Merit Online Learning
Reading Comprehension Booster

Skill levels 3 - 5
High Beginning ESL through Intermediate
Adult Learners

Complete program: 2 levels
Level 1: Skill levels 3 – 4, High Beginning English Language Learners
Level 2: Skill levels 4.5 – 5.5, Intermediate English Language Learners

Note skill levels correspond to U.S. equivalent grade levels.

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

What Does Reading Comprehension Booster Do?

Reading Comprehension Booster gives students personal, immediate feedback and provides online tracking for teachers.

The program helps students improve reading comprehension. Students read a non-fiction or fiction passage and then answer several skill questions about it. The questions focus students to determine main idea, comprehend logical development, make inferences, and read closely for details. Feedback explains incorrect choices and rewards correct answers.

Scope of the Program: Skills

Each Reading Comprehension Booster level contains 60 passages divided into 3 units of progressive difficulty.

All units provide Vocabulary, Sequence, Inference, Main Idea, and Interpretation skill practice. Optional Word Association and Crossword Puzzle exercises keyed to the passages offer a challenge for the more advanced student. Examples of questions for each skill are in the Tips and Strategies unit.

Tips and Strategies
A Tips and Strategies unit addresses each skill in the program. It contains examples of passages with skill questions and a step-by-step analysis of each answer choice. Teachers can use the Tips and Strategies unit as a together activity to introduce reading skills to a class. It can be used for group mini-lessons as well as for individual review of skills with which a student is having trouble.

Implementation

Suggested allocation of time for using the program
For best results we recommend that students use the program 20 to 30 minutes a session, two to three times a week, for six to eight weeks, in conjunction with other methods of instruction. Program usage should be paced to allow students sufficient time between sessions to absorb the material.

Suggested overview of student sessions
Students advance through the program at their own pace.

Each Reading Comprehension Booster unit is divided into three sections for students to work through:

Tryout – A diagnostic pre-test
Workout – Learning and practice with feedback and help messages.
Finals – A diagnostic post-test

The Workout section of the program is designed to promote learning and mastery by providing feedback immediately after students select an answer. When students select a wrong answer, the feedback explains why the choice is wrong. Students try again until they answer correctly. The Workout section is designed so that students may do as many rounds as necessary to master the material.

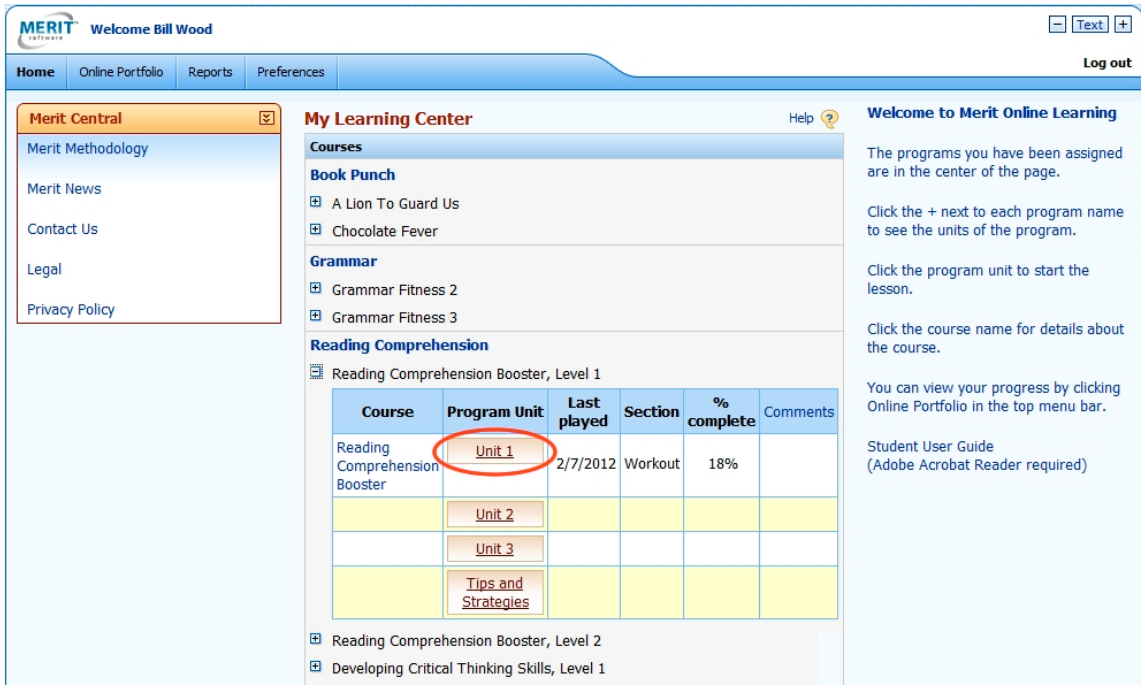
Students can redo a unit or section of a unit for additional practice. Note that playing again will reset student scores but not time on task.

Tracking students' work
Students and teachers are able to track improvement through students' Online Portfolios and Reports. Using these tools to view the Workout rounds informs students and teachers of what skills students are mastering and what skills students are having difficulty mastering.

Program Structure or "Anatomy of the Program"

The Reading Comprehension Booster program appears in the student's Learning Center.

Student's Learning Center

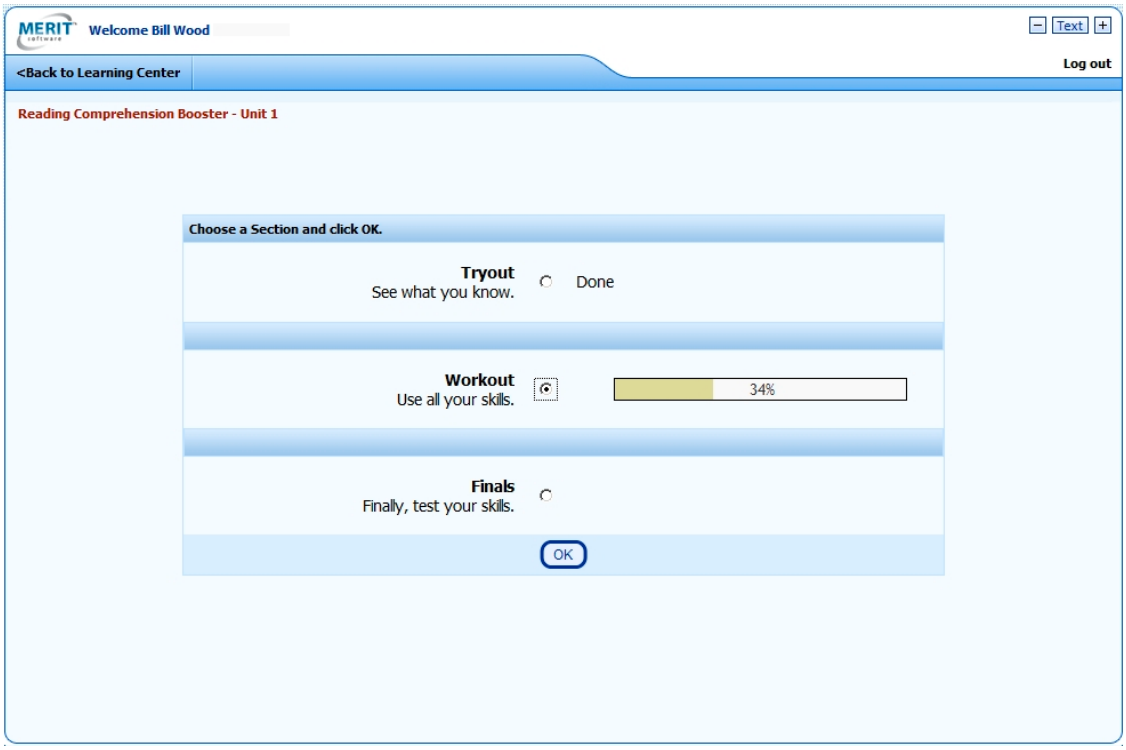


The student clicks the + next to the Reading Comprehension Booster program level to see the units of the program.

The student clicks the unit name to start a lesson.

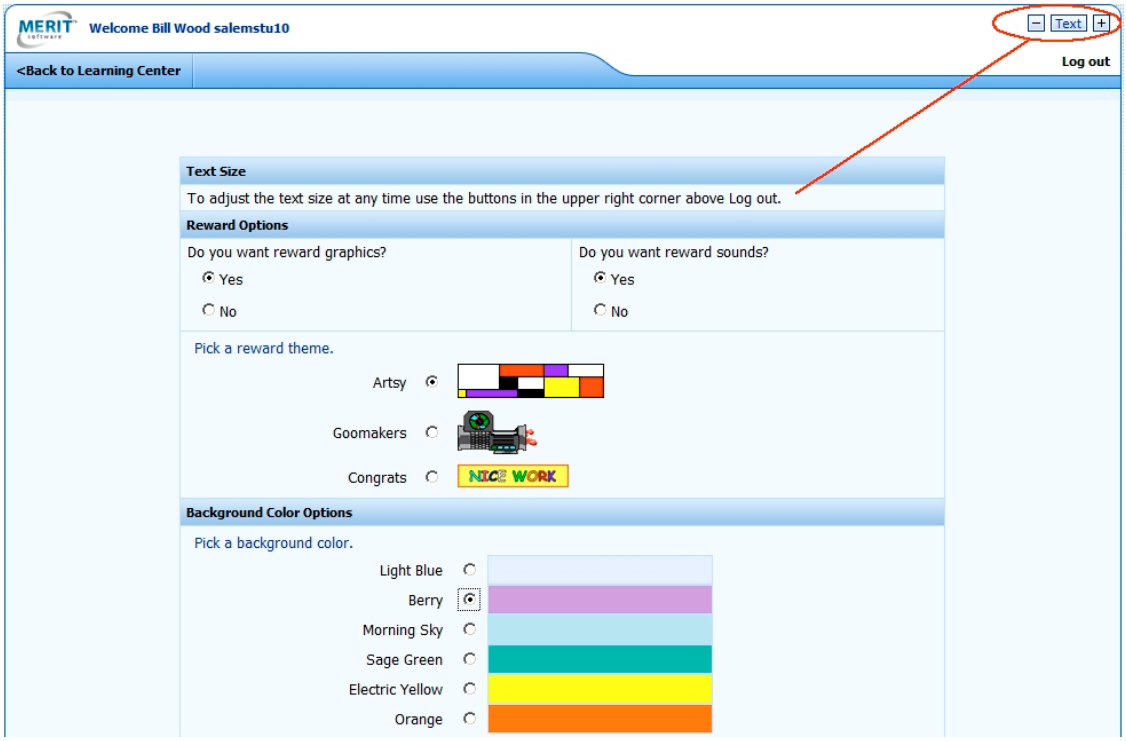
Next, the student selects a section. The section menu indicates whether the student has done the Tryout and Finals and the % complete for the Workout.

Section Menu



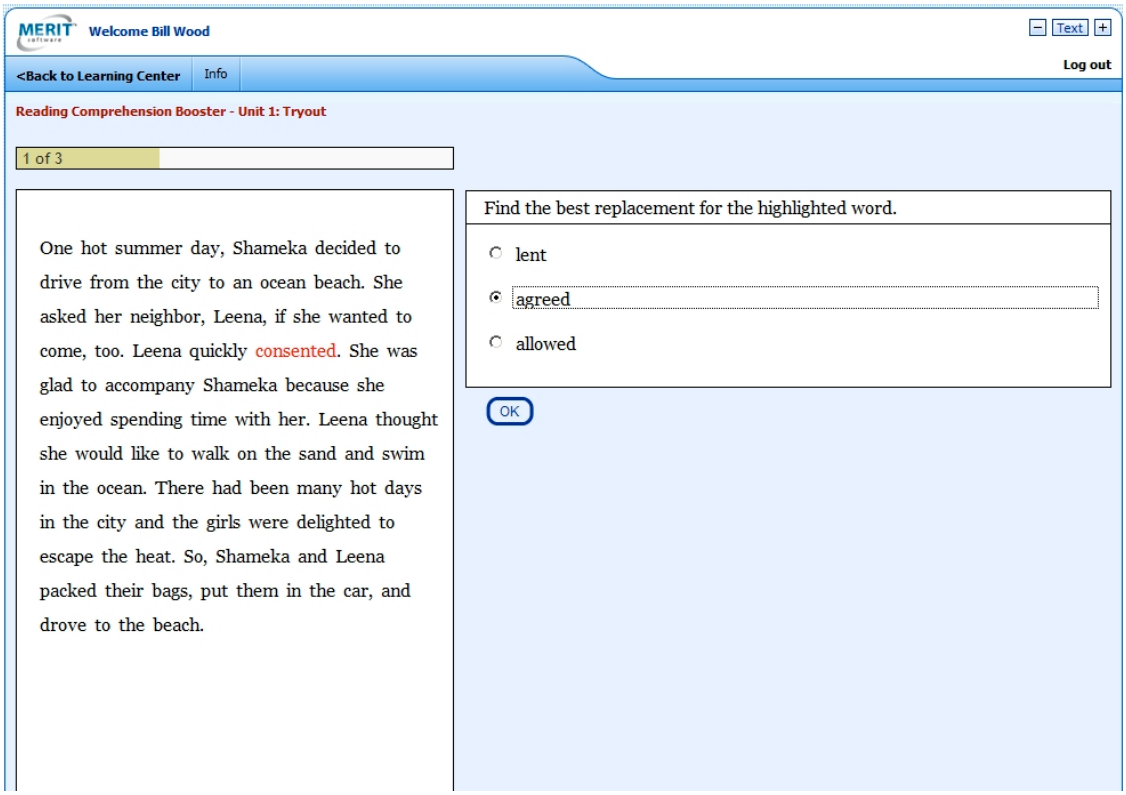
Students can adjust the text size and choose a different background color at the start of each section. At the start of the Workout they can also choose a graphic reward theme.

Display Options: Text Size, Rewards, Background Color



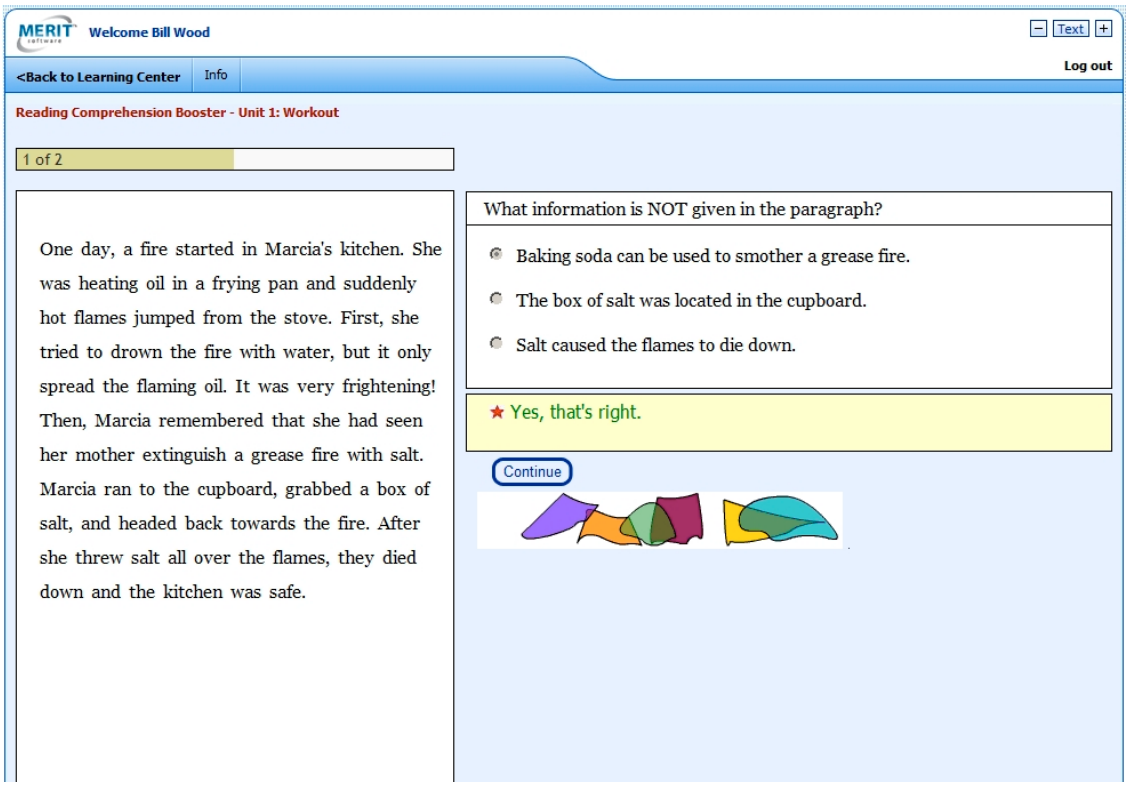
In all sections the student is asked to read a passage and then answer several skill questions.

Sample Question



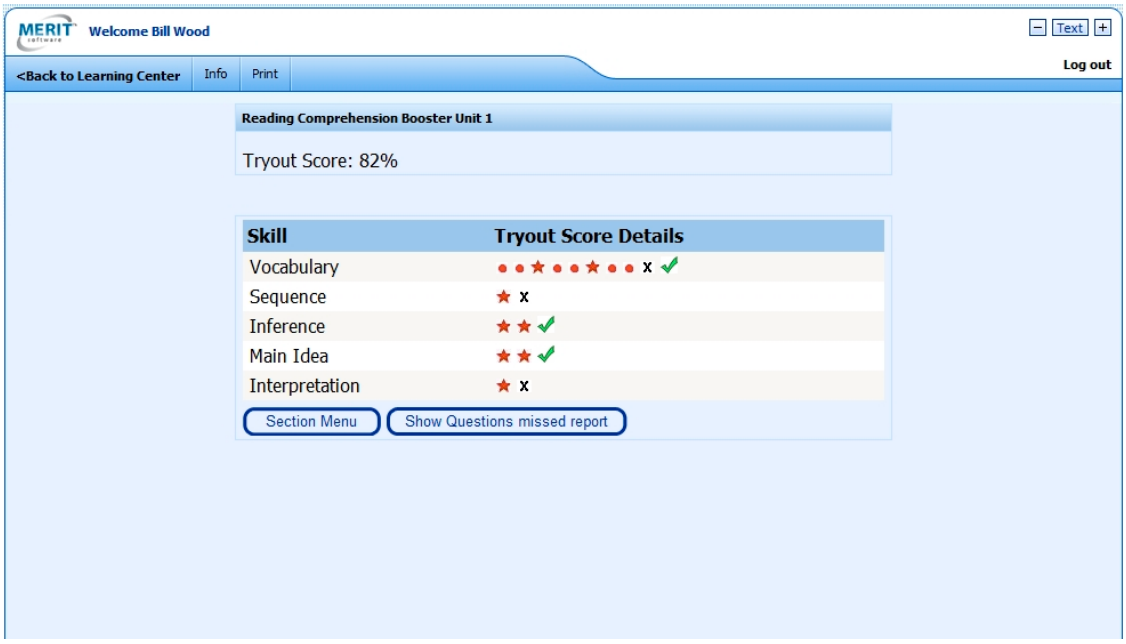
Feedback, help messages, and reward graphics are shown in the Workout section.

Sample Question with Feedback



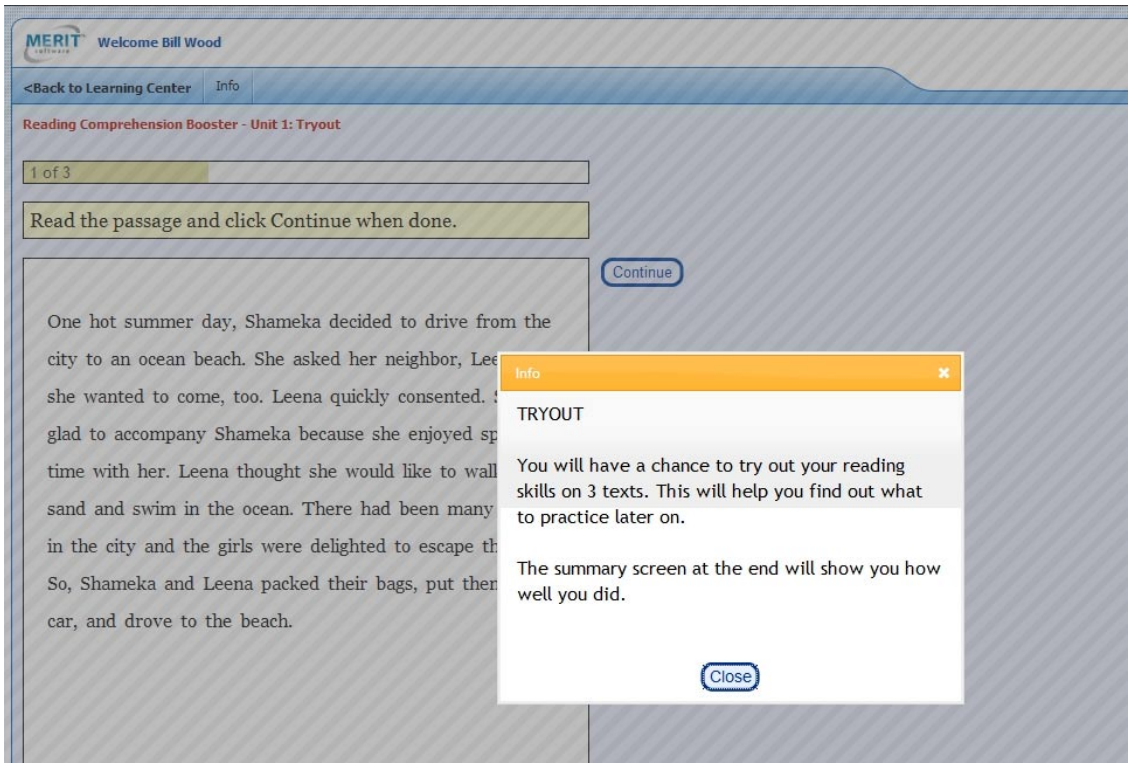
Following each round, the student sees a summary screen showing his/her progress and achievement in that round.

Sample Summary Screen



Section Details

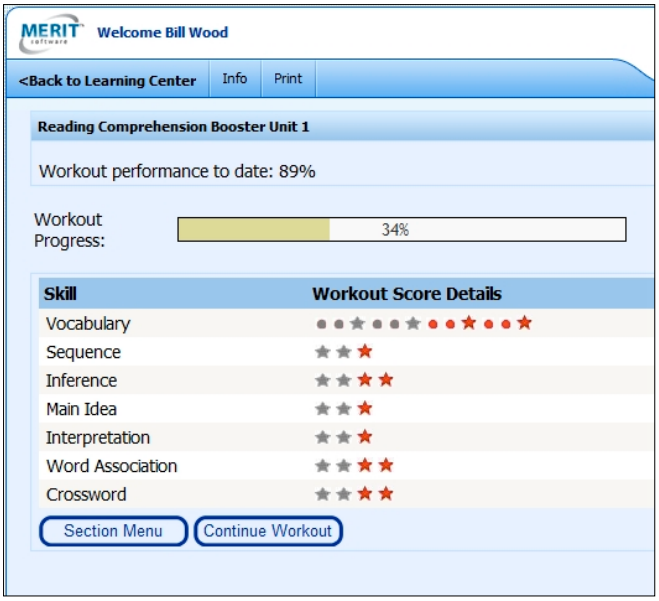
TRYOUT: The program presents three passages to test the student's reading comprehension skills. The student answers nine vocabulary questions and two questions for each of the other skills within the program. When the student has finished all the questions, a summary screen will show how the student did. The student gets a star or bullet for each correct answer and a check for skills in which the student has answered all questions correctly. A Questions Missed Report gives details for questions answer incorrectly.



WORKOUT: Each Workout round presents the student with two passages and accompanying questions. The student needs to play at least six rounds to complete the Workout.

The student is awarded stars for skill questions answered correctly on the first try. The student needs to collect 10 stars for each skill in order to complete the Workout. The student can play as many rounds as needed to collect the stars. Note: Three Vocabulary questions answered correctly earn one star. Each Main Idea, Sequence, Interpretation, and Inference question answered correctly earns one star.

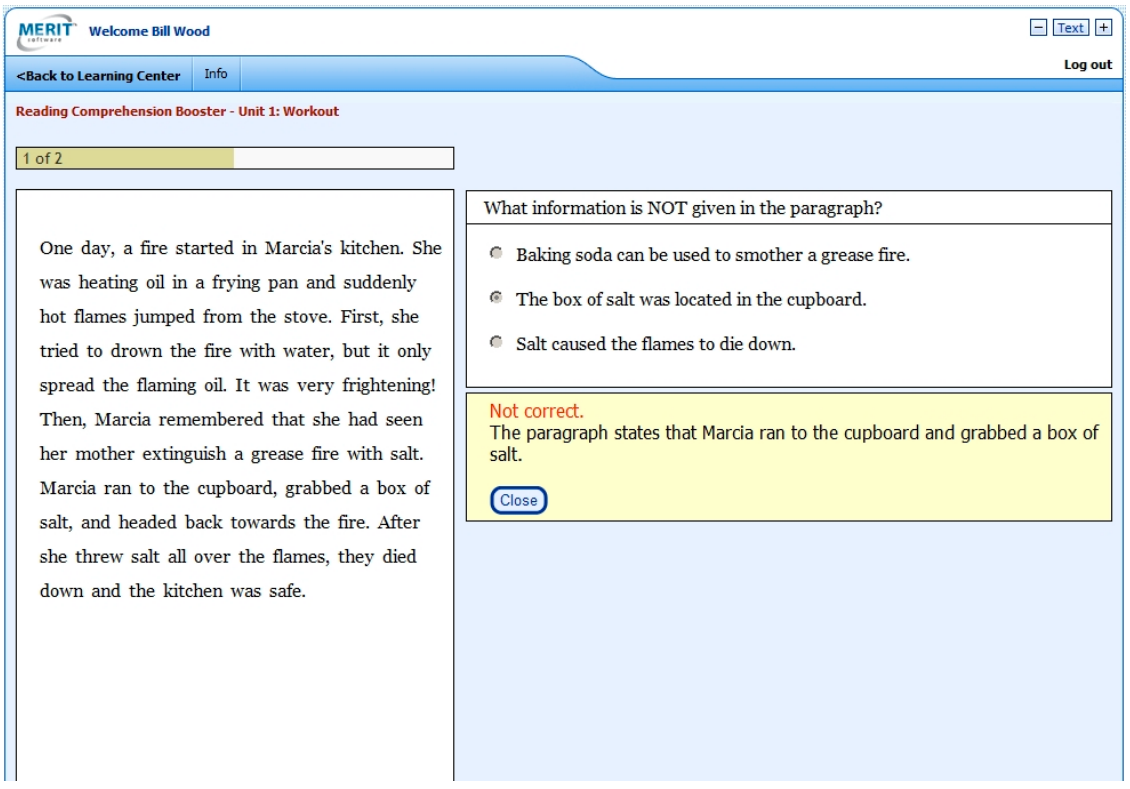
In addition to the skill questions for a passage, the student is challenged to solve two enrichment activities, a word association vocabulary exercise and a three-word crossword puzzle. The student is awarded a star for each enrichment activity solved. The student has the opportunity to collect 10 stars for an enrichment activity, but the student only needs to collect stars for the skill questions to complete the Workout. To complete the Workout, the student needs to answer 70 skill questions correctly on the first try. The Student may replay the Workout for additional practice.



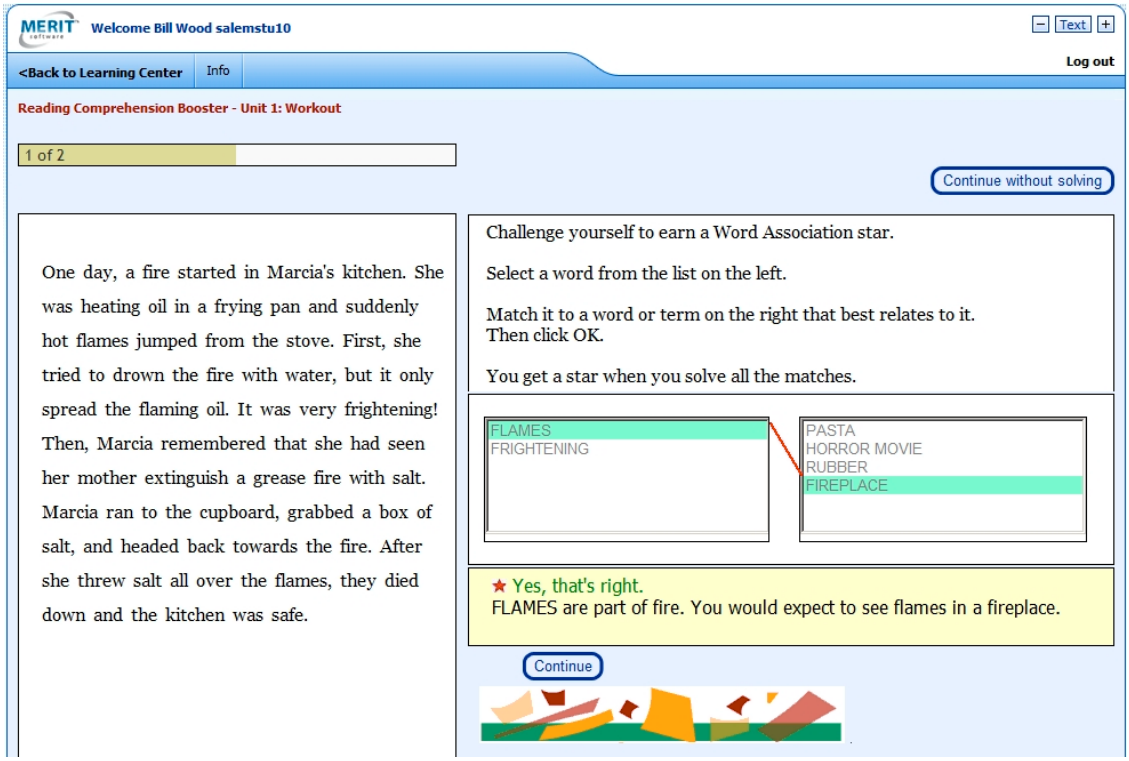
At the end of each Workout round a summary screen will show how the student did. The student gets a star or a bullet for each correct answer. Red indicates correct answers for the current round. Gray indicates correct answers for preceding rounds.

When the student has collected 10 stars in a skill area, the student gets a check indicating the skill has been passed. When the student has gotten checks in all skill areas, the Workout has been completed.

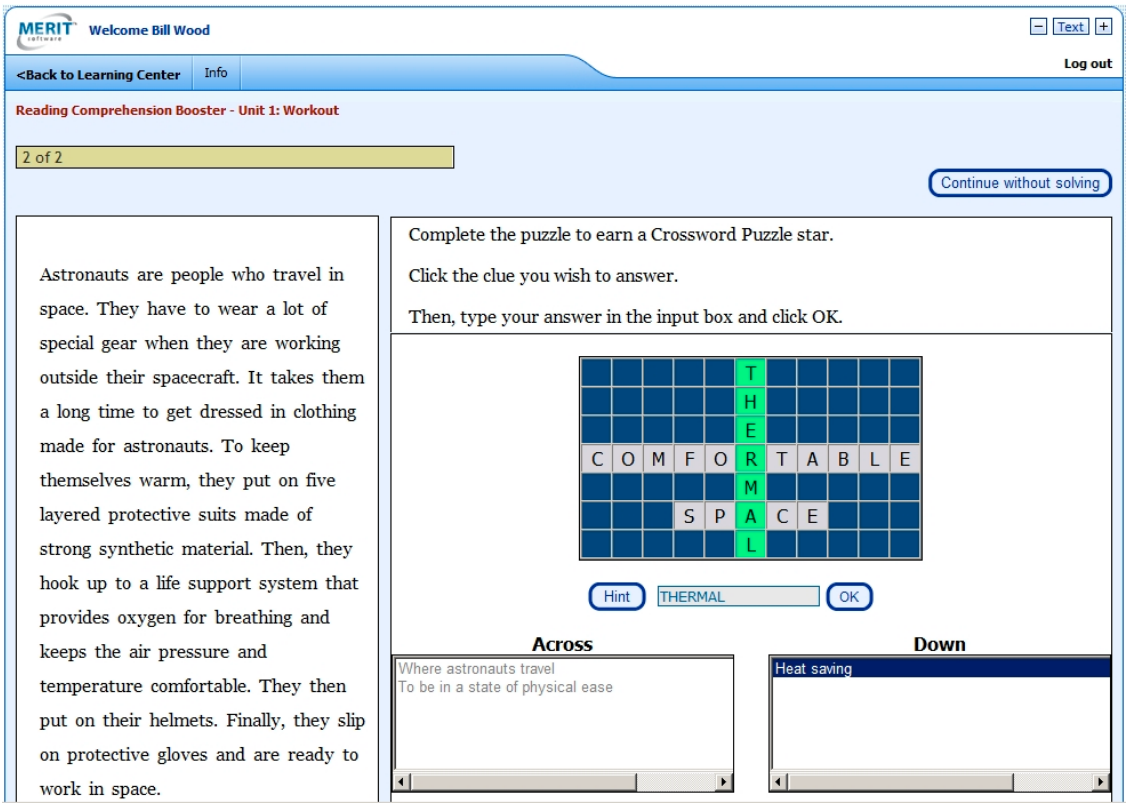
Sample Skill Question



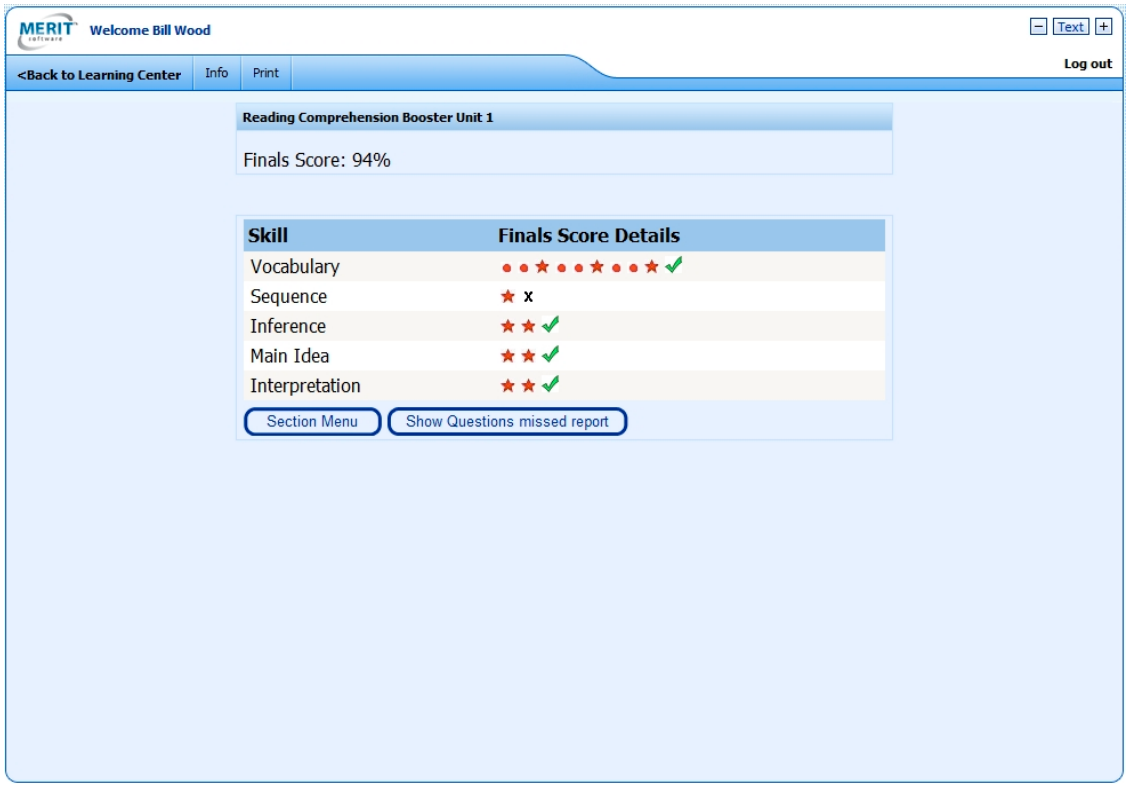
Sample Matching Activity



Sample Crossword Puzzle



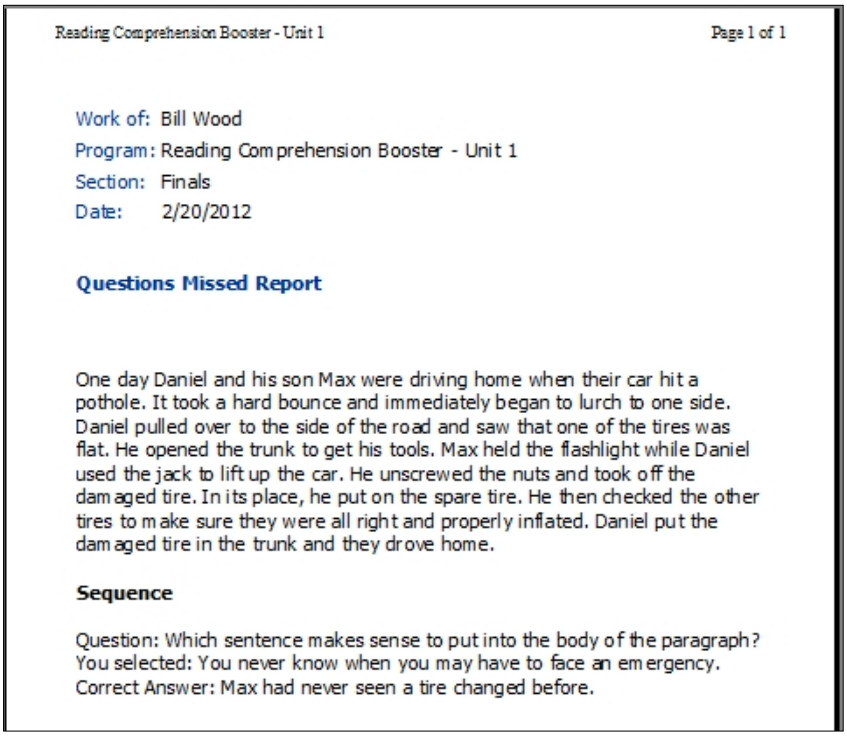
FINALS: The program presents three passages to test the student's reading comprehension skills. The student answers nine vocabulary questions and two questions for each of the other skills within the program. When the student has finished all the questions, a summary screen will show how the student did. The student gets a star or bullet for each correct answer and a check for skills in which the student has answered all questions correctly. A Questions Missed Report gives details for questions answered incorrectly.



The student may view the Questions Missed Report to see any questions the student missed on the Finals.

The report includes the passage, the correct answer, and what the student answered.

The Questions Missed Report is also available in the Online Portfolio.



Reading Comprehension Booster - Unit 1 Page 1 of 1

Work of: Bill Wood
Program: Reading Comprehension Booster - Unit 1
Section: Finals
Date: 2/20/2012

Questions Missed Report

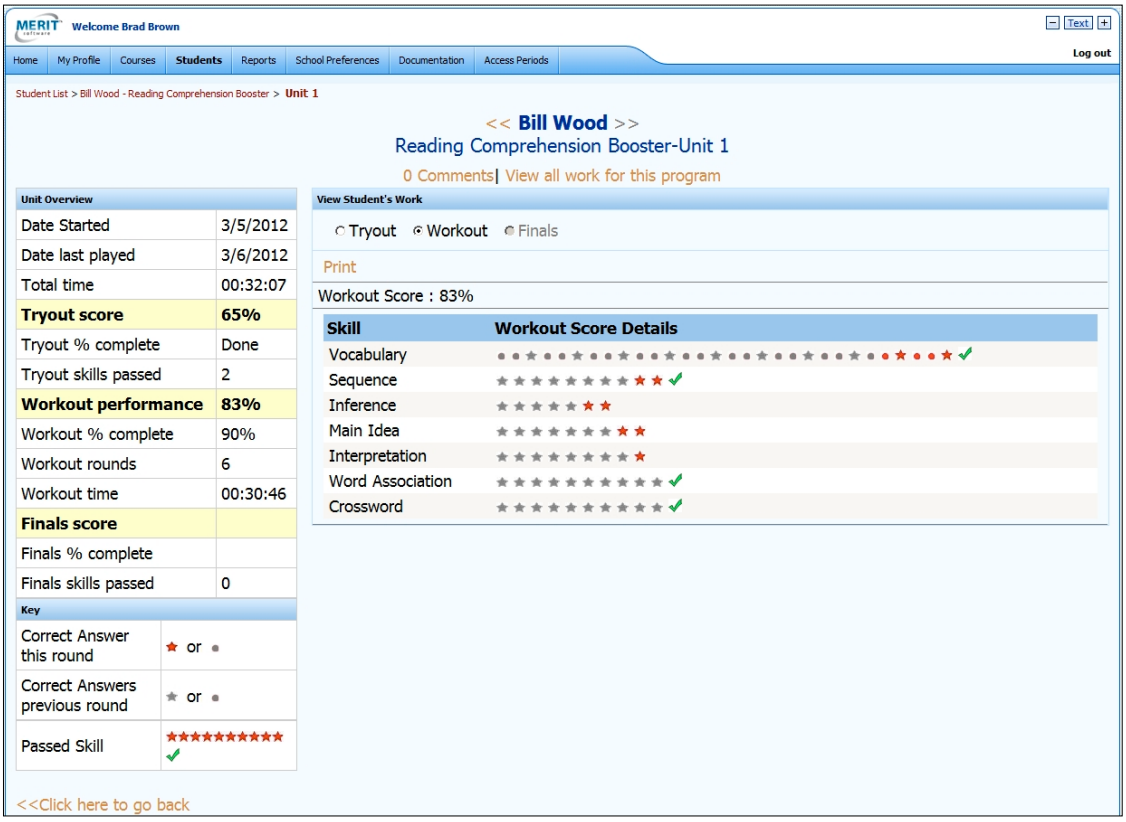
One day Daniel and his son Max were driving home when their car hit a pothole. It took a hard bounce and immediately began to lurch to one side. Daniel pulled over to the side of the road and saw that one of the tires was flat. He opened the trunk to get his tools. Max held the flashlight while Daniel used the jack to lift up the car. He unscrewed the nuts and took off the damaged tire. In its place, he put on the spare tire. He then checked the other tires to make sure they were all right and properly inflated. Daniel put the damaged tire in the trunk and they drove home.

Sequence

Question: Which sentence makes sense to put into the body of the paragraph?
You selected: You never know when you may have to face an emergency.
Correct Answer: Max had never seen a tire changed before.

Monitoring Student Work in the Online Portfolio

The Online Portfolio shows the student's summary screen for the most recently played section in the unit. To see the student's progress click earlier sections' radio buttons to view their summary screens. The Performance Detail also includes overview information about the unit in the left column.



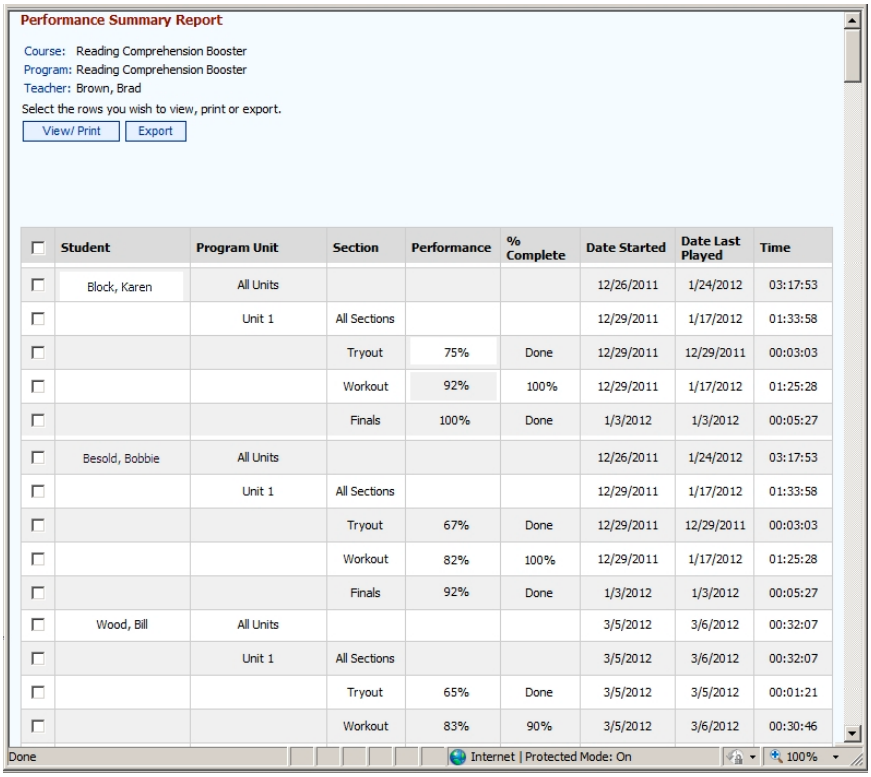
Monitoring Student Work With Reports

Reports show student progress and performance through the sections of the program.

Reports are useful for viewing and exporting information about a whole class or information about one student over several classes.

Reading Comprehension Booster student work can be tracked with the following reports:

Performance Summary Report
Work-to-Date Report
Performance Detail Report

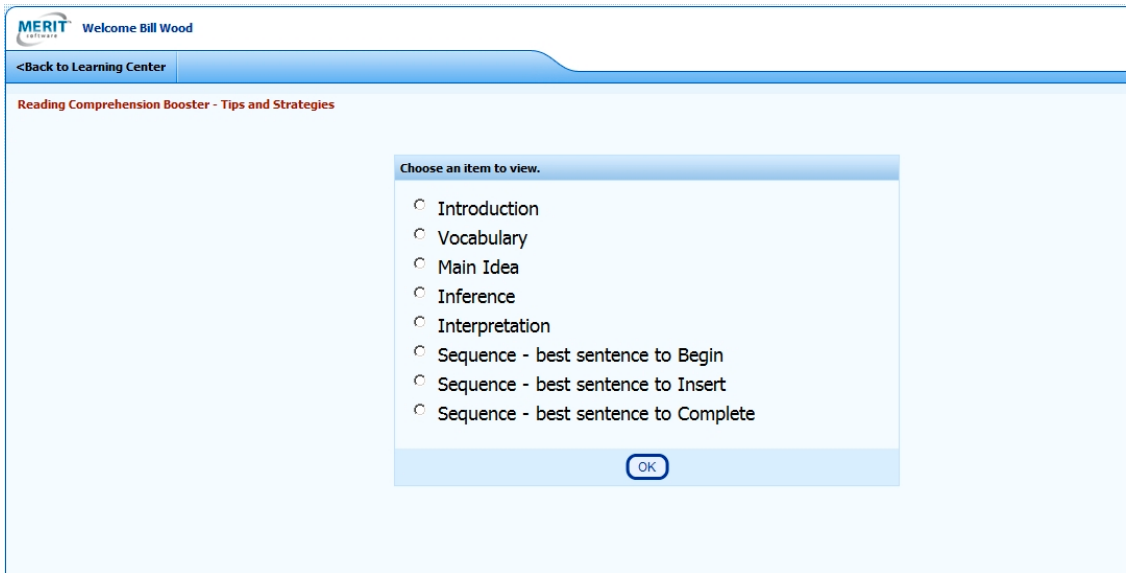


Tips and Strategies Unit

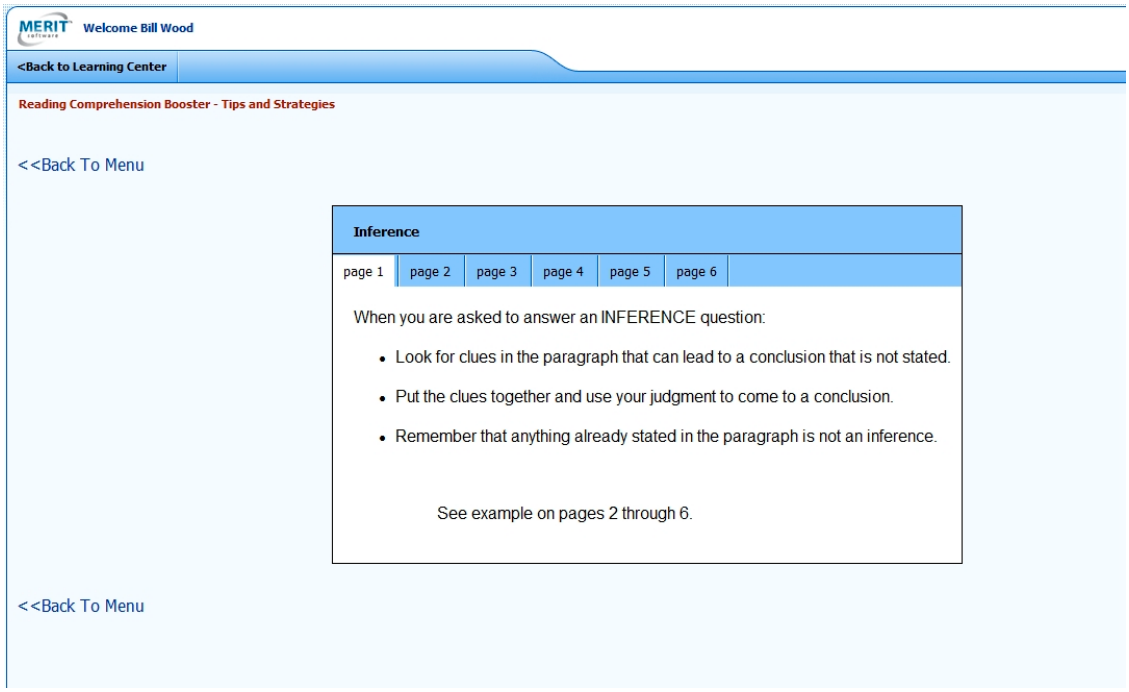
The link to Tips and Strategies appears in the unit column of the Reading Comprehension Booster program in the student's Learning Center. Click the link to access Tips and Strategies.

We recommend teachers review the Tips and Strategies section with their students.

Tips and Strategies Menu



Tips and Strategies Sample



copyright © 2012 Merit Software