

Hands-on activities for subversion using technology!

Want to get down and dirty with tech? Touching, holding, pulling apart, building and using technological devices themselves can be a powerful means for exploring unknowns, taking up space and subverting using technology. The following activities can help folks gain confidence handling technology and realise their own capabilities in shaping tech!

Read on to learn about:

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Even machines dream: Feminist robots for Twitter

By Stef, Brazil



LA CHAKALA
@LACHAKALARIXXO

Suivre

Ser **#VisibleEmpoderada** es draguear el canon de belleza; con **autodefensa feminista**

This activity entails making (or many) feminist bots on Twitter using generative grammar constructs.

A bot (or robot) is a computer programme that automatically performs repetitive tasks over the internet. Normally, these bots perform simple tasks. When they do together, it is often called a 'bots farm.' When used on Twitter, they are rarely influential, but they do help generate trending topics - the topics that Twitter considers 'hot' at a certain moment - or generate noise about a topic.

Making and using feminist robots on Twitter is a playful way of making feminist 'noise' online, and creating a feminist internet.

Generative grammar, which will be used to create our bots, is a linguistic theory that regards grammar as a system of rules. It generates exactly those combinations of words that form grammatical sentences in a given language.

Who is the activity for?

Getting started

Materials needed:

- A digital device such as a computer, tablet or mobile phone
- Internet access

Preparation:

- Check in with participants to make sure they can bring their own digital devices to the conversation. If they do not have their own, participants can also work together in pairs or small groups.

The activity

The activity can be run either in-person or online. Make sure that participants each have the materials needed as stipulated above. Remember to set a time limit for each step of the activity.

1. Invite participants to think of a Twitter robot concept. What will be their username ('@...')? What cover image, profile image and description will you use?
2. Give participants a moment to create a Twitter account for their bot and with it, log onto Twitter.
3. While logged on Twitter, ask participants to access the website: <https://cheapbotsdonequick.com/>
4. Instruct participants to click, 'Sign in with Twitter'
5. Instruct participants to click, 'Authorise the application'
6. Once your participants have reached the next page, they are ready to create the rules of their bot. They are going to write their code in the space after 'JSON Tracery'.
This site will help you make a Twitterbot! They're easy to make and free to run. To use it, create a Twitter account for your bot to run under and then sign in below. The bots are written in Tracery, a tool for writing generative grammars developed by Kate Compton. This site is run by v. buckenham - they can be contacted at vtventyone@gmail.com. You can support this site on Patreon.
7. Trying with an example is the best way to understand how it works. Invite participants to play with different examples, and from there to start creating their own robot. Paste the code that follows into the space and start playing. The code will look something like this:

```
{
"origin": ["Good day for #action# #something# with #object# #where#"]
,"action": ["explode","leave","kill","?","?","?","?"]
,"something": ["Facebook","patriarchy","the machista","?","?","?"]
,"object": ["scissors","encryption","?","?","?","?","?"]
,"where": ["in the kitchen","in the car","?","?","?"]
}
```

- 'Origin' is where the structure of our sentence comes from.
 - Everything that is between '# ' in 'origin' is what is going to get mixed up in the sentence.
8. With the code there, by clicking 'refresh,' participants can look at the possibilities of combinations with the words they have written in their example.
 9. Once a participant clicks on 'Tweet,' that text will be published in the Twitter account of the tweet.
 10. Participants can also select a number of configurations at the bottom left-hand area of the screen, including how long their bot is going to say something on Twitter, whether the bot can reply or not when someone sends it a message, and whether they want to share or not share their code with the public on the Cheap Bots Done Quick website. If a participant chooses to allow their bot to 'reply' to messages, explain that they will answer using a combination of words with the same rule that has been created for them.
 11. Once the above has been set up, the participants' bots are ready! Invite them to click 'Save' to have the bot active on the Twitter account created for it.

Proud Dyke.tech - a master of web technologies

By Maja, Slovenia (<https://www.22nds.com>)

TAKE THE CHALLENGE AND BECOME

Overview

Dyke.tech is a web page where nine web development challenges are featured. They are ordered by their complexity and while participants are solving them they learn about web technologies.

If the participant solves all nine challenges they get a certificate.

Project DYKE.tech originates from the LGBTIQ community in Slovenia. It was first presented at LGBTIQ in Tech meetup

and is an English version of **Lezba-si** – a lesbian who masters computer science – as defined in Slovenian **LGBTQ**

dictionary. [Solve 9 tasks and prove you master web technologies] It is a fun way of exploring web development while being creative, exploring functionalities of web browsers and sharing tips on how to solve the challenges.

The activity has been practiced in Ljubljana, Slovenia and Berlin, Germany.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Who is this activity for? The activity is best suited for web developers or those who are curious how websites are built and already have at least a little knowledge about web development.

START THE CHALLENGE

Getting started

Materials needed:

Laptop (not mobile phone) is needed to be able to look into source code of web pages. Preferably using Mozilla Firefox browser.

Preparation:

No preparation for participants is needed. Facilitator should solve the challenges on website

<https://www.22nds.com/dyketech/> before the activity to be able to help participants and be familiar of concepts used in modern web development (browser, source code, design, JavaScript, RegEx, cookies, search engines, data, images).

The activity

The facilitator should give a little intro into the activity (also available at <https://www.22nds.com/dyketech/about-the-project/>) and make sure all participants have web site <https://www.22nds.com/dyketech/> opened in Mozilla Firefox browser.

There are several ways this activity can be run and the choice is based on the proficiency of participants' web development skills:

1. *If all participants have a lot of experience and knowledge*, facilitator can block 20 minutes and let everyone start solving the challenges. After 20 minutes everybody shares their progress and if there is anybody that was unable to progress they get additional support to solve the challenge. If needed participants get another 20 minutes to tackle the challenges. Afterwards a review of all the challenges should be made and participants share how they solved it. If some challenges are still unsolved then the facilitator helps with tips (not solutions!) and motivates participants to solve the challenge together.

2. *If participants are not web developers*, but would like to learn about web technologies, then the challenges should be solved together by the whole group. For every challenge one of the participants is selected to read out loud the text on the web site (the tip that hints where the solution is) and think about the strategies of solving the challenge. Other participants can help and share their thoughts and possible solutions until they find the solution and all group progresses to the next challenge and ultimately solves all challenges. Facilitator should help with tips when the group gets stuck and when participants reach solution facilitator can also point out alternative ways of solving the challenge.

At the end of the activity participants and facilitator can have a discussion about which other challenges could be implemented, what they had learned and which web technology they would like to learn more about in the future.

Taking apart your computer!

By (person), (country)

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