

# Reading Comprehension Module for Informatics Engineering

## Operating Systems

```
$ date
Mon Sep 24 12:45:38 BST 2001
$ passwd
passwd: Changing password for dsea03
Enter login password:
New password:
$ ls
home    local   mnt     packages  scratch
$ logout >
```

Figure 1: Unix

### STARTER

**A. Study the above screen display and answer these questions.**

1. How do you enter Unix commands?
2. Which Unix commands does it show?
3. What is the output of each command?
4. What will happen when the last command is entered?
5. Which other Unix commands do you know?

**B. Read the text and understand the vocabulary contextually then fill the meanings of vocabularies in the box.**

## **LINUX**

Linux has its roots in a student project. In 1992, an undergraduate called Linus Torvalds was studying computer science in Helsinki, Finland. Like most computer science courses, a big component of it was taught on (and about) Unix . Unix was the wonder operating system of the 1970s and 1980s: both a textbook example of the principles of operating system design, and sufficiently robust to be the standard OS in engineering and scientific computing . But Unix was a commercial product (licensed by AT&T to a number of resellers), and cost more than a student could pay.

Annoyed by the shortcomings of Minix (a compact Unix clone written as a teaching aid by Professor Andy Tannenbaum ) Linus set out to write his own 'kernel' — the core of an operating system that handles memory allocation , talks to hardware devices, and makes sure everything keeps running . He used the GNU programming tools developed by Richard Stallman's Free Software Foundation, an organisation of volunteers dedicated to fulfilling Stallman's ideal of making good software that anyone could use without paying. When he'd written a basic kernel, he released the source code to the Linux kernel on the Internet.

Source code is important. It's the original from which compiled programs are generated. If you don't have the source code to a program, you can't modify it to fix bugs or add new features. Most software companies won't sell you their source code, or will only do so for an eye-watering price, because they believe that if they make it available it will destroy their revenue stream.

What happened next was astounding, from the conventional, commercial software industry point of view — and utterly predictable to anyone who knew about the Free Software Foundation. Programmers (mostly academics and students) began using Linux. They found that it didn't do things they wanted it to do - so they fixed it. And where they improved it, they sent the improvements to Linus, who rolled them into the kernel. And Linux began to grow.

### **GLOSSARY**

Roots	:	Core	:
Project	:	Fulfil	:
Wonder	:	Generate	:
Annoyed	:	Astounding	:
Shortcoming	:	Improvement	:

**C. Find the answers to these questions in the following**

1. What did Linus Torvalds use to write the Linux kernel?
2. How was the Linux kernel first made available to the general public?
3. What is a programmer likely to do with source code?
4. Why will most software companies not sell you their source code?
5. What type of utilities and applications are provided in a Linux distribution?

**D. Mark the Following Statements as True (T) or False(F):**

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 1. Linux was created in the 1980s.   | [    ] |
| 2. Minix was created by a university student.                              | [    ] |
| 3. Linus set out to write his own 'kernel'.                                | [    ] |
| 4. If you have the source code to a program, you can modify it to fix bugs | [    ] |
| 5. Programmers, academics and students are reluctant using Linux           | [    ] |

**Let's speak**

**E. Work in pairs, A and B. Each of you has information about some popular operating systems. Find out from the information you have and by asking each other.**

1. What is your favorite OS?
2. Why do you like it?
3. What is the most benefit of your OS?
4. What is the weakness of your OS?

**LANGUAGE WORK**

**-ing form (1) as a noun; after prepositions**

**We can use the -ing form of the verb as a noun. It can be the subject, object, or complement of a sentence. For example:**

1. Managing the computer's resources is an important function of the operating system.
2. The operating system starts *running* the user interface as soon as the PC is switched on.
3. Another function of the operating system is executing and providing services for applications software.

**The -ing form is also used after prepositions. This includes too when it is a preposition and not part of the infinitive. For example:**

4. Without the user being aware of the details, the operating system manages the computer's resources.
5. We begin by focusing on the interaction between a user and a PC operating system.

**F. Complete these sentences with the correct form of the verb: infinitive or -ing form.**

1. Don't switch off without (close down) your PC.
2. I want to (upgrade) my computer.
3. He can't get used to (log on) with a password.
4. You can find information on the Internet by (use) a search engine.
5. He objected to (pay) expensive telephone calls for Internet access.
6. He tried to (hack into) the system without (know) the password.

7. You needn't learn how to (program) in HTML before (design) webpages.
8. I look forward to (input) data by voice in stead of (use) a keyboard.

Let's write



**G. This description of the Mac OS X is drawn from the table below. Write a similar description of Linux.**

Mac OS X is a Unix-based operating system designed for use on Apple Mac computers. It includes memory-protection, pre-emptive multitasking and symmetric multiprocessing support. Graphics are provided by a graphics engine known as Quartz. It has advanced-PDF standards support, OpenGL and Quick time integrated into the OS. The operating system features are accessed through a graphical user interface called Aqua.

Linux is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

	Mac OS X	Linux
Type	Unix-based	Unix-based
computer feature	Apple Mac Memory protection, pre-emptive multi- tasking, symmetric multiprocessing support	wide variety variety of distribution kits available
graphics engine	Quartz	XFree86
standard support	advanced-PDF, Open GL, Quick time	
user interface type	GUI	command line, GUI
user interface	Aqua	KDE, Gnome
source code	not available	freely available
availability		

Let's have fun

**Task 1**  
**Making list**

There are many words in the ball. Sort and list them into the correct group.

Noun

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Adjective

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Verb

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Adverb

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Pronoun

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Article

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Preposition

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Conjunction

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Plants feed their  
foods from roots  
carefully The plant  
roots take and make  
good mineral salts,  
nitrates, phosphates  
and sulphates from  
water

**Task 2**

**Make 5 sentences using the words above in the ball.**

1. 

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2. 

---
3. 

---
4. 

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5. 

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