



Program Guide

READING CRITICALLY: NON-FICTION

Set 1: reading levels 5 - 6

Set 2: reading levels 7 - 8

and

READING CRITICALLY: NON-FICTION, COLLEGE PREP

Set 3: reading levels 8 - 9

Set 4: reading levels 10 - 11

Windows 95

4 MB RAM, 4 MB hard disk space

This Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) program is designed for students with average to good reading comprehension. Sets 1 and 2 are for middle schools or junior high schools. Sets 3 and 4 are for junior high and high schools. The program may also be used by ESL or older students for remediation. Special emphasis is placed on the use of inference skills to gain information not explicitly stated.

The program contains short selections based on various science and social studies topics. Students read a text and do a variety of exercises, from matching vocabulary to using their own words to answer questions for which the actual answers are not stated. Teachers may write a comment to the student which will be saved until the student sees it.

Program Description

There are 18 texts, 9 in a lower range and 9 in a higher one. There are three texts in each round. The student's understanding of each text is tested in four parts: (1) Vocabulary Match (2) Choosing Key Words (3) Using Key Words (4) Student's Own Sentence.

In part 1, the student reads the text and is shown three or four consecutively highlighted words seen both on a match list and in context. He/she then selects the best replacement or definition for each word from among multiple choice answers provided.

In part 2A, the student reads a question based on the text and selects, from three choices, one key word or term that could be used in a sentence to answer the question. In part 2B, the student is given another question and chooses, from four possible choices, two key words or terms that could be used in a sentence to answer that question.

In part 3, the student is asked to answer the question from part 2B, using one or both of the correct terms exactly as given. Students are encouraged to write complete sentences; this requires greater concentration and longer focus than giving a single-word answer. The sentence must begin with a capital letter, have appropriate end punctuation, and include at least two words in addition to the answer choice words.

In part 4, the student is asked to answer a final question on the text, using his/her own words. The computer then provides a sample sentence which the student can compare with his/her own sentence to see if they express a similar idea.

Main Program

The CAI program allows both the text and a question to remain on the screen at the same time so the student can refer to the text when choosing an answer.

The student receives more credit for answering correctly on the first try than on the second. In response to a first wrong answer in parts 2 and 3, the student is told: "Look at the hint in the text. Try again." For parts 1, 2, and 3, if the student fails to answer correctly in two tries, the computer will direct him/her to try again, but no credit will be given for the answer.

In parts 2A (Multiple choice - one Key Word) and 2B (Multiple choice - two Key Words), the student may ask for a hint before selecting an answer. However, he/she will then receive less credit for the answer, even if it is correct on the first try.

Students must get at least 70 percent on part 1 to go on to part 2, and 70 percent on part 2 to go on to part 3. If the student gets a "You are having trouble message," it means his/her score is not high enough to allow him/her to go on to the next part. Any text on which the student fails to score high enough on part 1 or 2 will be included in the pool of randomly chosen texts for subsequent rounds. In part 2B, the student must make two correct choices in order to receive credit.

In part 3 (Using Key Words), the question and the two correct answer choices from part 2B remain on the screen as the student writes a sentence using one or both of the key words. There is no hint available for this exercise.

In part 4, the student may NOT ask for a hint before writing his/her sentence. A hint message will come up automatically if the student fails to use one of the words on the program's match list. If the student fails to write an acceptable sentence a second time, the computer will provide help words. Partial credit will be given for an acceptable sentence produced on the third try. If the third try is incorrect, the student will be told: "Program doesn't accept your answer." A sample sentence automatically provided by the computer at the end of part 4 will show the student how an acceptable sentence might be written.

After the student has completed all the texts, if his/her cumulative score is low, the student may repeat the level to improve his/her score. Any new scores will be averaged with the student's present scores.

Teacher Program Manager (TPM)

The Teacher Program Manager (TPM) does not have an icon on your Start menu.

After installation you must start a program to create its .MAV file (Merit AV record file). All .MAV files will be kept according to the way you configure your setup; see LOCATION OF RECORD FILES below.

To access the .MAV files use Find on the Start menu.

Search for *.MAV to get a listing of all .MAV files on your system.

To open the Teacher Program Manager (TPM), double-click the .MAV file (Merit AV record file) for the program you want to see. This will automatically open the TPM.

You can also double-click the TPM.EXE icon (default install is C:\Meritav\TPM) and navigate to the program level you wish to see.

Type MERIT in the password box and press OK.

MENU BAR

The Menu Bar lists everything available in the TPM. Press the question mark icon to access the online Help file for details about the functions of the TPM.

Student's record file keeps track of the student's name, class code, date last played, total rounds, texts passed on both higher and lower ranges, and student's scores for vocabulary match, choosing key words,

using key words, and student's own sentences. In addition, it saves the student's own sentence in answer to the last question in each text. It saves the teacher's comment only until the student sees it.

Configurations for the CAI program, sound, and graphics are also included. Other items facilitate the teacher's use of student records. These include zoom, hiding fields, and selection of individual records to print or delete. A Help file for all TPM features may be accessed from the Menu Bar.

Configurations tech tip for setting the same configurations for each level of a CAI program:

Set them on one level.

Open that level's folder in an Explorer window and copy the game.ini file.

Paste this game.ini file to each CAI program level that you wish to have the same configurations.

LOCATION OF RECORD FILES

The first time a Merit Audio Visual Windows 95 program is played on a machine, a dialog box appears where path options can be selected. Record file set-up Help will guide your selection. Your selection will become the default configuration for all Merit AV Windows 95 programs that you subsequently install to your machine. Changes can be made by using a text editor to edit the meritav.ini file in the Windows directory or by deleting the meritav.ini file and resetting the location of the record files in the dialog box when you next sign in to a Merit AV Windows 95 program.