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Robotics camp teaches children

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The Rick Anderson's Robotics summer camp offers children ages 8 to 14 an opportunity to create singing and dancing robots.

The robotics workshop gave the children hands on experience teaching robots simple task such as walking in a line and a dance.

Rick Anderson, assistant professor of mathematics, said the children are not learning by lecture, but instead by trial and error.

"They need the robot to do the task in order for them to finish their project," he said.

Anderson said the program teaches the children the S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) principal.

"It teaches classroom robots using forces and friction," he said. "It uses computers and programming. It teaches speed, rate and time."

Anderson said students learned how to move robots, make sounds and faces.

"The robots are called mind storms," he said.

During the program, the children were introduced to sensors. Anderson said putting a sensor in a robot will prevent the robot from running into walls.

By the middle of the course, Anderson said the robots could dance, follow a line, and go through a maze.

"Robotics is engaging," he said. "It leads to logical thinking and debugging of programs."

Eli Wilson-Brown, 9, said he has never seen robot before this class.

"This was my favorite workshop," he said. Wilson-Brown said he attended art camp in previous summers, but he liked the robotics camp much better.

"I don't like art too much," he said. "I like learning how to program the robots." Jay Dawson, 9, said his father found the program for him because he enjoyed working with legos.

"I like legos," he said. "I didn't know anything about robots before."

Dawson said everything he learned was new but exciting.

The robotics summer camp began June 7 and will continue until June 11 in room 3013, Old Main.

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Jay Dawson, 9, starts to test-run his robot he has built during the Robotics Academy Tuesday afternoon. This was the afternoon where students were taught to put sensors into their robots to make it stop and go. Jay has only taken one other conference at Eastern which was an art conference. Jennifer Brown | The Daily Eastern News

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