

ETC 647 – Creating Technical Learning Environments

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Module One – PC Components

Learning Log

Currently, I teach a Computer Information System class called Introduction to Computers. Every semester to demystify the computer we take them apart and put them back together. This semester I used your worksheet to have the students identify and define the parts of the computer. I have 35 students and we have 5 computers to explore. We broke up into groups of 7 with one group leader and one secretary. I made sure that the team leader had some knowledge of computers. I walked around and monitored how they were doing. They used their books and the Internet for definition (Webopedia). Most of them were able to identify all of the parts. Luckily, getting them back together was no real problem.

I did discuss the ESD before we started and used your websites (Thanks!). One student said that we should not even be doing this on carpet. I usually have several students who know quite a bit about computers and just have to take this class for the credit. Every semester I have a new group of experts that I draw knowledge from in one way or another. Usually they are gamers with very cool stuff. I got to see the PSP the first month it came out. Sometimes I run into hackers that scare me, but we discuss laws and ethics. Hope they take something away from my class. (lol)

The biggest lesson most of my students learn from taking the computer apart is to not be afraid of it. They were also surprised by how easy it is to install memory or an expansion card. I am forever trying to stay on top of the latest and greatest technology, but this is a hard task. Good thing I have all these students to do the research for me. The next project is for them to take this knowledge and research buying a computer with a budget of \$2,000. I usually find out about new processors, ports, software, etc from these reports.

On your quiz, I could not type out all of the acronyms. It would only let me type so many letters, and then it would stop. Hope that is not a problem.

Also on the quiz, I got confused at first with IDE which I mistook as Integrated Development Environment instead of the IDE interface, but I think I got it all straighten out. That was something new I learned. Even though I teach all of this stuff I still get things mixed up sometimes and look like an idiot in front of the class. Oh well, guess that is just part of the job!

Below I defined all of the terms in your activity.

Monitor – a display device usually classified as output. There are three technology options: CRT, LCD and Plasma screen.

Mouse – a point and click input device.

Keyboard – an input device based on the QWERTY layout of a typewriter.

USB port – Universal Serial Bus is an external bus standard that supports data transfer.

Firewire – a very fast external bus standard that supports data transfer.

LPT port – Line Printer Terminal is the port used for the printer.

COM port – Serial Communication port where information is transferred one bit at a time from one computer to another or from one device to another.

Speakers – an output device where sound is broadcast.

Mother board – the main circuit board of a microcomputer.

Processor / CPU – the Central Processing Unit, also known as the brains of the computer. This is where all of the calculations take place.

Power supply – the component that supplies power to the computer.

CMOS battery – a small battery that keeps power going to the CMOS

CMOS battery jumper – wire that goes from the battery to the CMOA

Hard Drive – a place where data is store inside of the computer.

Zip Drive – a type of removable storage that uses a high-capacity floppy disk drive.

CDROM Drive – a device that burns an optical disk capable of storing large amounts of data.

DVD Drive – similar to a CDROM Drive but hold quite a bit more data (min 4.7 GB).

Video Card – a board that plug into a personal computer to give it display capabilities.

Memory – internal temporary storage area in the computer otherwise know as RAM

Expansion slots – a long narrow socket on the motherboard where an expansion card fits.

Expansion cards – a small circuit board that gives the computer certain capabilities.