T. Top
Computer Scientist

"THE BEST THING ABOUT COMPUTERS IS THAT THEY DO EXACTLY WHAT YOU TELL THEM TO DO. THE WORST THING ABOUT COMPUTERS IS THAT THEY DO EXACTLY WHAT YOU TELL THEM TO DO."

My family...

My mom teaches kindergarten and I have an 8-year-old sister who annoys me out of my shell sometimes. The most interesting person in my family, in my opinion, is my Uncle Mack. He works for a computer manufacturer and has taught me some really cool stuff about computers. When I was young, he made this really simple robot that we controlled remotely from his laptop. We programmed it to do some pretty neat things that included moving on the floor and drawing intricate shapes on paper. Ever since then, I've been fascinated by computers. I've even borrowed a few books from Uncle Mack so that I can learn more.
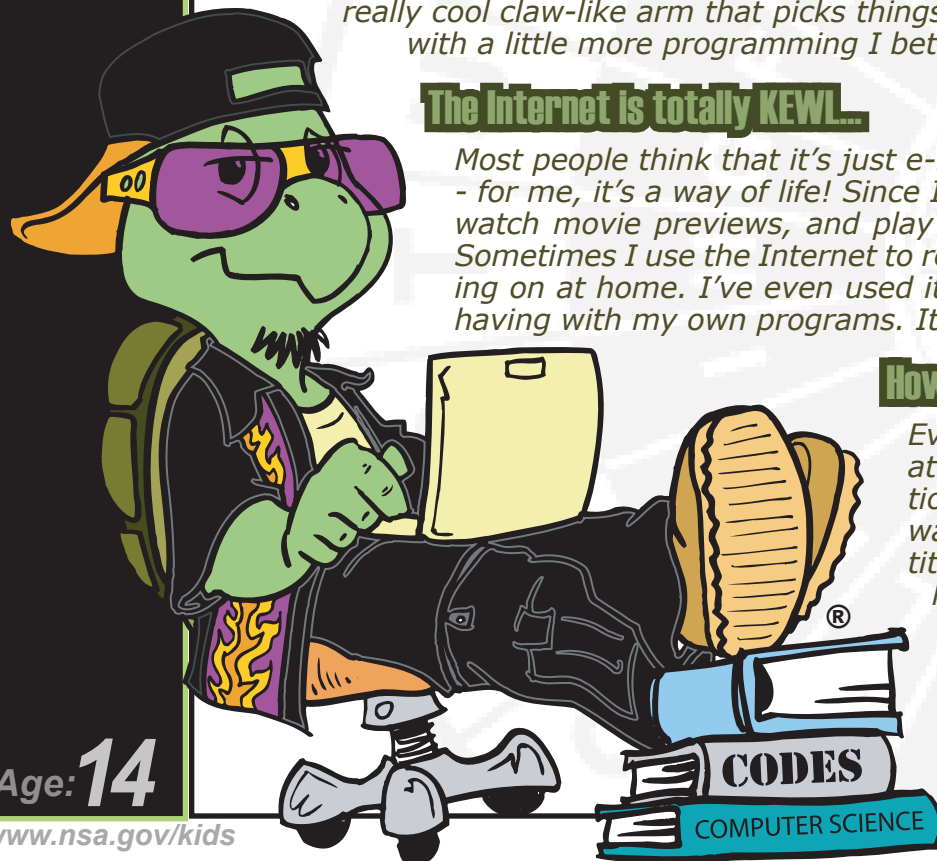
How I got plugged in...

In junior high, I took a computer course that taught me a language called BASIC. I used this to program my first computer game. At the time it seemed like a huge project, but looking back I guess it was actually pretty simple. After I learned a few other programming languages, I wanted to find out how the parts of a computer worked. Uncle Mack let me have some of his outdated computer parts so that I could mess around with them. Most of the stuff seemed pretty easy, so I decided to build my own remote-controlled robot that's got this really cool claw-like arm that picks things up for me. It has a few bugs that I still have to work out, but with a little more programming I bet I can get it to start talking and even walk the dog for me!

The Internet is totally KEWL...

Most people think that it's just e-mail and a bunch of web sites, but there's really so much more - for me, it's a way of life! Since I'm hearing impaired, it's easier for me to chat with my friends, watch movie previews, and play cool multi-player games with people from all over the world. Sometimes I use the Internet to research homework or my latest computer project that I'm working on at home. I've even used it to ask computer industry experts how to solve a problem I'm having with my own programs. It's KEWL!

How I met the CRYPTOKIDS®...

Every Tuesday and Thursday I volunteer in the computer lab at school and one day Crypto Cat® came in with some questions about a pretty advanced secret code she was writing. She wanted me to help her write a program for a cryptology competition that she and her friend Decipher Dog® were entered in. I had known for a long time that she was into cryptology, but I was never really interested in learning about it myself. Once she explained the basics of cryptology and the logic behind it, I thought this would be a really "kewl" project to work on. I met the rest of the team and once the competition was over, we formed a cryptology club that meets once a week to make and break codes.

Age: 14

CODES

COMPUTER SCIENCE