



Merit® Online Learning Essay Punch®

Skill Levels 7 and above
Middle School through College Prep
Intermediate English Language Learners through Advanced
Suitable for Adult Literacy and Special Needs Students

Complete program: 3 units
DESCRIPTION (Unit 1), INFORMATION (Unit 2), PERSUASION (Unit 3)

Internet Explorer 6.0+ (Windows)
Safari 3.0+ (Windows and Mac)
Firefox 2.0+ (Windows, Linux, and Mac)

What Does Essay Punch® Do?

Essay Punch helps students develop their essay writing skills. It teaches three different ways to develop an essay: through description, information, and persuasion.

Through pre-set writing prompts the program guides students step by step to develop an idea and write their own short essay. Steps to finished essays include pre-writing, outlining, organizing, revising, rewriting, and publishing.

Scope of the Program

The program contains 9 writing topics and 1,080 help prompts to guide students through each step in the writing process.

Implementation

Suggested allocation of time for using the program

For best results we recommend that students use the program 35 to 40 minutes a session for two to three sessions a week. Students would complete a writing assignment in three to five sessions. The program should be used throughout the school year to build and reinforce skills.

Suggested overview of student sessions

First session: Choosing a topic, brainstorming, pre-writing, writing and organizing

Second and third sessions: Revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing

Students advance through the program at their own pace. The program accommodates students with a wide range of skills and abilities. The program provides structure and support for students who need the help and engages advanced students by encouraging them to stretch themselves to improve their writing.

Tracking students' work

Students and teachers are able to view progress and time-on-task through students' Online Portfolios and Reports. The Online Portfolio stores all completed or published work. Students and teachers can review student writing to see development and progress over an entire year.

Program Structure or “Anatomy of the Program”

The following pages are a teacher orientation to the Essay Punch program structure, using sample screens from the program.

Student's Learning Center

MERIT Software Welcome Bill Wood

Home **Online Portfolio** Reports Preferences Log out

Merit Central

- Merit Home Page
- Ordering Information
- Online Learning Support
- Merit Methodology
- Contact Us
- Legal
- Privacy Policy

Welcome to Merit Online Learning

The programs you have been assigned are in the center of the page.

Click the + next to each program name to see the units of the program.

My Learning Center

Courses

Writing

- Paragraph Punch - Reasons
- Paragraph Punch - Details
- Paragraph Punch - Example
- Paragraph Punch - Sequence
- Paragraph Punch - Cause and Effects
- Open Punch
- Essay Punch - Description

Program Name	LAST PLAYED	% COMPLETE	ONLINE PORTFOLIO	COMMENTS
A Memorable Experience				
A Significant Place				
An Important Person				

Essay Punch - Information

Essay Punch Persuasion

The student clicks the + next to the Essay Punch program to see the units of the program. The student clicks the unit to start a lesson.

To see all saved writing the student clicks Online Portfolio in the menu bar.

Display Options: Text Size, Rewards, Background Color

MERIT Software Welcome Bill Wood

< Back to Learning Center Log out


Reward Options

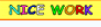
Do you want reward graphics?


☒ Yes

☐ No

Pick a reward theme.

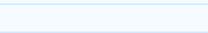
Meritkins ☒ 


Congrats ☐ 

Confetti ☐ 

Background Color Options

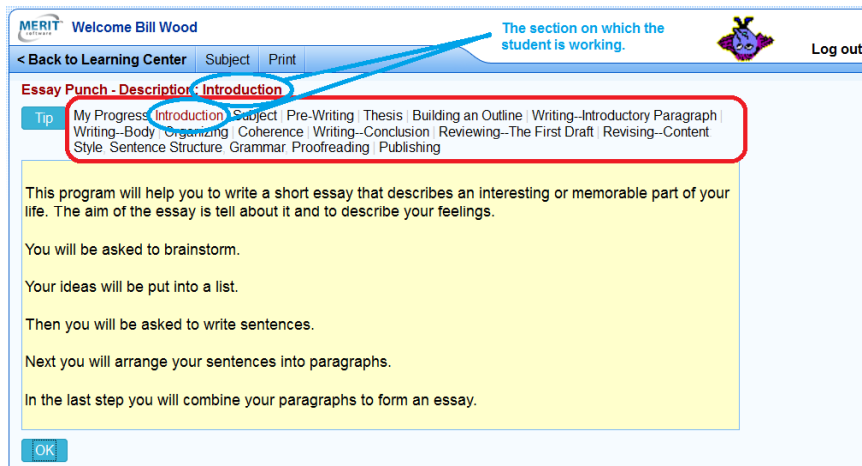
Pick a background color.

Light Blue (default) ☒ 

Violet ☐ 

Students can choose a graphic reward theme, and choose a different background color when they start a Essay Punch unit.

My Progress



Welcome Bill Wood

< Back to Learning Center Subject Print

Log out

Essay Punch - Description: Introduction

Tip: My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing-Introductory Paragraph | Writing-Body | Organizing | Coherence | Writing-Conclusion | Reviewing-The First Draft | Revising-Content Style | Sentence Structure | Grammar | Proofreading | Publishing

This program will help you to write a short essay that describes an interesting or memorable part of your life. The aim of the essay is tell about it and to describe your feelings.

You will be asked to brainstorm.

Your ideas will be put into a list.

Then you will be asked to write sentences.

Next you will arrange your sentences into paragraphs.

In the last step you will combine your paragraphs to form an essay.

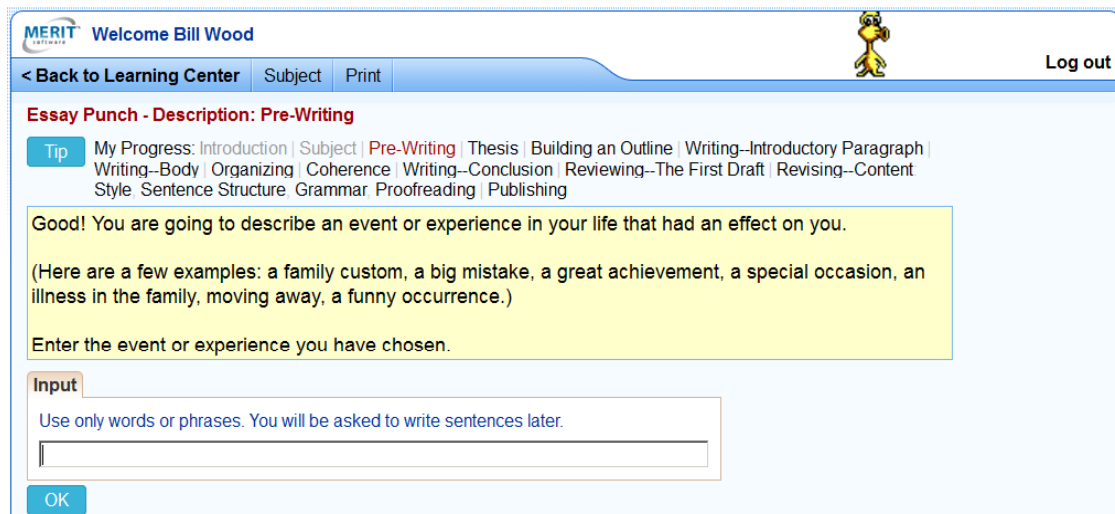
OK

The section or “step” on which the student is working is shown following the program name and unit name, as well as in “My Progress.”

Introduction

The program introduces a specific type of essay - one that presents details, explanations or reasons to support the subject of the essay.

Subject



Welcome Bill Wood

< Back to Learning Center Subject Print

Log out

Essay Punch - Description: Pre-Writing

Tip: My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing-Introductory Paragraph | Writing-Body | Organizing | Coherence | Writing-Conclusion | Reviewing-The First Draft | Revising-Content Style | Sentence Structure | Grammar | Proofreading | Publishing

Good! You are going to describe an event or experience in your life that had an effect on you.

(Here are a few examples: a family custom, a big mistake, a great achievement, a special occasion, an illness in the family, moving away, a funny occurrence.)

Enter the event or experience you have chosen.

Input

Use only words or phrases. You will be asked to write sentences later.

OK

Students are given several writing prompts and are asked to choose one as the focus of their essay. Students personalize the subject they have chosen.

Pre-Writing

A series of questions encourage students to brainstorm their ideas. Students enter words or phrases, not sentences. The program places students' answers in the Pre-Writing Notepad.

Thesis

Students formulate a thesis statement that tells what the essay will be about.

Building an Outline

Students look at their pre-writing list for related ideas and group them as subtopics under a heading. The program helps students to write possible headings. The program supplies Roman numerals - I, II, etc. - for the headings. It uses capital letters - A, B, etc. - for the subtopics.

Building an Outline

Writing--Introductory Paragraph

Students are prompted to use their thesis statement as written or rephrase it to introduce their essay. Students must write at least one follow-up sentence for their introductory paragraph.

Writing--Body

Students use the outline as their plan for writing the body paragraphs of their essay. The program guides students step by step to expand each heading and its subtopics into sentences that form paragraphs. Students are prompted to write at least three sentences for each paragraph.

Writing--Body

Welcome Bill Wood

< Back to Learning Center Subject Print Outline Log out

Essay Punch - Description: Writing--Body

Tip My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing--Introductory Paragraph | **Writing--Body** | Organizing | Coherence | Writing--Conclusion | Reviewing--The First Draft | Revising--Content | Style | Sentence Structure | Grammar | Proofreading | Publishing

Write another supporting sentence on another subtopic.

This could complete your paragraph.

Input

OK

Outline

II. Why it Was Important

A. Big step

B. Scary/exciting

Essay Notepad

city. I spent weeks before the move deciding what to bring with me, what to leave, and what to get later, once I was settled. When the big day finally came, my family flew to Manhattan with me to help me move in to my new dorm.

The move was important for several reasons. I had lived in Chicago for nearly 19 years, so going to a new city was a big deal. Also, it would be my first time living on my own.

Students write sentences for the body of the essay. The student's opening sentence appears in the Writing Notepad. Students begin the body of the essay by choosing an item from the Pre-Writing Notepad. They use this item in a sentence, which is saved in the Writing Notepad.

Organizing

Students see all the paragraphs they have written for the body of the essay. They have a chance here to review and make any changes in the order of the paragraphs so that the essay is organized in the most logical and effective way. Student may also add or delete entire paragraphs in this section.

Organizing

Welcome Bill Wood

< Back to Learning Center Subject Print Outline Log out

Essay Punch - Description: Organizing

Tip My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing--Introductory Paragraph | Writing--Body | **Organizing** | Coherence | Writing--Conclusion | Reviewing--The First Draft | Revising--Content | Style | Sentence Structure | Grammar | Proofreading | Publishing

Look at the ORDER of the paragraphs IN THE BODY of your essay.

Could you organize your paragraphs in a more interesting or more effective way?

First, decide which paragraph should follow your introduction.

If necessary, change the order by selecting the paragraph and using Up move/Down move.

Essay Notepad Up move Down move

- One of the most important moments of my life was moving to New York for college. I packed up my belongings and moved from a house in Chicago with my family to a tiny dorm room in New York City. It was a very scary experience, but I rose to the challenge and learned a lot along the way.
- The move from Chicago to New York was quite an experience. I had moved before, but never to a different city. I spent weeks before the move deciding what to bring with me, what to leave, and what to get later, once I was settled. When the big day finally came, my family flew to Manhattan with me to help me move in to my new dorm.
- The move was important for several reasons. I had lived in Chicago for nearly 19 years, so going to a new city was a big deal. Also, it would be my first time living on my own. It was a scary experience, but also exciting.
- I learned a lot from the move to New York. Living on my own made me much more independent. I learned to handle my own problems without having to rely on others. It also made me appreciate home more.

OK

Coherence

The program provides examples of connecting words or phrases that improve the transition between thoughts. Students are encouraged to add transitional words for a smooth flow from one paragraph to the next

Writing--Conclusion

The program guides the student to write a concluding paragraph that restates their introductory paragraph and sums up what their essay is about.

Reviewing - The First Draft

In this section, the Essay Notepad presents the essay as a whole unit for the first time. The program asks students to check their work, paragraph by paragraph, using the Essay Notepad buttons: Add, Remove, Move, or Edit.

Reviewing – The First Draft

WELCOME Welcome Bill Wood

[Back to Learning Center](#) [Subject](#) [Print](#) [Outline](#) [Log out](#)

Essay Punch - Description: Reviewing--The First Draft

Tip My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing--Introductory Paragraph | Writing--Body | Organizing | Coherence | Writing--Conclusion | **Reviewing--The First Draft** | Revising--Content | Style | Sentence Structure | Grammar | Proofreading | Publishing

Good work! Now you can read a draft of your whole essay.

To get feedback before you revise your work, click Print in the blue bar to make a copy to share with your teacher or classmates.

Click OK to go on to the revising section.

OK

Essay Draft

One of the most important moments of my life was moving to New York for college. I packed up my belongings and moved from a house in Chicago with my family to a tiny dorm room in New York City. It was a very scary experience, but I rose to the challenge and learned a lot along the way.

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Revising – Content

Here, the Essay Draft appears for review of the essay 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.

Revising--Overview

Welcome Bill Wood

< Back to Learning Center Subject Print Outline Log out

Essay Punch - Description: Revising--Content

Tip My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing--Introductory Paragraph | Writing--Body | Organizing | Coherence | Writing--Conclusion | Reviewing--The First Draft | **Revising--Content** | Style | Sentence Structure | Grammar | Proofreading | Publishing

Reread the first draft of your entire essay with the following questions in mind:

- 1) Does your essay, as a whole, stick to the subject stated at the beginning?
- 2) Does each paragraph stick to its particular topic?
- 3) Have you made your argument in a logical and convincing way?

Using the Essay Notepad tools, make any changes you think are necessary.

Essay Notepad Add | Change text | Remove | Up move | Down move

One of the most important moments of my life was moving to New York for college. I packed up my belongings and moved from

The computer asks the students to check their work and guides them in the use of the Add, Change Text, Remove, and Move buttons.

Revising Options

Welcome Bill Wood

< Back to Learning Center Subject Print Outline Log out

Essay Punch - Description: Grammar

Tip My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing--Introductory Paragraph | Writing--Body | Organizing | Coherence | Writing--Conclusion | Reviewing--The First Draft | Revising--Content | Style | Sentence Structure | **Grammar** | Proofreading | Publishing

REVISING OPTIONS - These lessons can help you improve your writing.

Style Sentence Structure Grammar Proofreading and Spell check Go to Publishing

Grammar Review - (1 of 4)
Let's look at your essay and try to improve the grammar.

First, check the agreement between subject and verb.

To see examples, use Tip. To make a change, use Change text.

Essay Notepad Add | Change text | Remove | Up move | Down move

One of the most important moments of my life was moving to New York for college. I packed up my belongings and moved from a house in Chicago with my family to a tiny dorm room in New York City. It was a very scary experience, but I rose to the challenge and learned a lot along the way.

OK

Students are presented with optional lessons to help them improve their writing.

The Revising Options menu contains four subsections: STYLE, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, GRAMMAR, AND PROOFREADING. Each subsection contains lessons designed to help students improve their language arts skills. The record-keeping program lets the teacher know which subsections the students have completed.

Publishing

Publishing Menu

Review Spell check **Save**

Do you want to continue revising or are you ready to publish? If you want to revise, click Review. The computer will then return to the Revising section.

Click Spell check if you want the computer to help you check your spelling.

Click Save when you are ready to save your finished essay to your Online Portfolio.

After saving you will be able to print and copy your work to a word processor.

Essay Draft

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Students are given the opportunity to continue revising their work before publishing. Students have a final opportunity to review their work before saving it – “publishing” it – to their online portfolio. All published writing is stored in the Online Portfolio.

Post Published Edits

Once students have finished the program, they can view their published work in the Online Portfolio. In addition to viewing completed work, students can make edits to published essays.

Accessing Student's Most Recent Work

View Student's Work

Pre-Writing Notepad Thesis Statement Outline Essay Notepad Published Essay **Post Published Edits**

Print

One of the most important moments of my life was moving to New York for college. I packed up my belongings and moved from a house in Chicago with my family to a tiny dorm room in New York City. It was a scary experience, but I rose to the challenge and learned a lot along the way.

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I learned a lot from the move to New York. Living on my own made me much more independent. I learned to handle my own problems without having to rely on others. It also made me appreciate home more.

Moving from Chicago to New York for college was a big change for me. I was in a new city with new people and new responsibilities. It was scary at first, but I learned along the way and grew a lot as a person.

Edited Text

Edit ← Use the Edit button to make changes to your essay after it has been published

Earlier Revisions

Revision 1
10/9/2014 10:21:06 AM 00:00:00

One of the most important moments of my life was moving to New York for college. I packed up my belongings and moved from a house in Chicago with my family to a tiny dorm room in New York City. It was a scary experience, but I rose to the challenge and learned a lot along the way.

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Edited Text

Original

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← Back to List of Courses

In addition to making edits, students can see the current state of their work, review past versions, and print their newly updated essays. The essay as it was initially published will be preserved

both on the Published Essay screen, and on the Post Published Edits screen under the title "Original."

Monitoring Student Work in the Online Portfolio

The Online Portfolio shows the student's most recent work in each unit. In addition, the Online Portfolio stores all published work.

Accessing Student's Most Recent Work

Unit Overview

Published works	2
-----------------	---

Current Topic Overview

Date started	8/22/2014
Date last played	8/29/2014
% complete	100%
Last session time	00:17:24
Rounds	3
Total time	00:45:09

View Student's Work

Pre-Writing Notepad Thesis Statement Outline **Essay Notepad** Published Essay

Print

One of the most important moments of my life was moving to New York for college. I packed up my belongings and moved from a house in Chicago with my family to a tiny dorm room in New York City. It was a very scary experience, but I rose to the challenge and learned a lot along the way.

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Dragonwings - Evidence and Inference (Dragonwings - Evidence and Inference)

Dragonwings - Text-to-Self (Dragonwings - Text-to-Self)

Essay Punch - Description (Essay Punch - Description)

Use checkboxes to select students, then click Course Comments to send a comment. **Course Comments**

	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	LAST PLAYED UNIT	DATE LAST PLAYED	% COMPLETE	ONLINE PORTFOLIO
<input type="checkbox"/>	Glenn	Normile	A Memorable Experience	7/17/2014	100%	View
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill	Wood	A Memorable Experience	8/29/2014	100%	View

To view the Performance Detail for a student's most recent work, click the unit name in the Snapshot View.

Teachers go directly to a student's most recent work by clicking the unit name in the course Snapshot View on their home page. Although the Parent / Tutor interface looks different, users click the unit name on their home page as well.

Online Portfolio Performance Detail

Unit Overview

Published works	2
-----------------	---

Current Topic Overview

Date started	8/29/2014
Date last played	8/29/2014
% complete	100%

View Student's Work

Pre-Writing Notepad Thesis Statement Outline **Essay Notepad** Published Essay Post Published Edits

Print

One of the most important moments of my life was moving to New York for college. I packed up my belongings and moved from a house in Chicago with my family to a tiny dorm room in New York City. It was a scary experience, but I rose to the challenge and learned a lot along the way.

The Performance detail opens with the Notepad displaying the student's most recent work.

Online Portfolio Performance Detail – Reviewing Earlier Stages

The screenshot shows the MERIT software interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: Home, My Profile, Courses, Students, Reports, School Preferences, Documentation, Access Periods, and a Log out button. Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads: Learning Center > Bill Wood - Essay Punch - Description > A Memorable Experience. The main content area is titled '<< Bill Wood >>' and 'Essay Punch - Description - A Memorable Experience'. It shows '0 Comments' and a link to 'View all work for this program'. On the left, there's a 'Unit Overview' table with 'Published works' set to '2'. Below that is a 'Current Topic Overview' table with details like 'Date started', 'Date last played', '% complete', 'Last session time', 'Rounds', and 'Total time'. The main section is 'View Student's Work', which has several radio button options: 'Pre-Writing Notepad' (which is circled in red), 'Thesis Statement', 'Outline', 'Essay Notepad', 'Published Essay', and 'Post Published Edits'. There is also a 'Print' link and a list of details with expandable arrows. At the bottom, there's a link '<< Back to List of Courses'.

To see how the student's writing developed you may view earlier stages of the work, such as the student's Pre-Writing Notepad.

Online Portfolio Performance Detail – Post Published Edits

Earlier Revisions

Revision 1

10/9/2014 10:21:05 AM

00:00:06

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Edited Text

Original

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To see changes that students have made to their writing after publishing, you can access the Post Paragraph Edits tab.

Online Portfolio – All Work for a Student

MERIT Welcome Brad Brown Log out

Home My Profile Courses Students Reports School Preferences Documentation Access Periods

Learning Center > Bill Wood - Essay Punch - Description > **A Memorable Experience**

<< Bill Wood >>

Essay Punch - Description - A Memorable Experience

0 Comments | [View all work for this program](#)

Unit Overview

Published works	2
-----------------	---

Current Topic Overview

Date started	8/29/2014
Date last played	8/29/2014
% complete	100%

View Student's Work

Pre-Writing Notepad
Thesis Statement
Outline

Essay Notepad
Published Essay
Post Published Edits

[Print](#)

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Click to view a table of contents listing both published work and work in progress.

Online Portfolio Table of Contents

MERIT Welcome Brad Brown Log out

Home My Profile Courses Students Reports School Preferences Documentation Access Periods

Learning Center > Bill Wood - Essay Punch - Description > **Essay Punch - Description**

Student Name: Bill Wood

Course: [Essay Punch - Description](#) (Essay Punch - Description)

All student work is stored in the Online Portfolio. Click the link in the Performance Detail column to view it.

Program Unit	Performance Detail	Date Last Played	% complete	Rounds	Segment Time
A Memorable Experience	Published work ✓	8/29/2014	100%	3	00:37:47
	Published work ✓	8/29/2014	100%	3	00:45:09
A Significant Place					
An Important Person					

<<Click here to go back

To view the student's previous work select the Performance Detail you wish to view from the online portfolio table of contents.

Navigating the Performance Detail Interface

Unit Overview

Published works	2
-----------------	---

Current Topic Overview

Date started	8/29/2014
Date last played	8/29/2014
% complete	100%
Last session time	00:28:32
Rounds	3
Total time	00:37:47

Section Progress

Introduction	Completed
Subject	Completed
Pre-Writing	Completed
Thesis	Completed
Building an Outline	Completed
Writing-Introductory Paragraph	Completed
Writing-Body	Completed
Organizing	Completed
Coherence	Completed
Writing-Conclusion	Completed
Reviewing-The First Draft	Completed
Revising-Content	Completed
Style	Completed
Sentence Structure	Completed
Grammar	Completed
Proofreading	Completed
Publishing	Completed

Sections indicated in green are optional

View Student's Work

Pre-Writing Notepad Thesis Statement Outline
 Essay Notepad Published Essay Post Published Edits

Print

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<< Back to List of Courses

Use the double arrows to navigate between records

The Section Progress menu tracks the exact step of the Punch writing process on which the student is working. It also shows whether the student has completed the optional revising sections.

The Student Performance Detail also displays overview and progress statistics that the program tracks.

Monitoring Student Work With Reports

The Reports are useful for monitoring student summary information and statistics for the Essay Punch units. You can view and export information about a whole class.

Performance Summary Report

Performance Summary Report - Mozilla Firefox

meritonlinelearning.com/OLMS/Reports/PerformanceSummaryReport.aspx?activity=0&cid=25537&ss=1&pType=0&puid=-1&uid=1045

Performance Summary Report

Student Name: Wood, Bill
 Course: Essay Punch - Description
 Program: Essay Punch - Description
 Teacher: Brown, Brad

Select the rows you wish to view, print or export.

View/ Print Export

<input type="checkbox"/>	Program Unit	Published Works	Works in Progress	Completed Revising Sections	Date Started	Date Last Played	Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	All Units	2	0	8	8/22/2014	8/29/2014	01:22:56
<input type="checkbox"/>	A Memorable Experience	2	0	8	8/22/2014	8/29/2014	01:22:56

The Performance Summary report tracks the number of published works, works in progress, and completed revising sections. It includes Date Last Played, Date Started, and Time on Task.

Content of Essay Punch

Each unit concentrates on a specific type of essay - based on persuasion, information, or description. Here are the subjects within each type:

Unit 1: Description

Subject: A memorable experience - One of your friends always seems to have an interesting experience to relate. Sometimes it is a quiet experience, drawn from everyday life. Sometimes it is a vivid memory of a past event. Now it is your turn to describe an experience or event in your own life that you remember well because of how it made you feel or what you learned from it.
Tip: This topic will give you a chance to write about something that happened to you and how it influenced or affected you.

Subject: A significant place - Particular places often have a special meaning, interest, or importance. For example, a child you know loves to describe the exciting sights and sounds of a local amusement park. An elderly neighbor remembers in detail her overcrowded home in a far-distant town nearly seventy years ago. Now it is your turn to tell about a place, past or present, that is significant to you.
Tip: This topic will give you a chance to describe a particular place and tell what it means to you.

Subject: Someone who has affected your life positively - You have learned about people whose lives were touched in some significant way by another person. Now you have a chance to write about someone who has affected your own life positively in some way.
Tip: This topic will give you a chance to write about a particular person and how he or she touched your life.

Unit 2: Information

Subject: An area of interest - One of your friends knows all about dolphins. Another can sing all the songs the Beatles ever wrote. Almost everyone has an interest, talent, or hobby that makes him or her an 'expert' in some area. Describe an activity or area about which you are especially knowledgeable.
Tip: This topic will give you a chance to describe or explain something you know well.

Subject: A modern discovery or invention - Have you ever wondered what a visitor from an earlier time would make of our world today? Imagine that you have such a visitor. Describe a discovery or invention made in the last one hundred years or so, and show how modern society depends on it.
Tip: This topic will give you a chance to tell about something discovered in nature or created entirely new within the past hundred years.

Subject: A character from a different background - You have a new neighbor, a recent arrival in your community. Some of your friends already know something about his culture from a movie they saw. Movies and books allow us to meet people whose lives are different from our own. Here is your chance to tell about a movie or book that increased your knowledge of people from another land, or from another part of America, or from a different background.
Tip: This topic will give you a chance to describe a movie or book about people from a different place or culture.

Unit 3: Persuasion

Subject: Community service - Some members of the school board in your community have recommended that all students be required to do community service each semester. Students are invited to express their opinions, in writing, for or against required community service.
Tip: This subject will give you a chance to write about why required community service for all students is a good idea or a poor idea.

Subject: A standard dress code - The principal of a local school wants to ban jewelry, hats, and leather jackets in school and set up a standard dress code for all students. Write an essay that argues for -- or against -- the idea of a school's having a standard dress code.

Tip: This subject will give you a chance to write about why a standard dress code for all students is a good idea or a poor idea.

Subject: The effects of TV - A teacher, a student, and a member of the town council appear on a local TV talk show and debate whether television does more good than harm, or the reverse. The program's host invites his home audience to write in their views.

Tip: This subject will give you a chance to write about the negative -- or positive -- effects of television

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