribute to your community; that is, the freedom to make and distribute copies of your modified versions of the program.

With these four freedoms a program is Free Software because the social system for its use and distribution is an ethical system that respects everyone's freedom and the freedom of the community of users.

Software must be Free because we all deserve freedom, we all deserve to be allowed to participate in a free community.

Therefore, schools should teach only Free Software. There are four reasons why this is so.

The most shallow reason is to save money. Schools don't have enough money, so they shouldn't waste their money paying for permission to use proprietary software.

This is an obvious reason, but some proprietary software companies usually eliminate this reason by donating copies of their proprietary programs to the school at no charge or at a small price.

The reason why they do that is to get students addicted. It's a malicious plan. It's a plan to use schools as instruments to impose a permanent dependence on students.

If a school teaches how to use a proprietary program, the student will be dependent on that program and after he graduates he will have to pay to use that program. He will probably work for a company that does not receive copies of the program free of charge.

Therefore, proprietary software developers use schools to impose permanent dependence on the whole society. Schools must refuse to participate in such a malicious plan because schools have a social mission which is to educate the next generation to be good citizens of a capable, strong, independent, cooperating and free society. This can only be achieved by teaching Free Software. Schools must eliminate, delete proprietary software and install Free Software.

But there is a deeper reason: to form good programmers, because in order to learn good programming skills students need to read lots of code and write lots of code. To learn to write good code for big programs students need to write small changes in the code of big programs. All this is possible only with Free Software. Only Free Software allows education in information technology.

But there is still a deeper reason: to teach good citizenship, because schools have the mission to teach not only facts and technical skills, but above all the spirit of good will, the habit of helping others.

Therefore, each class should have this rule: students, if you bring a program to the class, you can't keep it for yourself, you must share it with the rest of the class.

The school should practice what it preaches, it should introduce only Free Software in the classroom.

All schools should migrate to Free Software and teach exclusively Free Software because each school should participate in leading society towards freedom and social solidarity.

Thank you.

<http://www.gnu.org/education/misc/rms-education-es-translation-to-en.txt>



1. Illustration:

<http://www.gnu.org>