Class Starters & Enders

Making the Most of Instructional Time
Five Minute Lessons

Class Starters and Enders help utilize the last minutes of class when a lesson ends but there is not enough time to start another, or for an interest approach at the beginning of class. Mini-lessons correlate to GPS in the programs areas below.

A+ Certification

Program Areas: **Computer Networking, Computer Systems & Support, Computing**
Instructions: Read the narrative and make notes of important points, answer questions, and be ready to discuss this topic.

Information Technology (IT) certifications can be very beneficial for several reasons. They are generally respected in the IT industry, result in higher salaries, and assist in job retention. A number of computer-based certifications are available, one being A+. A+ is one of the basic certifications that leads to higher levels of certification.

Officially, CompTIA A+ certification is a vendor-neutral certification that covers numerous technologies and operating systems from such vendors as Microsoft, Apple Inc., Novell and some of the Linux variations. The first A+ certification exam was developed in 1993. There have been four versions of the A+ exam, the 1993, 2003, 2006, and 2009 objectives, which are broken down into two separate exams. Successful completion earns a designation as a "CompTIA Certified Computer Technician". The 2009 certification requires passing two exams: Essentials and Practical Application.

The A+ exam is intended for information technology professionals who have the equivalent of 500 hours of hands on experience. The exams are computer-based and composed of multiple choice questions, to which there may be more than one correct answer. In order to register, one must go online and pay a fee. The tests are administered at local testing facilities. Many high schools and technical colleges offer study courses for the exam. Private training and self-study programs are other options. Over 800,000 people have earned the A+ credential worldwide, to date.

Topics of the Essentials/Core examination include direct memory access and practical computer repair, including the installation and repair of hard drives, modems, network cards, CPUs, power supplies, PDAs, and printers. The focus of the exam is not theory, but practice. Topics included in the Operating Systems Exam include memory management, configuration files, and historical operating environments rather than newer, cutting edge technologies.

Successful candidates are certified that they understand the fundamentals of computer technology, networking, and security, and have the skills required to identify hardware, peripheral, networking, and security components. Successful candidates understand the basic functionality of the operating system and basic troubleshooting methodology, practice proper safety procedures, and can effectively interact with customers and peers.

Review
1. Why would one become A+ certified?
2. How many times has the A+ exam been updated?
3. What is required for A+ certification?
4. What skills should an A+ certified IT professional possess?
5. What points of knowledge should an A+ certified technician be familiar with?
6. How many people have earned the A+ certification?
7. T or F: The focus of the A+ exam is computer theory.
8. Where can a person take preparatory courses to become A+ certified?

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History Connection

Research and write a one page paper on the history of computers.

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