

Understanding Computers

Directions:

Open a Word document. Type your name at the top right, save this document as: Understanding Computers your last name. Read the information below then answer the questions in your own words. **Bold and underline** your answers. (**Do not copy the text for your answer**). You must put the answers **in your own words**. However, there is a copy of the questions in the Stern Stu Share Folder under 7th grade you may copy and paste the questions from this page into your Word document. When finished, add the following graphics to your document in the **correct areas** on your document:

❖ hardware

❖ software

❖ input

❖ output

❖ microchip

❖ memory-chip

❖ storage device

❖ vacuum tube

❖ transistor

Hardware and Software

Computers are made up of **hardware** and **software**. Hardware is the tangible, physical equipment that **can be seen and touched**. Examples of hardware are things such as the keyboard, printer, monitor, and computer chips.

Software is the intangible instructions that tell the computer what to do. Software are things such as PowerPoint, Windows XP, Sim City 3000, or Oregon Trail. People who write software (instructions that tell the computer what to do) are called **programmers**.

Programmers write instructions, or programs, to the computer so that it is able to execute a task or operate properly. A program can be defined as a series of detailed step-by-step **instructions** that tell the computer precisely what actions to perform.

Questions:

1. a. What is hardware?
b. What is software?
2. a. What is a program?
b. Who writes programs?

Many people believe that computers can do just about anything and that their level of sophistication requires a genius to program and run them. In reality, computers are very simple devices that can perform only four basic functions.

A computer can:

- 1) Store data and programs
- 2) Function unattended due to its ability to interpret and follow instructions it is provided
- 3) Do arithmetic calculations
- 4) Perform logical comparisons