Punch®
Software for teaching
writing and reading.

MERIT software®

Book Punch® Series Manual
Grades 3 through 9

Each Book Punch title includes a lesson plan aid, 11 worksheets, and 3 online interactive units.
TEXT-TO-SELF TOPICS,
EVIDENCE AND INFERENCE TOPICS,
READING CHECK

For writing topics in each unit, see the Book Punch Lesson Plan Aid for the book title.

Internet Explorer 6.0+ (Windows)
Safari 3.0+ (Windows and Mac)
Firefox 2.0+ (Windows, Linux and Mac)
Best viewed at 1024 x 768 screen resolution.

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Why Use Book Punch?

Introduction to Book Punch

Book Punch combines the writing and reasoning processes to strengthen students' reading skills. Having to write paragraphs and essays about their reading material encourages students to think more critically about what they have read. As a direct result, students improve their reading comprehension as well as their writing skills.

Benefits of Using Book Punch

1. Effective, research-based computer-assisted instruction: embedded cognitive strategies, e.g., repetition; rehearsal of content; paraphrasing; drawing inferences; use of illustrative examples
2. Student control over amount and sequence of work performed and extent of review needed, leading to increased mastery and improved attitude towards learning
3. Improvement of writing and literacy skills
   a. Recognition of points of difficulty and confusion
   b. Advancement at student's own pace
   c. Scaffolding and enhancing comprehension
4. Generalization of skills to other contexts and situations, i.e., transferring these skills to other academic areas
5. Appropriate for students of all skill levels
   a. Effectiveness seen notably in low-achieving students
   b. Improvement in proficiency among students in middle quartiles
   c. Enrichment for students in upper quartile
6. Detailed class management via Merit Online Learning management tools
   a. Teacher can track and check students' progress
   b. Teacher can track and intervene at points of difficulty
   c. Teacher can track and check students' independent reading
   d. Student records may be exported into spread-sheets

What Does Book Punch Do?

The Book Punch Method – Research Basis

1. Engages cognitive thinking and metacognitive strategies step by step (Bloom and Krathwohl, 1956)
2. Supports constructivist learning by providing students with choices; decisions; multiple-completion paths for writing tasks (Shepard, 2000)
3. Strengthens students' abilities to increase learning from text: text-to-self, text-to-world and text-to-text (Keene and Zimmerman, 1997)
4. Encourages students to approach literature from several perspectives. Asking stance questions will help readers' construct and extend meaning. (Langer, 1995)

5. Connects the processes of reading and writing; students extend the meaning of the text by writing about it. (Fountas and Pinnell, 2001).

6. Uses techniques in Merit reading and writing programs that improve the comprehension of students struggling with language arts skills and produces gains across the curriculum (O'Byrne, Securro, Jones, and Cadle, 2006).

7. Provides a way for a wide range of students to get personal feedback when learning the writing process (Matsumura, Patthey-Chavez, Valdes, and Garnier, 2004).

8. Explicitly teaches steps necessary for planning, revising, and/or editing text; increases students' independent writing skills. (Graham, 2006).

9. Differentiates instruction by lexile level for students of mixed levels of ability (Tomlinson, 1999)

10. Facilitates vocabulary development by having students engage words and create meaning (Beck and McKeown, 1991)

References Cited in The Book Punch Method (in Alphabetical Order)

Beck, I., and McKeown, M., Conditions of vocabulary acquisition, Handbook of Reading Research, 1991.

Bloom, B.S., and Krathwohl, D.R., Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals, by a committee of college and university examiners, Longmans, Green, 1956.

Fountas, I., and Pinnell, G., Guiding Readers and Writers: Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literacy, Heinemann, 2001.

Graham, S., Strategy Instruction and the Teaching of Writing: A Meta-Analysis, Handbook of Writing Research, 2006.

Keene, E.O., and Zimmermann, S., Mosaic of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop, Heinemann, 1997.

Langer, J., Envisioning Literature: Literary Understanding and Literature Instruction, Teachers College Press, 1995.

Matsumura, L.C., Patthey-Chavez, C.G., Valdes, R., and Garnier, H., Teacher Feedback, Writing Assignment Quality, and Third-Grade Students' Revision in Lower- and Higher-Achieving Urban Schools, The Elementary School Journal, 2002.

O'Byrne, B., Securro, S., Jones, J., Cadle, B., Making the cut: the impact of an integrated learning system on low-achieving middle school students, Journal of Computer-Assisted Learning, 2006.

Shepard, L.A., The Role of Assessment in a Learning Culture, Educational Researcher, 2000.

Tomlinson, C., The Differentiated Classroom, Responding to the Needs of All Learners, American Society for Curriculum Development, 1999.

Scope of the Program: Skills

1. Contains 3 units:
   a. Text-to-Self Topics – 3 paragraph topics
   b. Evidence and Inference Topics – 3 paragraph topics (Grades 3-5), 2 essay topics (Grades 6-9)
   c. Reading Check - 1 paragraph topic
2. Each unit focuses on a different aspect of reading comprehension
3. Provides writing prompts (topics) and writing questions
4. Guides students step by step through paragraph or essay development
5. Focuses on a different kind of writing for each unit
6. Provides a computer-assisted approach to teaching writing through brainstorming, organizing, expanding ideas and revising

Implementation

Plan of Action for Using the Program as a Reading Check

1. Have students read the book.
2. Have students do Reading Check in one 15-20 minute session.
3. Track scores.

Plan of Action for Using the Program Integrated with the Curriculum

1. Suggested allocation of time for using the program
   a. 2 sessions per week
   b. 35-40 minutes per session
   c. 2-3 sessions to complete each writing topic
      i) 6 paragraph writing topics (Grades 3-5)
      ii) 3 paragraph writing topics and 2 essay writing topics (Grades 6-9)
2. Suggested sequence for using the program
   a. Text-to-Self Topics—making self connections to text
   b. Evidence and Inference Topics—improving comprehension and critical thinking
3. Suggested overview of student sessions
   a. **First session:** Choosing a topic, brainstorming, pre-writing, writing and organizing
   b. **Second and third sessions:** Revising, editing, proofreading and publishing
4. Tracking students' work
   a. checking progress – using reports and the online portfolio
   b. intervening with individual students or the whole class as suggested by work in progress
   c. using completed work to assess both individual and overall class progress

Class Time – Preparing your students to use the Punch Program

Paragraph Writing Topics - Text-to-Self Topics, Evidence and Inference Topics (Grades 3-5), and Reading Check

1. Skills students need in order to use the program for paragraph writing topics
   a. write basic sentences
   b. read and follow directions
   c. use a computer, type and use a mouse
2. Classroom instruction on writing a paragraph using the Punch process
   a. pre-writing – brainstorming (spelling not important in this step)
   b. topic sentence
   c. body
   d. organizing
   e. concluding sentence
   f. revising
   g. proofreading (spellchecker will be available in this step)
   h. publishing

Essay Writing Topics - Evidence and Inference Topics (Grades 6-9)

3. Skills students need in order to use the program for essay writing topics
   a. write basic sentences
   b. write basic paragraph
   c. read and follow directions
   d. use a computer, type and use a mouse
4. Classroom instruction on writing an essay using the Book Punch process
   a. pre-writing – brainstorming (spelling not important in this step)
   b. thesis
   c. more pre-writing – organize ideas to match thesis
   d. writing--body – write sentences
   e. organizing – organize sentences and paragraphs to match thesis
   f. more writing--body – focus on paragraph development
   g. introduction paragraph
   h. conclusion paragraph
   i. revising
   j. proofreading (spellchecker will be available in this step)
   k. publishing

How the Program Works – Paragraph and Essay Writing Topics

5. Classroom instruction on the use of the software program – how the program works
   a. "My Progress" (shows how far along the student is in the program)
   b. choosing a topic; 5 or 6 writing prompts (topics) from which students choose
   c. questions to guide the student through each step in the writing process (600 helpful questions and 600 helpful tips per book)

    d. input boxes (places for the student to enter his own words, phrases or sentences)

    e. tips

        i) tips for Reading Check and Evidence and Inference (paragraph writing)Topics (helpful for the student who is not sure of the directions)

        ii) tips for Text-to-Self Topics and Evidence and Inference (essay writing) Topics (helpful for the student who wants suggestions about what to enter in input boxes)

    f. notepads – pre-writing, writing, paragraph (places where student inputs are recorded)

    g. modeled writing – examples provided

        i) paragraph writing topics

            (1) topic sentence

            (2) concluding sentence

        ii) essay writing topics

            (1) thesis statement

            (2) introduction paragraph

            (3) conclusion paragraph

    h. revising tools (how to change, add, remove, and move text)

Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary

Classroom Instruction About the Content of the Book to Ensure Students Comprehend What They Have Read

1. Vocabulary (See Lesson Plan Aid for each title for vocabulary exploration specific to the title. See the Vocabulary Exploration Worksheet included at the end of this manual.)

    a. Students need to comprehend the book's language to be able to discuss its themes.

    b. Select vocabulary words from the book that represent the most important themes.

    c. As a class, have students list ideas they associate with these words.

    d. Using these ideas, develop working definitions.

    e. Have students write about how their own experiences relate to these words or concepts.

    f. Review vocabulary that is particular to the book.

2. Character Exploration (See Lesson Plan Aid for each title for suggested character exploration prompts.)

    a. You may want to have students select their favorite character or the one they find most interesting.

    b. Instruct students to list words and phrases that describe the character, including personality and appearance, on the Character Exploration Handout included at the end of this Book Punch Series Manual.

3. Group Work and Discussion - Pre-writing (See Lesson Plan Aid for each title for a suggested discussion topic.)

    a. Before students begin working on a paragraph or an essay with a Book Punch program topic, you may want to lead the entire class in a pre-writing brainstorming session on a similar topic.

b. Have students work in groups using the Brainstorming handout included at the end of this Book Punch Series Manual.

c. This will help students to practice formulating their ideas before they start their individual writing. They will learn from each other's ideas.

d. It will also allow students to explore the most important themes from the book before focusing on the Book Punch topic they choose.

Text-to-Self Topics: Classroom Curriculum Integration

1. Preparation: classroom instruction on writing a good paragraph via modeling
   a. webbing, outlining
   b. topic sentence
   c. body
   d. concluding sentence

2. While using the program: Text-to-Self Topics related to literature
   a. After reading the book's relevant chapters, students use the software to write a paragraph.
   b. Software provides the opportunity for students to select a Text-to-Self Topic, ensuring a vested interest in their writing assignment.
   c. Software provides the opportunity for students to make connections between classroom literature and personal experiences, utilizing the text-to-self application.

3. While using the program: practice and solidify skills via classroom review
   a. topic and concluding sentences
   b. body
   c. revision
   d. vocabulary
   e. connectives (transitional words)
   f. editing - proper punctuation/usage/capitalization

4. While using the program: classroom follow-up
   a. Sharing in small groups or with whole class
      i) editing
      ii) revision–small group or class suggestions may encourage students to go back to program to use revising tools
      iii) modeling
         (1) small group
         (2) whole class
   b. Mini-lessons for small groups or whole class
      i) grammar/usage
      ii) sentence structure
      iii) spelling
      iv) vocabulary/language
      v) revision

        vi)   topic/concluding/supporting sentences

   c. Publishing

        i)   Use completed paragraphs to create individual writing portfolios.

        ii) Share portfolios with other students.

Evidence and Inference Topics: Classroom Curriculum Integration

Paragraph Writing Topics

1. Preparation: classroom instruction on writing via modeling

   a. fact vs. opinion

   b. supporting statements

   c. inferences from text

   d. related ideas

   e. use of present tense

   f. general review of paragraph writing

2. Preparation: classroom instruction on using the software

   a. similarities to Text-to-Self Topics software: familiar features, i.e., progress bar, tips, notepads, topic and concluding sentence examples, revising tools

   b. differences from Text-to-Self Topics software: new kinds of evidence and inference prompts

3. While using the program: practice and solidify skills via modeling and review

   a. topic sentence

   b. supporting sentences

   c. concluding sentence

   d. citing text

   e. using factual information as a basis for drawing conclusions

   f. fact vs. opinion

   g. developing grammar and usage skills

4. While using the program: classroom follow up

   a. Sharing in small groups or with whole class

        i)   editing

        ii) revision–suggestions from peers may encourage students to go back to the program to use revising tools

        iii) modeling

            (1) small group

            (2) whole class

   b. Mini-lessons for small groups or whole class

        i)   grammar/usage

        ii) sentence structure

        iii) spelling

        iv) vocabulary/language

        v) revision

      vi) topic/supporting/concluding sentences

  c. Discussions for small groups or whole class

      i) interpreting factual information

      ii) defending conclusions orally

5. Publishing

  a. Use completed writing topics to build individual writing portfolios.

  b. Share portfolios with other students.

6. Follow-up after each writing topic: evaluation and assistance

  a. Have students review pre-writing questions when they have finished their Evidence and Inference Topic paragraphs.

  b. Determine with students whether their paragraphs provide answers to the pre-writing questions.

  c. Have your students determine whether their paragraphs present ideas from the book that were not explicitly stated.

  d. Have your students see if their paragraphs provide details (evidence) for the ideas they have found in (inferred from) the book.

Essay Writing Topics

7. Preparation: classroom instruction on writing via modeling

  a. fact vs. opinion

  b. supporting statements

  c. inferences from text

  d. evidence from the text to support opinion

  e. quotations from text

  f. use of present tense

  g. general review of essay writing

8. Preparation: classroom instruction on using the software

  a. similarities to Text-to-Self paragraph writing topics: familiar features, i.e., progress bar, tips, notepads, revising tools

  b. differences from Text-to-Self Topics software: new kinds of evidence and inference prompts, organizing terms

9. While using the program: practice and solidify skills via modeling and review

  a. thesis statement

  b. relationship between thesis statement and organizing terms and body paragraphs

  c. body paragraph development

      i) topic sentence

      ii) supporting sentences

      iii) concluding sentence

  d. Introduction and conclusion paragraphs

  e. citing text

  f. using factual information as a basis for drawing conclusions

  g. fact vs. opinion

    h.   revision

    i.   vocabulary

    j.   connectives (transitional words)

10. While using the program: classroom follow up

    d.   Sharing in small groups or with whole class

        i)   editing

        ii)   revision–suggestions from peers may encourage students to go back to the program to use revising tools

        iii)   modeling

            (1) small group

            (2) whole class

    e.   Mini-lessons for small groups or whole class

        i)   grammar/usage

        ii)   sentence structure

        iii)   spelling

        iv)   vocabulary/language

        v)   revision

        vi)   introduction/supporting/conclusion paragraphs

    f.   Discussions for small groups or whole class

        i)   interpreting factual information

        ii)   defending conclusions orally

11. Publishing

    a.   Use completed writing topics to build individual writing portfolios.

    b.   Share portfolios with other students.

12. Follow-up after each writing topic: evaluation and assistance

    a.   Have students review pre-writing questions when they have finished their Evidence and Inference Topic essays.

    b.   Determine with students whether their essays provide answers to the pre-writing questions.

    c.   Have your students determine whether their essays present ideas from the book that were not explicitly stated.

    d.   Have students review their thesis statements.

    e.   Determine with students whether their body paragraphs support the opinion and plan contained in their thesis statements.

    f.   Have your students see if their body paragraphs provide details and factual information (evidence) for the ideas they have found in (inferred from) the book.

Using Book Punch Reading Check

To Verify Reading of Entire Book

1. May be used in class study of a Book Punch book when students are assigned to read the entire book.
2. May be used in an independent reading program when students select a Book Punch book to read on their own.
3. Students are instructed to write a paragraph on the Reading Check Topic as a test that they have knowledge and understanding of the book.
4. Students will view their score and their completed paragraph when they complete their work.
5. We suggest that the student print out the page with their score and their work.
6. Maximum score is 4 out of 4 key points.
7. We suggest that if a student receives a 3 or 4 key point score, the student passes the reading check and is given credit for having read the book.
8. We suggest that if the student does not get credit, the teacher will ask the student to reread the book and do the Reading Check Topic again.
9. The computer will track the number of times the student completes the Reading Check Topic.

Beyond the Program

1. Ask students to keep a reading journal to connect text to self. Have them do the following for each entry:
   a. Note what, where and when they read.
   b. Briefly explain what the reading makes them think about.
   c. List characters and tell who they are.
   d. Note something they like about the reading.
   e. Note something they dislike about the reading.
   f. List 1-3 words they don't understand.
   g. Write down a question that they have about the book.
   h. Note something they would like to know more about.
2. Respond to student reading journals regularly and with encouragement.
3. Have students use the Vocabulary Exploration Worksheets to practice word recognition and enhance comprehension.
   a. Give students a choice of books to read from class curriculum.
   b. Give students time to read in small groups, according to either reading level or subject of interest.
   c. Ask groups to agree on and list the most important themes from the book.
   d. Help groups select vocabulary words from the book. These words should relate to the book's most important themes.
   e. Have groups list ideas they associate with these words. Then have them use these ideas to develop working definitions.

   f. Ask groups to look over the Vocabulary Exploration Worksheets. Group members may work individually or in pairs. They should plan to share their work when done.

      i) Each individual or pair should choose a word from their group's vocabulary list. They should complete the Vocabulary Exploration Worksheet.

      ii) Group members should decide on a working definition for the chosen word. They should then compare their working definition with the closest dictionary definition that fits the context of the story.

      iii) If the vocabulary word has more than one meaning, group members should choose a dictionary definition that is different from the way the word is used in the context of the story.

   g. Have students work in pairs to create their own vocabulary crossword puzzles. Have pairs share and trade their crossword puzzle with another pair, who should then complete it.

   h. Use the Word Search Puzzle and Crossword Puzzle Worksheets to offer multiple exposures to each vocabulary word.

6. Use the Merit Software Punch process to practice independent writing.

   a. Have students use the Independent Follow-up Worksheet to work step by step.

   b. Have students check off steps on the Independent Follow-up Worksheet as they complete them.

   c. Two additional writing topics are provided in each book's Lesson Plan Aid.

7. Use the Character Worksheets to practice independent reading and writing.

   a. Give students a choice of books to read from class curriculum.

   b. Give students time to read in small groups, according to either reading level or subject of interest.

   c. Ask students to choose one of the following writing topics:

      i) Describe a character in the book.

      ii) Pick a character and tell how you are similar or how you are different.

      iii) Compare two characters in the book.

      iv) Pick a character you don't like and tell why you feel that way.

   d. Use the Character Worksheets for pre-writing.

      i) Help students choose either the Character Exploration Worksheet or the Compare and Contrast Characters Worksheet—according to whichever writing topic they have chosen.

      ii) Ask group members to share how they used the Character Worksheets.

      iii) Have students return to the Independent Follow-up Worksheet while completing their writing topics.

8. Use the Brainstorming Worksheet to practice fact-based writing.

   a. Have students choose a book from class curriculum.

   b. Give students time to read in small groups, according to either reading level or subject of interest.

   c. Ask students to choose one of the following writing topics:

      i)   Think about where the book takes place and then compare it to where you live.

      ii)   Write about something you learned in the book that you didn't know before.

  d. Ask students to look over the Brainstorming Worksheet and discuss pre-writing ideas on the topic chosen. List 3-5 of them.

  e. Have group members work together to find supporting details for the ideas they list.

  f. Have students return to the Independent Follow-up Worksheet while completing their writing topics.

9. Use the Prove It Worksheet to practice fact-based writing.

  a. Have students choose a book from class curriculum.

  b. Give students time to read in small groups, according to either reading level or subject of interest.

  c. Ask students to choose one of the following writing topics.

      i)   Predict what will happen to your favorite character after the book ends.

      ii)   Give your opinion about the book—why you either liked or disliked it.

  d. Ask students to look over the Prove It Worksheet and then list 4-7 pre-writing ideas.

  e. Have group members work together to find evidence for the opinions/predictions they list.

  f. Have students return to the Independent Follow-up Worksheet while completing their writing topics.

10. Use the Merit Writing Assessment Rubric to evaluate student skills.

  a. Meet with students for independent writing conferences whenever possible.

  b. Point out strengths in their writing.

  c. Point out how they have improved over time.

  d. Explain which ideas continue to need improvement.

  e. Intervene with individual students or with the whole class as needed.

11. Create a bridge from language arts to other academic subjects.

  a. Have students use the Merit Software Punch process to understand other kinds of subject-area content, and to improve their writing across the curriculum.

  b. Explain how students may use the Merit Software Punch process to do a social studies or science writing assignment.

      i)   Have students work together in small groups after reading a social studies or science text.

      ii)   Give group members a writing topic.

      iii) Have group members work together to fill out the Brainstorming or Prove It Worksheet.

      iv) Have students return to the Independent Follow-up Worksheet while completing their writing assignment.

Teacher Orientation to Program Structure or "Anatomy of the Program"
Logging on, Class Management and Course Administration

All users log into www.meritonlinelearning.com with their user name and password. The system displays each user's personalized Homepage. Students see their individualized coursework and click on a program unit to start the lesson.

The parent/tutors Homepages include tools for adding students. School administrators' homepages include tools for creating courses and adding both teachers and students.

Book Punch Paragraph Topics Step by Step
INTRODUCTION: Introduces the book that the writing topics are based on.

TOPIC: Students are given several writing prompts and are asked to choose one as the focus of their paragraph. In Text-to-Self topics, the computer prompts them to enter their own personalized subject, which will be the topic of their paragraph.

PRE-WRITING: A Pre-Writing Notepad appears on the screen. The computer provides a series of questions to encourage the student to brainstorm about the topic the student has chosen to write about. Text-to-Self questions are customized to match the student's personalized topic. He/she responds by typing words or phrases into separate input boxes. Then the computer puts the student's ideas into a list. Tips are available if the student wants help.

WRITING - OPENING SENTENCE: The computer provides sample opening sentences. Students then write an original opening sentence to introduce their paragraph. Next, they look at their opening sentence together with their pre-writing items and review the items for relevance to the opening sentence.

MORE PRE-WRITING: Students look at their opening sentence together with their pre-writing items. The computer first asks students if they wish to add ideas to support their main idea. Next students review the pre-writing items for relevance to the opening sentence.

WRITING - BODY: The Pre-Writing Notepad reappears. Students begin the body of the paragraph by choosing an item from the Pre-Writing Notepad and moving it to the Writing Notepad. They then use this item in a sentence that begins the body of the paragraph. Students continue to choose items and write several sentences to complete the body of the paragraph. Students are encouraged to write complete sentences. The sentence must begin with a capital letter, have appropriate end punctuation, and include at least two words.

ORGANIZING: In the first step of this section, the Writing Notepad containing the students' sentences appears on the left half of the screen. A Paragraph Notepad with the students' topic sentence is on the right half of the screen. Students transfer sentences from the Writing Notepad and arrange them in the Paragraph Notepad, deciding which sentences to use and in which order. All the sentences do not have to be used, but at least four must be chosen for the student to proceed.

In the second step of the Organizing section students see their work for the first time in paragraph form in the Paragraph Draft Box. Next, students are encouraged to add transitional words to help the sentences flow smoothly from one thought to the next. From this point on, students may print their work. (The printout will show the section of the program from which the work was printed.)

WRITING - CLOSING: The computer provides sample closing sentences. Students then write an original closing sentence to end their paragraph.

REVISING - OVERVIEW: Here, for the first time, the Paragraph Draft appears for review with the paragraph as a whole unit. The computer asks the students to check their work and guides them in the use of the Add, Change text, Remove, or Move buttons.

OPTIONS MENU: The Options Menu contains four subsections: STYLE, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, GRAMMAR AND PROOFREADING. Each subsection contains lessons designed

to help students improve their writing. (The record-keeping program lets the teacher know which subsections the students have completed.) The Reading Check does not include the Options Menu.

--STYLE: The student is encouraged to review his choice of nouns, adjectives and verbs. Examples show how changes can make paragraphs more interesting to read.

--SENTENCE STRUCTURE: The program reminds students about the common sentence structure problem of run-on sentences. Examples show how to correct them.

--GRAMMAR: The student is encouraged to improve his use of commas. Examples show some of the many ways to use commas in a paragraph.

--PROOFREADING: The program reminds students about the proper use of capital letters. Examples show students how to use capital letters correctly. Students then revisit their paragraph for spelling errors. Spell checking is available here as a review tool. Students are reminded to reread their work after doing a spell check to make sure it makes sense.

PUBLISHING: When students arrive at the Publishing section they are given three choices:

Review: Review the revising sections again.

Spell check: This is a final opportunity to review spelling.

Save: This saves the student's work to the student's online portfolio.

After the students' paragraphs are saved, students are presented with these options:

Print: The student's work appears in a browser window for printing. Name and date appear at the beginning of the printout. Ther Reading Check printouts report the student's key point score. The student's Evidence and Inference paragraphs display the topic's pre-writing prompts.

Word Processor: Copies the student's work to the Clipboard so that it can be pasted into a word processor document.

New Topic: This button allows students to start a new topic without going back to the Learning Center.

Book Punch Essay Topics Step by Step
INTRODUCTION: Introduces the book that the writing topics are based on.

TOPIC: Students are given several writing prompts and are asked to choose one as the focus of their essay.

PRE-WRITING: A Pre-Writing Notepad appears on the screen. The program provides a series of questions related to a point in the organizing term to encourage the student to brainstorm about the topic the student has chosen to write about. Tips are available if the student wants help.

THESIS: The program guides the student to formulate a thesis statement comprised of an OPINION, presented to the student in the Topic and a PLAN, the points that support this opinion. The program provides example thesis statements as well as a sample thesis statement based on the topic the student has chosen to write about. Students then write a thesis statement of their own.

MORE PRE-WRITING: Students review their pre-writing list and their plan to insure that they match. Students may delete pre-writing ideas that are not part of their plan. Students may also rearrange their pre-writing list and/or make edits to their plan.

WRITING - BODY: The Pre-Writing Notepad reappears. Students select one idea at a time from their pre-writing list to expand into a complete sentence for the body of their essay. Students are

instructed to choose two or three ideas that support each point in their plan. Students must choose at least four ideas.

ORGANIZING: Students review their body sentences to ensure that they have written sentences to support each point in their plan. Students may add or edit sentences or change the order of their sentences. Next, students are instructed to group related sentences into paragraphs.

MORE WRITING - BODY: Students look at their body paragraphs to make sure that they each have a topic sentence and a concluding sentence. Students are encouraged to add quotations and transitional words to their body paragraphs.

WRITING - INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH: The computer provides a sample three-sentence introduction paragraph. Students then write their own opening sentence and transition sentence which the program inserts above the thesis statement they wrote earlier.

WRITING – CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH: The computer provides a sample three-sentence conclusion paragraph. Students then write three sentences of their own.

REVISING - OVERVIEW: Here, for the first time, the Essay Draft appears for review with the essay as a whole unit. The computer asks the students to check their work and suggests appropriate places to use the editing tools to make changes.

OPTIONS MENU: The Options Menu contains four subsections: STYLE, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, LANGUAGE AND PROOFREADING. Each subsection contains lessons designed to help students improve their writing. (The record-keeping program lets the teacher know which subsections the students have completed.)

--STYLE: The student is encouraged to use the present tense, the active voice, and a variety of sentence beginnings. Examples show how changes can make writing more immediate, powerful, and interesting to read.

--SENTENCE STRUCTURE: The program reminds students about common sentence structure problems such as incomplete sentences and parallel structure errors. Examples show how to correct them.

--LANGUAGE: The student is encouraged to improve his use of language. Students are encouraged to make sure their sentences are free from overused expressions and repetitions.

--PROOFREADING: This is the student's last chance to revisit what he has written and check his spelling. Spell checking is available here as review tool. Students are reminded to reread their work after doing a spell check to make sure it makes sense.

PUBLISHING: When students arrive at the Publishing section they are given three choices:

Review: Review the revising sections again.

Spell check: This is a final opportunity to review spelling.

Save: This saves the student's work to the student's online portfolio.

After the students' paragraphs are saved, students are presented with these options:

Print: The student's work appears in a browser window for printing. Name and date appear at the beginning of the printout. Ther Reading Check printouts report the student's key point score. The student's Evidence and Inference paragraphs display the topic's pre-writing prompts.

Word Processor: Copies the student's work to the Clipboard so that it can be pasted into a word processor document.

New Topic: This button allows students to start a new topic without going back to the Learning Center.

POST PUBLISHED EDITS: Students can edit their published work from the Post Published Edits tab in the Online Portfolio. From there, in addition to editing their work, students can review previous versions and print their newly updated paragraphs. The paragraph as it was originally published will be preserved both on the Post Published Edits page under the title "Original" and on the Published Paragraph screen.

Tracking Students' Work

Administrators and teachers may view students' online portfolios. They can also view and print a variety of reports.

Using Book Punch in an Independent Reading Program

To Facilitate Independent Reading

1. Support students in selecting a book from the Book Punch list of books.

   a. Create a library of Book Punch books in your classroom.

   b. Help students choose a Book Punch book at a comfortable and challenging reading level.

   c. Help students choose a Book Punch book that will interest them.

   d. Encourage students to discuss the books they have read and tell about the subject.

2. Have students create a reading plan for the book they selected.

   a. Tell students that they will receive a printout of Evidence and Inference Topics for their book.

   b. Explain that they may choose one of the Evidence and Inference Topics at any time.

   c. Tell students that they will have help locating the facts needed for their paragraph: pre-writing questions, along with chapter numbers, give clues to the location of the facts.

   d. Suggest that when students find a fact in the book in answer to a question, they note the page number next to the question.

   e. Students may write their paragraph on an Evidence and Inference Topic any time they have enough facts to tell about. We suggest that students write the Evidence and Inference essay writing topics after they have completed the book.

   f. Encourage students to read their book independently.

   g. When students have read half of the book, ask them to look at the list of Book Punch Text-to-Self Topics on the computer and choose one that interests them. This will help students make independent personal connections to the book.

   h. When students have completed the book, ask them to write their paragraph on the Text-to-Self Topic they chose.

Book Punch Books

The books in Book Punch are appropriate for grades 3 through 9. They range in lexile measure from 360 to 1200. The books in the Book Punch series can be searched by title, author, lexile measure, grade level and keyword description.

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Merit Writing Assessment Rubric (Optional)

Scores from 5 to 1 reflect the range of skills demonstrated in response to each writing assignment.

SCORE OF 5
A 5 writing assignment is **EXCELLENT**. It demonstrates proficiency in response to the assignment. It contains only a few minor errors. A writing assignment with a score of 5:
- is very well organized and developed
- explains a key idea very clearly
- displays variation in types of sentences used
- displays outstanding facility in the use of language, including vocabulary
- is nearly free of errors in mechanics, usage and sentence structure

SCORE OF 4
A 4 writing assignment is **GOOD**. It demonstrates proficiency in response to the assignment. It may contain a number of minor errors. A writing assignment with a score of 4:
- is well organized and developed
- explains a key idea clearly
- displays some variation in types of sentences used
- displays good facility in the use of language and vocabulary
- is generally free of errors in mechanics, usage and sentence structure

SCORE OF 3
A 3 writing assignment is **COMPETENT**. While it demonstrates some proficiency in response to the assignment, it also needs some improvement. It contains a number of minor errors. A writing assignment with a score of 3:
- is adequately organized and developed
- explains a key idea
- displays little variation and some errors in sentences
- displays adequate facility in the use of language
- displays a number of minor errors in mechanics, usage and sentence structure

SCORE OF 2
A 2 writing assignment is **LIMITED**. It demonstrates minimal proficiency in response to the assignment. It needs much improvement. It contains both major and minor errors. A writing assignment with a score of 2:
- is weakly organized and poorly developed
- does not adequately explain a key idea
- shows limited understanding of sentence variety and structure
- displays limited or inappropriate use of language, including limited vocabulary
- displays major and minor errors in mechanics and usage

SCORE OF 1
A 1 writing assignment is **UNSATISFACTORY**. It demonstrates fundamental deficiencies in response to the assignment. It indicates that the student is struggling to write. It contains major errors that need to be dealt with before the minor errors. A writing assignment with a score of 1:
- is not organized and developed
- does not explain a key idea, or goes off-topic
- provides little or no relevant detail
- shows little understanding of sentence structure
- displays inappropriate use of language
- displays many major and minor errors in mechanics, usage and sentence structure

Name ——————————————————————— Date ————————————————

Vocabulary Exploration

Book _____

Vocabulary word _____

Copy a sentence from the story containing the word.

_____

_____

_____

What is the part of speech of the word as it is used in the story? _____

Write the closest dictionary definition of the word that fits the context of the story.

_____

_____

_____

Use the word in a sentence of your own. Be sure the word is the same part of speech as used in the story.

_____

_____

_____

If the word has more than one meaning, write a dictionary definition for it that is different from the way the word is used in the context of the story.

What is the part of speech of the word now? _____

_____

_____

_____

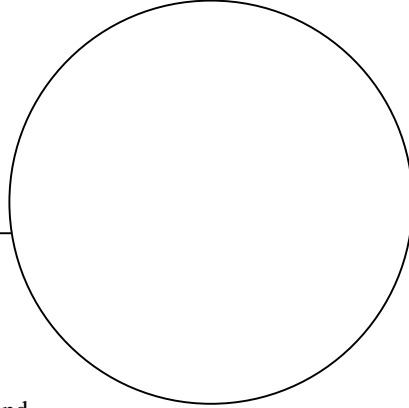Write your own sentence using the word with this different definition.

_____

_____

_____

Character Exploration
Use words or phrases.

Write the name of
character in the circle.

Describe the character's personality and
what the character likes to do.

Describe the character's appearance.

Name ————————————————————   Date ——————————————

Compare and Contrast Characters
Use words or phrases.

—————————————————————   —————————————————————
Name of Character 1   Name of Character 2

Describe the character's personality and   Describe the character's personality and
appearance and what the character likes to do.   appearance and what the character likes to do.
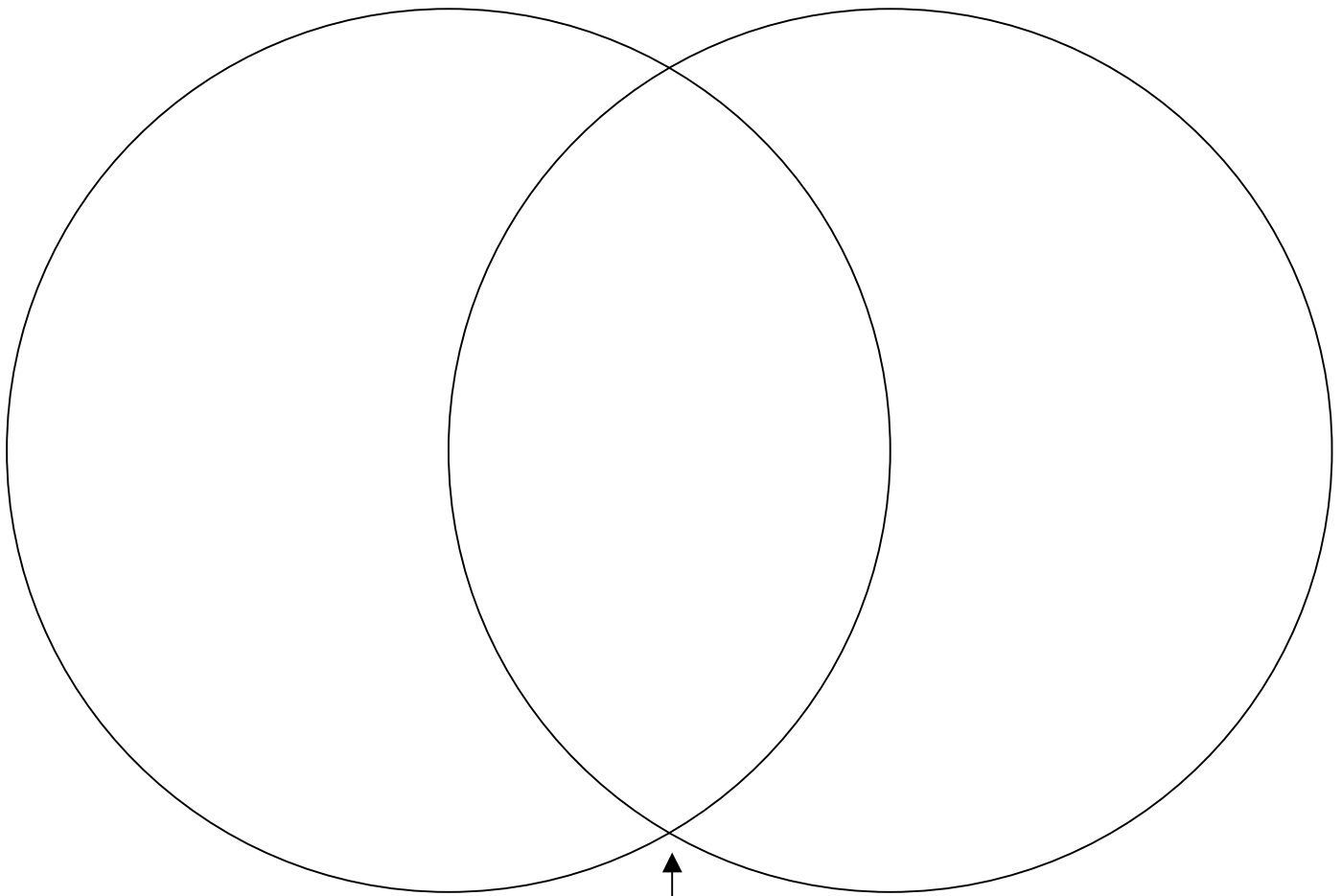
What the characters
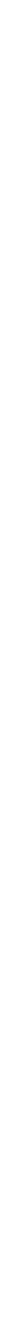have in common.

Name _____   Date _____

Group members _____

Book _____

Topic _____

_____

Brainstorming
Use words or phrases.

Ideas   *Supporting Details*

Name _____   Date _____

Book _____

Topic _____

_____

Prove It

Directions: Fill in the following chart. Be sure to use the *exact* words from the text to support your opinion or prediction.

Opinion/Prediction	Evidence from the text	Page

Name _____   Date _____

Independent Follow-up Worksheet
Book Punch – Paragraph Writing Topics

Use this checklist to guide you through the paragraph writing process. As you begin each writing step, think about what you did in the Book Punch program. You should do your pre-writing and paragraph writing on a word processor or in your writer's notebook.

TOPIC \ QUESTION (fill in):

_____

_____

Check the box when you have finished a step.

❑ PRE-WRITING

> Brainstorm by writing ideas related to your topic. Write only words or phrases.

❑ WRITING--OPENING SENTENCE

> Write your opening sentence to introduce the subject of your paragraph.

❑ WRITING--BODY

> Use your pre-writing ideas to write complete sentences.

❑ ORGANIZING

> Arrange your sentences into a paragraph. Use connecting words (first, also, finally) to help your sentences flow from one to the next.

❑ WRITING--CLOSING SENTENCE

> Write your closing sentence to summarize the main idea of your paragraph.

❑ REVISING

> ❑ STYLE
>
> Check your word choice. Make sure you use specific nouns, adjectives, and verbs.
>
> ❑ SENTENCE STRUCTURE
>
> Check that you use complete sentences. Make sure to avoid run-on sentences.
>
> ❑ GRAMMAR
>
> Check that you use commas correctly. Check your punctuation.

❑ PROOFREADING

> Listen to the flow of your paragraph as you read it out loud. Is there something that doesn't sound right?
> Correct capitalization and spelling errors.

❑ PUBLISHING

Name _____   Date _____

Independent Follow-up Worksheet
Book Punch – Essay Writing Topics

Use this checklist to guide you through the essay writing process. As you begin each writing step, think about what you did in the Book Punch program. You should do your pre-writing and essay writing on a word processor or in your writer's notebook.

TOPIC \ QUESTION (fill in):

_____

_____

Check the box when you have finished a step.

❑ PRE-WRITING

Think of terms to help you organize your ideas about your topic. Then brainstorm by writing ideas related to your topic and the organizing terms. Write only words or phrases.

❑ THESIS

Write the thesis in the form of an OPINION and PLAN.

❑ OPINION

Write your opinion on the topic of your essay.

❑ PLAN

Remember each of the points in your plan will be the main idea of a body paragraph in your essay. Write at least two points for your plan.

❑ MORE PRE-WRITING

Edit your pre-writing list and your plan to make sure they match.

❑ WRITING--BODY

Use your pre-writing ideas to write complete sentences.

❑ ORGANIZING

Arrange your sentences to support each point in your plan.

Group related sentences into paragraphs.

❑ MORE WRITING--BODY

Add sentences so that each body paragraph has a topic sentence and concluding sentence. Add quotations and transitional words to your body paragraphs.

❑ WRITING--INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH

     Write an opening and transition sentence to add to the thesis for your introduction paragraph.

❑ WRITING--CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

     Write at least three sentences for your conclusion paragraph. Restate your thesis. Sum up the main points of your essay. Leave something for the reader to think about.

❑ REVISING

     ❑ STYLE

     Check your word choice. Make sure you use specific nouns, adjectives, and verbs.

     ❑ SENTENCE STRUCTURE

     Check that you use complete sentences. Make sure to avoid run-on sentences.

     ❑ LANGUAGE

     Check that your sentences are free from overused expressions and repetitions.

❑ PROOFREADING

     Listen to the flow of your paragraph as you read it out loud. Is there something that doesn't sound right?
     Correct capitalization and spelling errors.

❑ PUBLISHING