Teenager makes millions with news app

27th March, 2013

A British teenager has become a multi-millionaire after selling an app he created to web giant Yahoo. The deal is reported to be worth up to $30 million and includes a position working on Yahoo's future mobile projects. Nick D'Aloisio, 17, started his Summly app when he was just 15. He was studying for school exams and became frustrated at ploughing through lengthy online articles. He created the app to summarise long reports so people could more easily digest the content. Yahoo's boss of mobile content development Adam Cahan said: "It started with an insight, that we live in a world of constant information and need new ways to simplify how we find the stories that are important to us, at a glance."

Mr D'Aloisio started coding when he was 12 years old and developed the bulk of his Summly app in his bedroom. He launched his app when he was 15 and it soon attracted over $1.5 million of investment, including from Hollywood stars Ashton Kutcher and Stephen Fry. The acquisition by Yahoo makes the British teen one of the world's youngest self-made millionaires. He believes his tie-up with Yahoo is perfect, saying: "To me, Yahoo is the best company to be joining right now because it's one of these classic Internet companies. With new leadership from Marissa Mayer, Yahoo has a strong focus on mobile and product, and that's the perfect fit for Summly."

Sources: *BBC / L.A. Timess*

Writing

Students should have coding lessons at school every day. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

teenager / multi-millionaire / Yahoo / school exams / lengthy online articles / insight / coding / investment / acquisition / self-made / classic / mobile / focus / the perfect fit

True / False

a) A teenager sold an app to Google for around $30 million. T / F

b) The teenager, Nick D'Aloisio, also landed a job at Yahoo. T / F

c) Nick thought of the app after getting fed up with long online texts. T / F

d) A Yahoo boss said we need more than a few glances to look at news. T / F

e) Nick started coding when he was just seven years old. T / F

f) People invested more than $1.5 million in his product when he was 15. T / F

g) Nick is the world's youngest multi-millionaire. T / F

h) Nick believes his partnership with Yahoo is perfect. T / F

Synonym Match

1.	worth	a.	understand
2	deal	b.	purchase
3.	ploughing	c.	brief look
4.	digest	d.	programming
5.	glance	e.	funding
6.	coding	f.	relationship
7.	investment	g.	valued at
8.	acquisition	h.	match
9.	tie-up	i.	agreement
10.	fit	j.	wading

Discussion – Student A

a) Can you see possibilities for you to get rich via the Internet?

b) How can we get kids to be business-minded with technology?

c) What are your favorite apps and why?

d) How do apps change your life?

e) What do you think of Yahoo?

f) What company would be the perfect fit for you?

g) What questions would you like to ask Nick D'Aloisio?

h) What do you think his answers might be?

Phrase Match

1.	multi-		a.	lengthy online articles
2	The deal is reported to be		b.	made millionaires
3.	frustrated at ploughing through		c.	digest the content
4.	people could more easily		d.	$1.5 million of investment
5.	at		e.	fit
6.	Mr D'Aloisio started		f.	millionaire
7.	attracted over		g.	mobile and product
8.	the world's youngest self-		h.	a glance
9.	Yahoo has a strong focus on		i.	worth up to $30 million
10.	the perfect		j.	coding when he was 12

Discussion – Student B

a) What do you think of the idea of Summly?

b) What do you think it's like to become a millionaire at the age of 17?

c) Do you think it's a good deal for Yahoo?

d) Why do you think Nick has taken a job with Yahoo when he's so rich?

e) What frustrates you about reading things online?

f) How clever do you have to be to write an app?

g) In what ways do we "live in a world of constant information"?

h) Should all kids learn to code?

Spelling

1. become a tmuli-mieliioanrl

2. became tefdrsruat

3. nyelhtg online articles

4. more easily tsiegd the content

5. It started with an ntgisih

6. at a lnecag

7. developed the klub of his Summly app

8. He nalhuecd his app when he was 15

9. The sqitiucaoin by Yahoo

10. his eut-pi with Yahoo

11. one of these cailcss Internet companies

12. new dlrpseihae

Role Play

Coding teacher - You believe coding is one of the most important things kids can learn. Tell the others three reasons why. You think children should learn coding for two hours a day at school instead of subjects like art, history and foreign languages. Coding will change the world.

Tech-hating parent - You don't understand why people are talking so much about coding. Coding is for geeks and nerds. You want your children to learn useful things like art, history and foreign languages. Tell the others three reasons why. Also tell them coding will never change anything in the world.

English teacher - You learning English is the most important thing your students can do. Tell the others three reasons why. English is the world language. Everyone can get a good job with English. Coding jobs do not pay good money. You think coding should never be a school subject.

Kid - You love technology. You really want to be a coder. Tell the others three reasons why. Your school subjects are boring because you cannot create anything. You want to learn coding so you can change the future and work for cool companies like Apple or Yahoo and be rich.

Speaking - Summaries

What do you think is best summarised? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often.

- world news
- instructions
- a novel
- e-mails
- what your friends say
- what a teacher says
- textbook chapters
- telephone bills

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	T

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. i	3. e	4. a	5. c
6. d	7. e	8. b	9. i	10. h