

Shopping for Your Own Supercomputer

Goal:

This lesson gives students a chance to explore the monetary costs of supercomputing and challenges them to think about the value and importance of each physical component of a supercomputer.

Materials:

- A computer connected to the Internet, 1 per student.
- Parallel Computing Notebook, 1 per student

Activity:

1. All students are given the task of designing a supercomputer that takes less than \$2800 to build.
2. Students work to identify parts needed, shop for them on the Internet, and provide links in their notebooks.
3. Once students have finished their shopping, they each write out what strategies they used to find parts.
4. The instructor calls upon a few volunteers to present what they were able to design.

Questions to answer in your Parallel Computing Notebook:

1. What are the most important parts of a supercomputer?
2. What assumptions did you make when you did your shopping? Which of these assumptions were false?