Xraise hosts Hour-of-Code sessions

Hour of Code is a global movement that encourages students of all ages to try a one-hour introduction to computer science and the basics of coding through fun block tutorials. Xraise, in collaboration with CLASSE research scientist Dr. Margaret Koker, has been hosting Hour of Code sessions for middle school students at Beverly J. Martin in downtown Ithaca during the month of November and into December. In these sessions we guide middle school students through the block tutorials hosted by the Hour of Code website, we talk about what computers do and how they are programmed to do tasks, we go on adventures with Ruby (the main character in the Hello Ruby children’s book) where she explores the whimsical world of computing...

The students are intrinsically engaged and excited since the tutorials are tailored to their age range. Many of the tutorials consist of making digital games with characters that they are familiar with, such as Disney’s Frozen or Angry Birds. Last week we even got to play with Star Wars characters from the new movie coming out. With just a few levels into the tutorials, students are making if statements to choose the right paths for their characters or trying loop statements to simplify too many lines of code. It is very exciting to see their progress and how quickly they get some of these computing concepts. “I started programming as a kid on a TI calculator my dad brought home from work. I'd be excited to get kids interested in the process however will best pique their interest” says Dr. Margaret Koker.

Xraise will continue to host these sessions until the end of classes and will introduce more complicated block code challenges to the group.

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