

Teacher, the Computer is not Working

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How often has that cry been heard by a classroom teacher? As a teacher you expect things to be in a certain condition or place so that there is minimal involvement by you to get a task accomplished by your students. For example, sports equipment is organized by sport and each piece of equipment is put back in its place once played with. This saves time and energy for you as a teacher because you do not have to go looking for the equipment before you can get the class started.

Apply this principle to computers. Take time to configure your computer exactly the way you want it to be. Install programs that you want your class to use. Place icons on the desktop for easy access to those programs. And then configure programs like Internet browsers the way that you want. In other words, have a computer ready for your students to use that will require minimal, if no involvement on your part.

But as we all know, students have a tendency to mess with computers. And unfortunately, computers seem to "crash" for no reason. Here are some things that you can do to prevent students from ruining your configuration, and in dire situations, restore the computer to its original beauty.

1. Install a computer management program. Such a program is "Winguard". It will allow you to control what files and what places on a computer students have access to. Thus you can keep them out of the operating system files and allow them to only access the programs that you want them to work in.
2. Image the computer. Create an image of the hard drive using a program such as Symantec's Ghost. What this program does is create an image of your hard drive. You will need a CD Burner, either external or internal to create the image. However, once the image is made, it just takes a matter of minutes to restore the computer to your configuration. All you do is boot from a floppy, place the image CD in the CDROM drive and install the image. Fast and simple.

Yes computers in the classroom are a useful and beneficial tool. But you cannot use your valuable time to keep fixing them. Apply the steps above and you will be well on your way to a stress free computing experience.