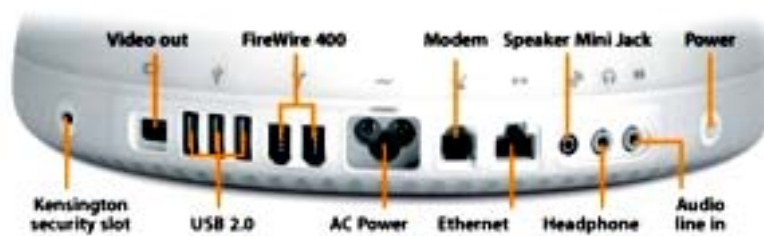


A Cool Teacher's Guide to the Computer Lab/ How to Hook Your Students Up

The Computer lab can be a frustrating environment to teach a lesson. An improperly functioning computer may feel like it is starting to push *your* buttons! Aha! Aha aha ahem.. yes but seriously, the inability for a student to “log in”, or a computer that is unresponsive can make it difficult for students to complete any task. While an issue requiring outside help may occasionally arise, there are many constructive things that you can do on your own to ensure your student's time in the lab is spent learning their lessons and not assessing your Mr. Hyde impression.

Scopin' the Scene:

With a troublesome computer, the first precaution to make is that each of its essential physical attributes is intact (such as the mouse and keyboard) and to ensure that connections for all cords and cables are plugged in securely. There should be a power cord plugged into the back of the computer as well as a network or ethernet cable (which looks like a chubby phone cord). Also ensure that the keyboard and mouse are plugged into a “usb” port. The other ends of the power cord and network cable may also be checked to ensure that they are plugged securely into their respective power sources (some students will try to “fix” these items by unplugging them).



The back of an iMac Lampshade.

“Everything is plugged in correctly, now what?!”

Here I would like to tell you that unless it is the very beginning of the school year or ISM has just received some new computers, any suspicion as to the faulty internal settings of a computer are unfounded. Any network settings inside the computer have already been set correctly by your IT Specialist.

Checkin' the Status:

If you are still having trouble with a student's computer you should check to see that the computer is receiving communication from the network. To do this Click on the grey line of text at the login screen that is directly below the line that reads, “**Mac OS X**”. You will see that the line of text has changed, keep clicking until you see a colored ball with

text that reads “Network Accounts Un/Available”. In many cases the computer will freeze briefly just before it cycles to this screen (on the IP 172.000.000.00 screen) this is because at that moment in time it is connecting to the network. If you see a red ball then you are not connected to the network, try cycling through again. A green ball means it is connected.



This computer is not connected to the network.



This computer is connected to the network

Click the mouse, walk away...

Within a minute of waking up a computer from sleep or a period of inactivity, any computer should re-establish its connection to the network. *Because of this delay in a computer's connectivity, it is best to wake the computer up first and then wait about 30 seconds before logging-in.*

Typin' that Name,

Watch the invisibles.

When ready to “Log-in”, many students will not type their names and/or passwords correctly resulting in an inability to access their accounts. Beyond this obvious problem there are sneaky Invisibles that sometimes lurk in the vacant spaces of a login window. Confidentially, these invisibles are also known as... “Spaces”! Spaces are any space inserted before or after a name or password. If a student presses the space bar just one time unnecessarily anywhere in either the username or password windows, the computer will recognize the presence of an invisible and not log you in. *Make sure students type their names and passwords correctly and refrain from hitting the space bar where unnecessary.*

That's it for the tutorial!

Here is a brief reminder of the steps you should take to ensure a computer is working properly.

Scope the scene: Check all physical connections.

Check the status: Get that green light shining; remember to wait 30 seconds after waking the computer.

Type the name: Correctly, watch for spaces.

Stuff you can't fix:

Some problems in the lab can't be fixed immediately and some not at all. The following is a list of those problems. The fixable problems are labeled with a “☺” and the unfixable with a “☹”. Let your IT Specialist know if you run into a “☹” problem...

All or a string of computers are not connected ☺

Internet Speeds are slow ☹

The computer has a blank screen and/or is frozen ☺

The computer is slow ☹

The closest “In-n-Out®” is in Salinas ☹