



Merit Online Learning User Guide for Students

Welcome to Merit Online Learning, meritonlinelearning.com, your Internet portal to the power of Merit Software.

Merit Online Learning lessons are designed to help you build your skills. The programs are in-depth interactive learning tools. They are intuitive to use and encourage a step-by-step approach to academic mastery.

Punch[®] programs help you develop your writing skills. Punch[®] lessons take you step by step through the writing process. **For an overview of Punch[®] Programs see below.**

Skill Building programs help you learn concepts and master skills. The Skill Building lessons present questions for you to work through. Feedback messages explain the correct answer. **For an overview of Skill Building Programs see page 3.**

Punch[®] Programs – Overview

Punch[®] programs help you develop your writing skills. The lessons will tutor you step by step through the writing process. Prompts and tips will help you think clearly.

There is no **“back button.”** However, you will have many chances to change and improve your work.

After a series of introductory screens, the program will offer you several topics to write about. **Choose a topic** in order to begin the writing lesson.

Prompts, or questions about the topic, appear throughout the lesson to help you think and write.

Each prompt is followed by an **input box**, an area on the screen where you can enter your own words, phrases or sentences. After you make an input, press Enter or click the OK button once.

Click **“Tip”** if you want suggestions about what to write in the input box.

The program saves your input box entries in a **Notepad**. The Notepad saves what you have written during the lesson.

At many points in the lesson, you will see **Revising Tools** above your Notepad. These tools help you to improve your work by allowing you to change, add, remove, or move your text.

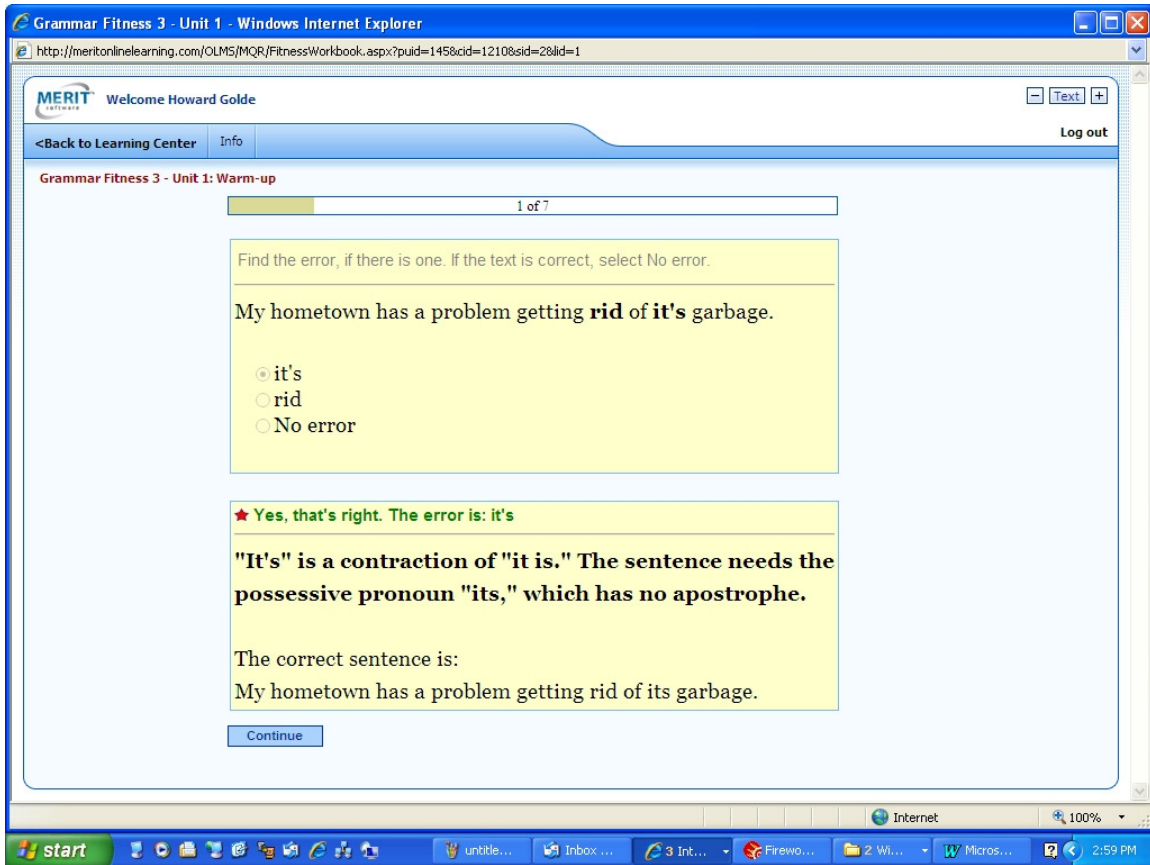
Throughout each lesson, "**My Progress**" across the top of the screen indicates how much of the lesson you have completed and how much of the lesson remains.

You can work at your own pace during a lesson. The Punch[®] workbook saves your writing. You can continue where you left off when you open a Punch[®] workbook that you already started.

Sample Punch[®] Program Lesson Screen Shot

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Paragraph Punch - Reasons - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL: <http://meritonlinelearning.com/OLM5/Punch/Workbook.aspx?puid=1&cid=1109&resume=1>. The page content includes a "Welcome Howard Golde" message, a "Log out" button, and a navigation menu with options like "<Back to Learning Center", "Topic", and "Print". The main content area is titled "Paragraph Punch - Reasons: Pre-Writing" and features a "Tip" box with the text: "What do you most [respect? admire? enjoy?] about Alex? See Tip for possible answers." Below this is an "Input" field with the instruction: "Use only words or phrases. Be brief to write sentences later." An "OK" button is located below the input field. A "Pre-Writing Notepad" is visible at the bottom, containing the text "a friend". A "Tip" dialog box is open, displaying the text: "Fun to be with? Knows a lot?" with a "Close" button.

Sample Skill Building Program Lesson Screen Shot



Skill Building Programs – Overview

Skill Building programs help you learn concepts and master skills. The Skill Building workbook presents questions for you to work through.

Skill Building programs are divided into sections for you to progress through in order. Note; some Skill Building programs do not have all of the sections in every unit.

The **Tryout** shows what you know already.

The **Warm-up** helps you learn and practice one skill at a time.

The **Workout** gives you practice on all the skills in the unit.

The **Finals** tests your skills at the end of the unit.

The Tryout and Finals are done in one round. The Warm-up and Workout are completed in as many rounds as necessary.

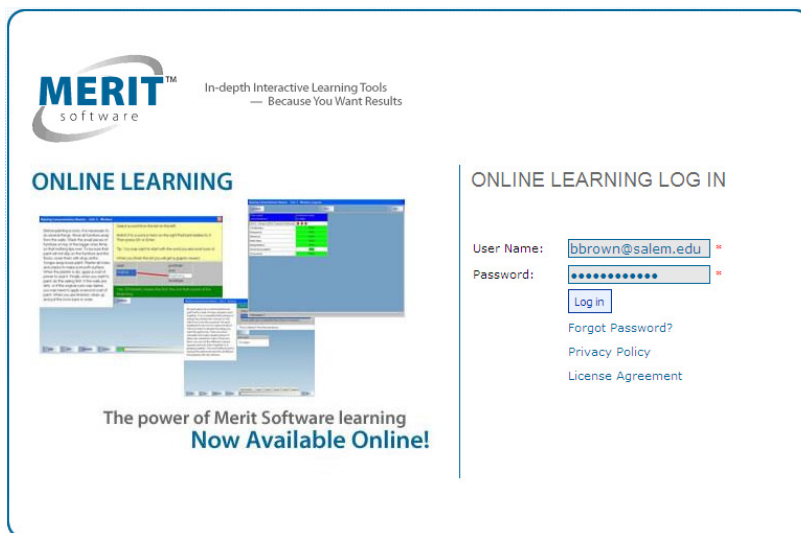
The Skill Building workbook opens to the **Section menu** where you see how far along you are in the unit and you select a section to work on.

Next, in all sections you will see one question with two or more answer choices. Use the mouse to select your choice and press Enter or the OK button. If you are doing the Tryout or Finals the next question will come on the screen. If you are doing the Warm-up or Workout you will get **feedback** messages.

The **status bar** above the question shows the question count for the round. When you have done all the questions in a round you will get a **summary screen** that shows your score.

The Skill Building workbook saves your work. You can see your summary screens for each section of each unit in your Online Portfolio. Your Finals summary screen has a Questions Missed Report that shows the questions you missed in the Finals and their correct answers.

Logging In



To log in, go to **www.meritonlinelearning.com** and enter your User Name and Password.

The User Name and Password are **case sensitive**.
e.g. User NAME

You must enter the same upper- and lower-case letters that your teacher gave you or that were in the email that was sent to you.

You can access your Merit lessons from any computer with an Internet connection. After you log in you will see “My Learning Center.”

If you have trouble logging in and become blocked by the system your teacher or school administrator can unblock you. If you forget your password, they can create a new one for you.

Beginning a Lesson

The screenshot shows the 'My Learning Center' page. On the left is a 'Merit Central' menu with options like 'Merit Methodology', 'Merit News', 'Contact Us', 'Legal', and 'Privacy Policy'. The main area is titled 'My Learning Center' and contains a 'Courses' section. Under 'Book Punch', there is 'The Giver'. Under 'Grammar', there are 'Grammar Fitness 1' through 'Grammar Fitness 4'. A table below shows details for 'Grammar Fitness 4', with columns for 'Course', 'Program Unit', 'Last played', 'Section', '% complete', and 'Comments'. The table lists 'Unit 1' through 'Unit 5'. A red arrow points from the 'Merit Central' menu to the 'Unit 2' button in the table. Another red arrow points from the 'Unit 2' button to the 'Last played' column header.

Course	Program Unit	Last played	Section	% complete	Comments
Grammar Fitness 4	Unit 1				
	Unit 2				
	Unit 3				
	Unit 4				
	Unit 5				

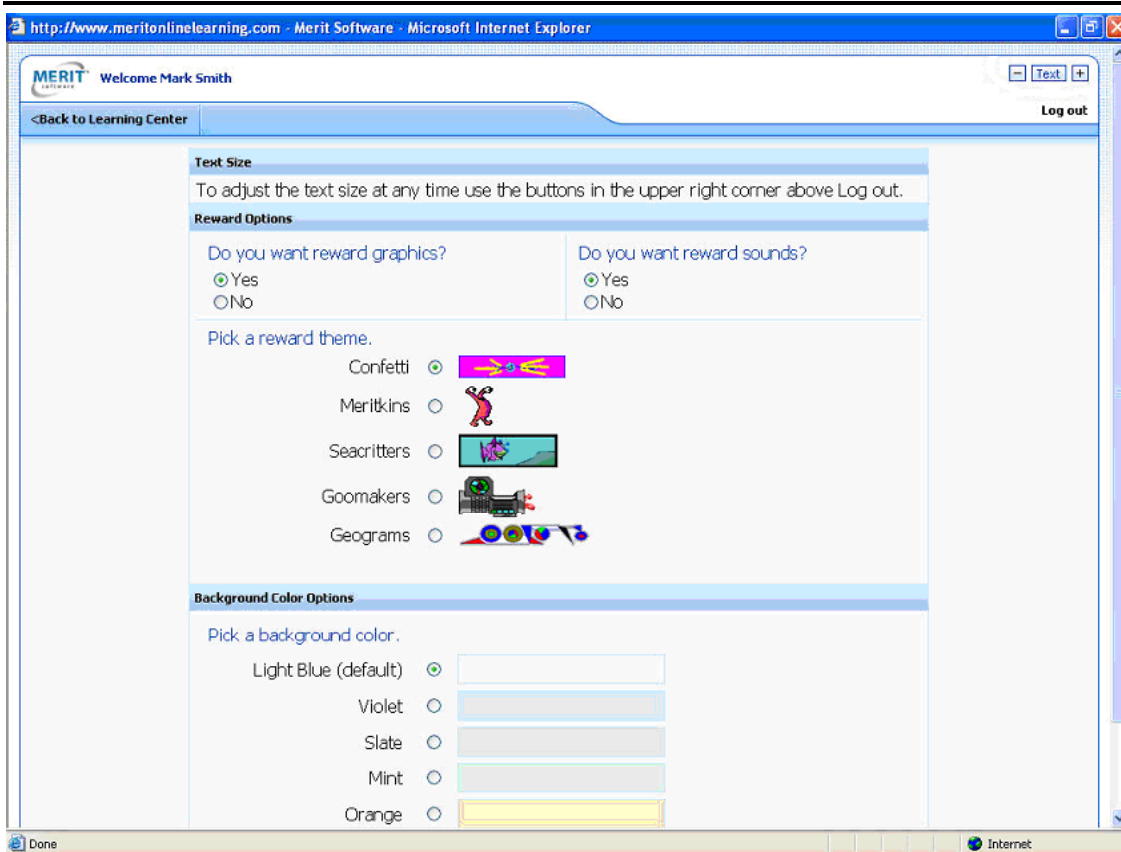
In “My Learning Center” your course programs will be listed in the center of the screen.

Click the + next to each program name to see the units in that program.

Click a unit name to start a lesson. The workbook for the lesson will open on the screen. Follow the directions on the screen.

Lesson features depend on the program and the content of the lesson. **For an overview of Punch® Programs see page 1. For an overview of Skill Building Programs see page 3.**

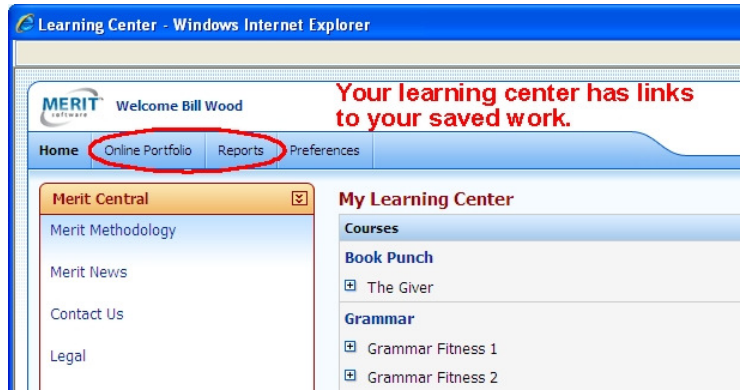
Reward Preferences and Background Color



You can choose a different reward theme and background color at the start of each unit.

If you want to go directly to the lessons without selecting a reward theme, go to your Learning Center and click "Preferences" on the bar across the top of the screen to set the graphic and sound reward behavior you would like.

Online Portfolio and Reports



You can track your progress and scores in your Online Portfolio and in your Reports section.

Your Online Portfolio saves a record of your work in progress and your completed work. In “My Learning Center” click “Online Portfolio” on the bar across the top of the screen. A screen will display your assigned programs. You can click a program name to see your work listed by program unit or you can select “Recent Work” to view a table showing your 10 most recently played program units. From either listing, click the link in the Performance Detail column of the work you wish to view. The Performance Detail screen will open with your work. From this screen you can also print your work.

Sample Punch® Performance Detail

Learning Center > Alan Tung - The Giver > Reading Check

<< Alan Tung >>
 << The Giver - Reading Check >>
 0 Comments | View all work for this program

Current Topic Overview	
Date started	4/8/2009
Date last played	1/26/2010
% complete	100%
Last session time	00:06:08
Rounds	2
Total time	00:07:05
Attempt number	1
Key point score	3/4

View Student's Work

Pre-Writing Notepad
 Writing Notepad
 Paragraph Notepad
 Published Paragraph

Print

Order is maintained in the Giver community by rules. People are required to take a pill when they have sexual feelings or "stirrings." Everyone is required to dress according to their place in the society. Families are required to talk about feelings and share private thoughts. The Giver introduces Jonas to color and laughter, which were banished from the community. The order in the Giver community is due to all the requirements the citizens must follow.

Topic:
 The community in the story fears freedom of thought, expression, and choice as sources of disorder and differences.

Write a paragraph that tells how the community elders maintain order and control.
 Be specific and include examples from the story.

A good response to this topic should include answers to the following:

---What are people required to do when they have "stirrings"?

x--How is "Sameness" achieved in each child's appearance? How does Lily feel about the restrictions?

---What private experiences are Jonas and his family required to talk about at breakfast and dinner every day?

Section Progress	
Introduction	Completed
Topic	Completed
Pre-Writing	Completed
Writing--Opening Sentence	Completed
More Pre-Writing	Completed
Writing--Randy	Completed
Organizing	Completed

Sample Skill Building Performance Detail

Learning Center > Bill Wood - Grammar Fitness 3 > **Unit 1**

<< **Bill Wood** >>
Grammar Fitness 3 - Unit 1
0 Comments | [View all work for this program](#)

Unit Overview	
Date Started	8/12/2009
Date last played	8/12/2009
Total time	00:56:41
Tryout score	87%
Tryout % complete	Done
Tryout skills passed	6
Warm-up performance	100%
Warm-up % complete	100%
Warm-up time	00:21:45
Workout performance	100%
Workout % complete	60%
Workout rounds	6
Workout time	00:19:00
Finals score	93%
Finals % complete	Done
Finals skills passed	8

View Student's Work

Tryout
 Warm-up
 Workout
 Finals

Print

Finals score: 93%

Skill	Score details
Possessive pronoun: its, not it's	★★★★✓
All right, not alright	★★★★✓
Comparative and superlative of adjectives	★★★X
Making a singular noun possessive, using 's	★★★★✓
Run-on sentences	★★★★✓
The comma in dates and addresses	★★★★✓
Illiterate use of 'of' instead of 'have'	★★★X
Contractions	★★★★✓
Irregular plurals	★★★★✓
The period in abbreviations	★★★★✓

X Show Questions Missed Report

Correct answer ★

Please note that your teacher can access your online portfolio to monitor your work. Your teacher can see all the information you see when you view your work in your Online Portfolio.

Reports

In the Reports section you can monitor the same summary information and statistics about your work that your teacher sees. You can view, print and export reports about your work. To see the Reports Menu, click the Reports link on the blue bar at the top of the screen. From the Reports Menu, click the report you wish to view. The report interface will automatically display appropriate drop down menus that will enable you to select the data you wish. Click the Show Report button to open the report on screen.

Comments

The screenshot shows the 'My Learning Center' page. A table lists course units for 'Grammar Fitness 1'. The 'Comments' column is highlighted in red. A red circle highlights the 'Comments' column header, and another red circle highlights the '1 Comments (1 New)' entry for Unit 1. A red arrow points from the 'Comments' column to the 'Student Work Comments' window in the second image.

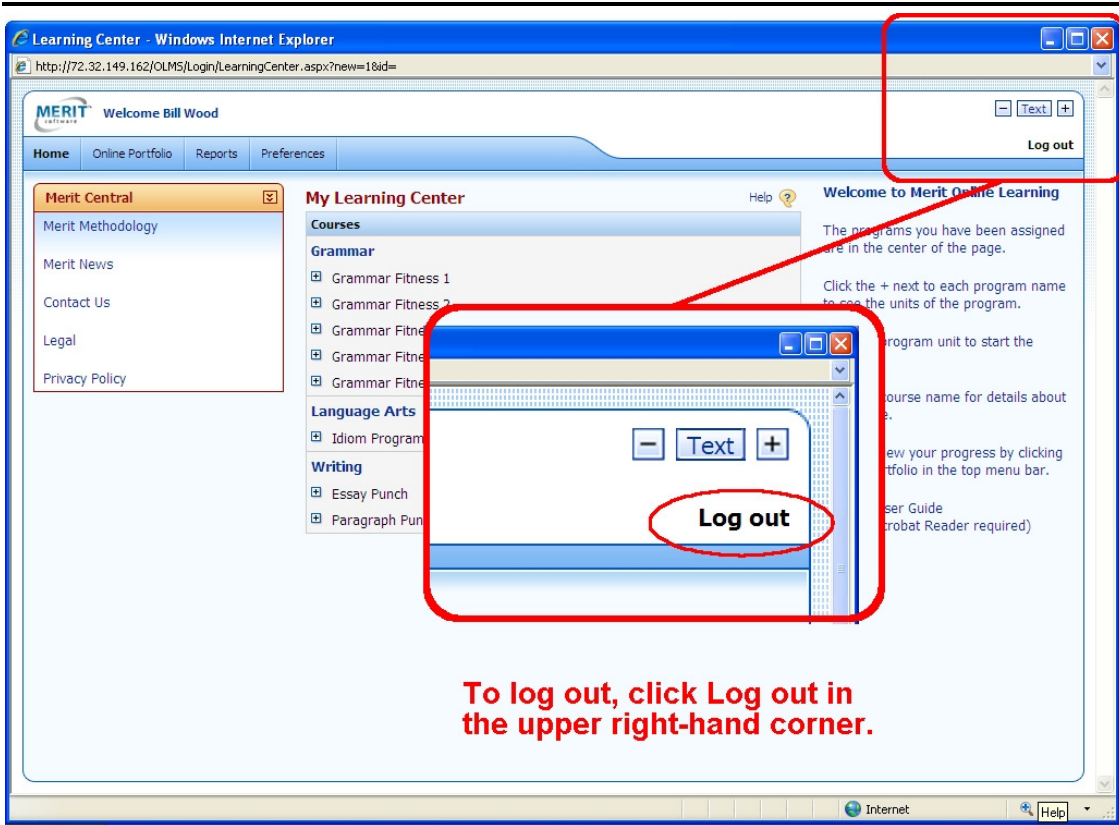
Course	Program Unit	Last played	Section	% complete	Comments
Grammar Fitness 1	Unit 1	6/1/2010	Warm-up	50%	1 Comments (1 New)
	Unit 2				
	Unit 3				
	Unit 4				
	Unit 5				

Your teacher can post "Course Comments" and "Student Work Comments," comments about your performance and progress." You can access both types of comments from your Learning Center when you view the units of a program. If you have a student work comment you will see "New" in the unit's Comments column. Click "New" to see the comment. The Comments column heading will be red if you have a course comment. Click the red column heading to see the comment.

Sample Student Work Comment

The screenshot shows a 'Student Work Comments' window. The comment is from Brad Brown, dated 6/4/2010, and reads: "Super progress! Keep up the good work Susan."

Logging Out



The program allows **fifteen minutes of inactivity** before automatically logging you out. If you have not made an input in fifteen minutes or more, you will have to log in again.

To log out, click **Log out** in the upper right-hand corner before you close your Internet browser. If you X out of the browser, or if the session times out you may lose some of your work.

When you click Log out or click Back to Learning Center the work up to the previously completed **page** will be saved.

When working on a Punch[®] program if you X out of the browser, or the session times out, or the session is ended by a force log out, the work up to the previously completed **section** will be saved.

Important Notes

Internet Speed

If you have a slow Internet connection the program may take extra time to move to the next screen. Remember, press Enter or click the OK button only once. Do NOT press the Enter key repeatedly. Do NOT click the OK button repeatedly. These actions will not speed up the program. They will cause an error and you may lose the work you have done for the unit.

Scoring Anomalies

Skill Building program scoring can become abnormal or outside the normal range if you use the open new browser window command while logged into the program or if you repeatedly press Enter or repeatedly click the OK button. You can continue playing, but your score may not be accurate.

Error Messages and Technical Problems Using Merit Online Learning

Most error messages and problems are caused by pressing Enter or clicking the OK button more than once on a screen. If you get an error message instead of the exercises the record of your work in the program may be corrupted. You need to go back to the Learning Center and restart the unit.

If the program seems to be frozen it could be due to a slow Internet connection or to pressing Enter or clicking the OK button more than once on a screen. First, try logging in from a different computer with a faster connection. If the program is still frozen you will need to start the unit over.

Internet Connectivity

If you lose the connection to the Internet while logged into Merit Online Learning the application does not log you out automatically. If you try to log back in right away you may get a warning message that you need to log in again to resume.

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