

Keeping up with the Grandkids – Instructors Notes

A WinstonNet course for older adults

(older students need lots of support and 1 instructor and 2 assistants for 5 students was not a bad ratio)

4 sessions of 2 hours each (typically during the day because of night vision issues)

- 1 Introduction to Computers and WinstonNet
Using a mouse
- 2 Office Applications especially Word
Working with the keyboard and documents
- 3 Outlook and e-mail
- 4 Internet Explorer and Surfing the Internet

Before the course you should Log In to each student's account (to make sure that it actually works)

You should minimize the Language Bar (explaining it is more trouble than it is worth)

You should use Internet Explorer (so that in the future the WinstonNet home page appears).

You should create a link on the WinstonNet Desktop of each student to

<http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/> (to make it easier to get to the tutorial – trust me on this)

Print the first session hand-outs using the student's user name as their identifier (this helps at Log In)

Throughout the course the students should be encouraged to think about what will happen when they press a given key or click on a given button (to reinforce what has been learned). They should also be told that no one is ever too old to learn, but that adults learn differently than children, because they are trying to integrate their new learning with prior knowledge.

Each student learns in a different way. Therefore even though the instructions are written in a step-by-step fashion (at least in the beginning) they are also presented orally by the instructor. Nonetheless it is not possible for the students (at least at this stage) to listen, read, key or click, and think, simultaneously. The written instructions are to take notes on and for when the students are working on their own and for later classes when they are asked to Log In, etc. on their own.

Session 1

1.1 Introductions

Course (This is your course and we assume that you know nothing about computers)

Ask questions! Don't be shy!

Me (background and experience) other "helpers" (background and experience)

You (Why are you here? What do you hope to get out of the course? What is your current access?)

1.2 This is a Computer

It is very literal and stupid, unlike you who is currently just ignorant, which can be changed

Discuss the components (monitor, system unit, etc.) and what they do

WinstonNet (Thin Client – Discuss difference between this and a home system)

Talk about what skills are transferable (mouse, keyboard, using windows, etc. and which are not)

1.3 Getting Started

Do have them turn on the computers (don't start from the Log In / Shutdown screen)

Discuss start-up, diagnostics etc. (like getting up in the morning)

Discuss menus (briefly at Log In screen)

Mouse basics are because the mouse must (they tell me) be used to click on the Log In button

1.4 Windows and WinstonNet

Have them Log In (key strokes seem easier at this stage)

(the system will revert to the Log In / Shutdown screen if there is a delay in logging in)

Discuss the fact that Windows allows for many different ways to accomplish the same thing (mouse, keyboard, etc.)

Discuss the Desktop as "typical" for any windows environment

1.5 Leaving WinstonNet

Discuss the irony of using the start menu to log off

(Abbott & Costello's "Who's On First" is a good analogy for this age group)

Let them know that not all of the menu's they will see are shown in the hand-out (but proceed logically through shut down)

Then have them turn on the machine and Log In on their own (for reinforcement)

1.6 The mouse tutorial (first two parts) is very comprehensive and will take about an hour or so

(plan to stay a little later so that everyone can finish up)

Have them (or you) maximize the screen

(since they don't understand the concept of scroll bars at this point)

Make sure to print the "certificate" that is generated at the end of the tutorial

(tell them to take it home and put it on their refrigerator)

Also give them a copy of the WinstonNet hand-out that shows the locations

Homework

While no homework is mandatory the students should be encouraged to review their hand-outs and think about and remember what they did. They should also be encouraged to go through the mouse tutorial again, if possible, either at home or at a WinstonNet site.

Session 2

2.1 Office Applications

Have them log in on their own (remind them that the instructions are on pages 1.3 and 1.4)
Talk about the common attributes of all Windows
Discuss the Control Menu, Title Bar, Control Buttons, Menu Bar, Standard Buttons, Etc.
Discuss the Various Office Applications and their uses (Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Etc.)
Use the Control Buttons, Drag and Drop (using the Title Bar), do some limited resizing)

2.2 Using Microsoft Word

Discuss the common Windows elements as well as the changes (in Standard Buttons, Etc.)
Discuss the Ruler, Status Bar, Format Bar (and meaning of >> Buttons) and Insertion Point
Discuss function of the New (even though it is not only for new documents) Document Task Pane

2.3 Working With Documents

Close the New Document Task Pane
As they key in their personal information talk about the use of the Enter Key
Spend a fair amount of time on the Edit Keys and Arrow Keys (for editing and moving within text)
Talk about the importance of Saving files and the importance of “useful” file names
Exiting Word will give them practice in getting back into Word

2.4 Retrieving, Editing and Printing

Talk about the fact the Word has “remembered” their last file (name) and provided a link to it
Spend a limited amount of time on selecting and changing text (this seems to be a difficult skill)
Have them select the entire text and the press the delete key (then use undo to restore it)
When printing tell them not to click on the Print Button more than once or they will get multiples
Discuss how they will know that they are “pointing” at the “right” Button or Menu (color change)
When they go to Close discuss the importance of the “Save Changes” window.

2.5 Now it's Your Turn

This is mostly just to practice all of the skills that they “learned” today
This will probably require a lot of individual attention
Have them experiment with at least a few of the formatting commands

Homework

Students should again be encouraged to review their hand-outs and think about and remember what they did. They should also be encouraged to practice their keyboarding and editing skills, if possible, either at home or at a WinstonNet site. They should also obtain the complete email address (both user name and domain name) of someone they would like to send an email to next week.

Instructors Homework

Send an email to each of the students. (I used the same one, but personalized the salutation.) It included a greeting, some reassurance that they are doing fine in the class (regardless of how they might be feeling) and some encouragement to keep practicing their new skills. Be sure to include your name in the closing.

Session 3

3.1 Outlook and email

Discuss Outlook as a product (Microsoft exchange server-based email with other functions)
Discuss the icons in the Outlook Shortcuts bar (and the meaning of the down arrow)

3.2 Managing email

Scan all three of the emails (1 from you and 2 from the help desk)
Have them open the email from you and reply to it

3.3 Sending new email

Remind them that the user names of their classmates are on page 1.1
Have them use the “@winstonnet.org” domain name as part of the address
Talk about the use of descriptive subjects
Discuss “netiquette”

3.4 Checking email from Home

Only if they have Internet access (of course)

Session 4

4.1 Surfing the Internet

Provide some history (1969 – ARPANet, 1991 - World Wide Web)
Indicate that information on the net is not controlled (unlike that in a library for example)
Discuss other Browsers (AOL, etc.)
Outline the role of a Universal Resource Locator (URL)
Discuss domain names as an investment (and the buying and selling of them)

4.2 Searching the Web

Outline google’s philosophy (and the fact that it searches over 4 billion sites)
Outline value of good search strategies
Describe the possibilities for information overload and how to manage it
Describe the other kinds of services available through Yahoo
Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Internet shopping

Make sure that there is a certificate of completion for each student

Discuss the class and what can be done to improve it.