

VOCABULARY STRETCH

Skill levels 4 - 10

Complete program: 16 units

Vocabulary Stretch - Set 1 (Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

Vocabulary Stretch for Upper Grades - Set 2 (Units 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)

For details about each unit, see the Content section on page 5

For teaching suggestions see page 10

Evaluation versions: Units 2 and 10

Tracks work for two students.

Windows 9x/NT/2000/XP

8 MB RAM, 74 MB hard disk space

This program requires a minimum screen resolution of 800 by 600 pixels.

The program helps students to learn new words, recognize them in different contexts, and understand where many English words come from. A glossary introduces the word list in each unit. Each set contains 96 vocabulary words and 720 questions.

The program is designed for students at different levels of language proficiency from middle school to high school. For beginning students, the first parts of the program, the Workout and Wrap-up, help to build vocabulary. The enrichment activities, which are optional, provide beginners with a chance to stretch their knowledge in a more advanced context. For intermediate and advanced students, the first parts of the program help to improve their test skills. The enrichment activities are specifically designed to help students increase their vocabulary in interesting new contexts.

The format allows the word list, the question, and the multiple choice answers to remain on screen at the same time so that students can refer to the list when choosing an answer. The program can also be used by ESL and adult students interested in improving their reading skills. It contains a diagnostic test and glossary, followed by a series of exercises and activities designed to promote mastery of words and word families.

This self-paced improvement and management program helps students sharpen their vocabulary skills and lets teachers monitor their students' independent learning. After an assessment, students work on specific words on each list and learn in a mixed practice format that includes: 1) a Multiple Choice exercise; 2) an Antonym Hunt; 3) two idea association activities, Beyond Definition and Idea Match; 4) a Words-in-context Paragraph; and 5) a Crossword Puzzle. The glossary is available throughout, and students receive help and contextual feedback. A review consisting of three activities follows every four units.

Each lesson is self-directing and self-correcting. Students receive graphic rewards. Following each round on the summary screen is a Print option, which generates a progress-to-date report. Student scores are kept in a management system that allows teachers to view and print reports.

The evaluation version of the program permits entry of only two student names. When a third name is entered, the first one will be deleted. The stand-alone version for one station contains record keeping for 42 students. Other School versions permit entry of as many names as disk space allows. When disk space is filled, the name that was entered first will be deleted.

For logging on instructions, see the Logging on and Class Management section of this guide.

There are program features the teacher may customize for the students. See the TPM section of this guide for information.

1. Hide/Show Sound
2. Hide/Show Graphics
3. Set the number of correct answers needed to pass each part
4. Set the number of words presented for each part

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Each unit of the program contains three Main Menu parts: Tryout, Workout, and Finals. Summary screens follow each round of each part of the Main Menu. The Print option shows the student's progress to date, not just the results of an individual round.

TRYOUT: Because the Tryout helps the student assess his knowledge of words on the list, he does not get any sounds or graphic rewards until he has completed the Tryout. The bar at the bottom of the screen shows how much of the Tryout he has completed. When the student has finished all the questions, a

summary screen shows how he did. Stars show the number of words passed. A check shows that he has done an excellent job. His scores let him know how he is doing. 'Print' will show how he did in a progress-to-date report.

WORKOUT (part 1 - Multiple Choice): This section of the program presents a multiple choice question for each word on the list. A glossary and help messages, as well as sound and graphic rewards, are available. FYI buttons allow the student to learn interesting additional facts about selected words on the list. To complete the Workout, the student needs to play at least two rounds. To pass the Workout, the student must make correct choices for each word. The student must do a minimum of two rounds to pass. When he completes the Workout he automatically moves on to the Wrap-up. The bar at the bottom of the screen shows how far along the student is in the Workout.

Wrap-up (part 2 of the Workout): The Wrap-up consists of two activities, Antonym Hunt and Beyond Definition, a series of multiple choice thought questions. Each gives the student a different way to see what he has learned.

Summary-Workout: At the end of each round a summary screen shows which words the student passed in that round. Only Workout results appear on the screen. 'Print' will show the Workout scores along with the Wrap-up results. The bar at the bottom of the screen indicates the student has passed the Workout. He may then go on to the enrichment activities.

Enrichment: There are three enrichment activities: 1) Idea Match; 2) Words in a Paragraph; and 3) Puzzle.

When the student has received a star for each activity, he has finished the program. The bar at the bottom of the screen indicates how many activities the student has passed.

FINALS: The student is tested on the same words but with some different multiple choice questions. He will be given three texts for each word. The student must make at least two correct choices to pass. The bar at the bottom of the screen shows how much of the Finals he has completed.

Summary-Finals: When the student has finished all the questions, a summary screen will show how he did.

REVIEW: At the end of each group of four units, students are challenged by two multi-paragraph reviews and a more extensive crossword puzzle.

HOME VERSION

A Home version of the program provides additional flexibility. It is appropriate for:

Teachers who wish to assign independent work for students

Teachers who teach distance learning programs

Self-motivated people interested in improving their skills

Home school settings

The Home version has the same scope, sequence, and printing features as the School versions. It tracks and bookmarks the work of two students, but it does not permit user entry into the teacher record management system.

To facilitate distance learning, each time a student completes a round, a progress report is automatically saved as a file that may be e-mailed to an instructor. This progress-to-date file has an MPR extension and contains the same information a student gets when he prints from the summary screen. Student access to this file is through the Progress Reports folder in the Start menu of the Home version.

Students may purchase Home versions of the software directly from Merit.

HOME VERSION PROGRESS REPORT VIEWER

The School versions do not generate MPR files but they contain a Viewer program. When you double-click the Home version MPR progress-to-date file on a system that has a School version of the program installed, the file will open in a password-protected Viewer program. Type the password in the password box and press OK. You will be alerted if the file has been altered. If it is unaltered, you may view or print it out from the Viewer program.

The progress-to-date file can also be opened with the Windows system Notepad or Wordpad programs, but these programs will not notify you if the file has been altered.

EVALUATION VERSION NOTE

The Evaluation version of the software includes the Viewer program and, for convenience, automatically saves the MPR progress-to-date file at the end of each round. MPR files can be accessed through the Progress Reports folder in the Start menu.

LOGGING ON AND CLASS MANAGEMENT

There are two options for adding student names to the record database.

- Teacher controlled – appropriate for most schools. Names added with the TPM Set Up Student Names functions.
- Student controlled – for home users and for mature students. Names added at the Logon Screen.

For more information about class management and adding student names to the database, see the Teacher Program Manager manual. It can be printed out from a Merit Software CD or from this link on the Internet: http://meritsoftware.com/Teacher_Program_Manager.pdf

The program opens to a Log on screen with all previously entered class codes and student names. Students must select their class code in order to see the list of students in their class. They then click on their name to begin the program. If the program is in student controlled mode and students are logging on for the first time, they select their class code, click the New Student icon, and fill in their name on the form that appears on the screen.

The evaluation version of the program permits entry of only two student names. When a third name is entered, the first one will be deleted. The stand-alone version for one station contains record keeping for 42 students. Other School versions permit entry of as many names as disk space allows. When disk space is filled, the name that was entered first will be deleted.

SCORING

Students may print out their scores at the end of round progress-to-date screen. Teachers may view detailed scoring in the Teacher Program Manager.

TEACHER PROGRAM MANAGER

All Merit Software applications utilize a centralized student record keeping/management system utility program called Teacher Program Manager (TPM). To learn about these advanced functions, see the Teacher Program Manager manual. It can be printed out from the Merit Software CD.

Content of Vocabulary Stretch

Vocabulary Stretch, Set 1 (Contains Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8)

Unit 1

announce - state publicly
audience - group of listeners
border - line between two countries
conceal - hide
daily - every day
entire - whole
expensive - costly
expensive - costly
neighbor - person living nearby
ruin - spoil, harm
salary - pay
uniform - all the same

weary - tired

Unit 2

escape - get away
instruct - tell, teach
prey - animal hunted as food
protect - keep safe
remain - stay behind
remain - be left
sandwich - bread slices and filling
shelter - a place that provides cover
sole - only
transport - carry
wander - stray
weapon - something to fight with

Unit 3

abundant - plentiful, more than enough
autograph - a person's own signature
barren - unproductive, bare
bonfire - a large outdoor fire
common - widespread, general
common - shared by all
depart - leave
ferocious - savage, fierce
harvest - to gather in crops; a gathering in of crops
irrigate - bring water to crops
nibble - eat in small bites
vast - very large, covering a great area

Unit 4

ancient - very old; related to times long past
brilliant - very smart, clever
brilliant - sparkling, very shiny
campaign - work actively for
candidate - a person seeking office
capital - chief city, main seat of state or national government
capitol - state legislature's building
defective - faulty; not working properly
hostile - unfriendly, warlike
opponent - foe; person against one in games, battles, etc.
predict - foretell
sincere - honest, true; not pretending, real

Unit 5

accept - agree to
accept - receive, take
annual - yearly
anxious - worried
budget - a plan for meeting expenses
industrious - hard-working
issue - problem being talked about

outline - state briefly
minor - unimportant
multitude - a great number; a crowd
temporary - lasting a short time; not permanent
valiant - very brave

Unit 6

accomplice - someone who helps another, especially in wrongdoing
artificial - manmade, not occurring naturally
culprit - wrongdoer, guilty one
frail - weak
glare - to look angrily at
glare - strong, blinding light
liberate - set free
occupy - live in
ransack - search thoroughly, usually to rob
stump - to puzzle with a question
thrifty - not wasteful
witty - cleverly amusing

Unit 7

agile - active, moving easily and quickly
conspicuous - easily seen, attracting attention by being unusual
curfew - prescribed time to be off the streets
extend - to stretch out
glide - to move smoothly and easily
immense - huge, very large
isolated - set apart, all alone
legend - unproven story handed down from earlier times
loathe - hate, despise
odd - strange, unusual
rare - not completely cooked
rare - uncommon, scarce

Unit 8

avid - very eager, greedy
cite - refer to, usually for proof or support
contribute - give, donate
flexible - easily bent; easily changed
lure - to attract by offering something pleasant; something that attracts
lynch - execute by mob rule
precious - very valuable; much-loved
repel - to disgust
repel - to drive back
seek - look for, try to find or get
site - place, location; plot of ground set aside for a specific use
utensil - a special tool or container, especially for kitchen use

Vocabulary Stretch for Upper Grades - Set 2 (Contains Units 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)

Unit 9

anonymous - by an unknown person, unnamed
antidote - remedy for poison; relief or prevention
assassin - murderer, usually of a public person
attached - fastened together
attached - fond of
humane - merciful
memento - remembrance, object kept as a reminder
mourn - show sorrow over a death or loss, grieve for
scald - to burn with hot liquid or steam; heat to near boiling
untimely - occurring too soon; done at an inappropriate time
urgent - needing quick attention; seriously demanding
wretched - miserable; very unpleasant

Unit 10

amiable - friendly, pleasant, good-natured
bedlam - a place or a state of noise and confusion
boisterous - noisy, loud, undisciplined
fantastic - unreal; strikingly unusual
fragile - easily broken; delicate
overwhelm - completely defeat; overpower; upset
reprimand - to scold sharply; to criticize; a severe scolding
parched - dried up; thirsty
pedestrian - person on foot
pedestrian - dull, ordinary, commonplace
sober - serious, solemn
unruly - disorderly; hard to control

Unit 11

callous - emotionally hardened, coldhearted, lacking in feeling
compact - agreement
compact - tightly packed
jeer - make fun of in a rude way; mock
maimed - crippled, badly injured
sabotage - to harm or destroy underhandedly; an act of deliberate harm
scanty - not enough or just barely enough, too little
spectacle - a public performance or display
sustain - support, maintain; nourish
tranquil - quiet, calm, peaceful
vanquish - conquer, overcome, defeat
vivacious - full of life, lively

Unit 12

delete - take out, cancel, omit
descend - go down
dismal - gloomy, dreary
drench - soak thoroughly
enigma - a puzzle or riddle difficult or impossible to solve
exhort - urge or advise strongly; plead with
liable - legally responsible
liable - likely or apt
orator - skillful public speaker
patriot - one who loves, supports, and defends his country
prior - earlier, coming before

robot - mechanical human being; device that works by remote control

Unit 13

adapt - adjust to new conditions, change as needed
adopt - select or choose as one's own; accept
adroit - very skillful
authentic - genuine
disaster - occurrence of widespread destruction;
 serious misfortune; total failure
edible - eatable; fit to be eaten
foolhardy - reckless, rash, unwisely bold
gusto - great enjoyment; great liking
inherit - be an heir to; come into possession of
penalize - punish
reveal - make known, show, disclose
staple - product in steady demand; basic or chief item

Unit 14

aquatic - having to do with water
asset - property, something of value
compensate - pay; make up for a loss
creditor - one to whom money is owed
deprive - keep from having; take away from
ensue - to follow, to result
hubbub - uproar, great noise
inept - clumsy, awkward, incompetent
legible - easy to read
naive - inexperienced, simple in nature, innocent
principal - chief, main
principle - basic truth; standard of good behavior

Unit 15

aggravate - make worse
belligerent - hostile, quarrelsome; warlike
chronic - constant, long-lasting, recurring
disgruntled - dissatisfied, annoyed, unhappy
exceptional - unusual, out of the ordinary
forbearance - patience and self-control
murky - dark and gloomy, dirty
oasis - fertile place with water in a desert
pennant - triangular flag; championship symbolized by the flag
slovenly - messy, very untidy
tact - skill in dealing with people; ability to say and do the right thing
triplicate - made in three identical copies

Unit 16

abound - occur in large numbers; teem
arduous - tiring and difficult, strenuous
consider - think about
denote - indicate, mean, signify
disrupt - break up, disturb, spoil the orderliness of
habitual - often repeated, constant

mass - a large amount or number
recollect - remember, call to mind
stationary - not moving, motionless
stationery - writing materials
summon - send for
taciturn - habitually silent, uncommunicative

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THIS 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.

Start out with Merit's *Tryouts* to see where students need reading help most.

Discuss problem areas with students.

Ask students what they read most outside school. How much do they read outside school? Do they use books or go online? What do they like to read?

Supplement Merit with material from social studies, science and language arts class, so students may practice skills in various subject areas.

Return to the software and let students try Merit *Workout* sections.

Follow up each software session by asking students what new vocabulary words they have learned. What new questions do they have?

Look at a sample text. Ask students to find the key words that tell the main idea. Can they list 1-2 details? Find a fact and/or an opinion? Explain text sequence?

Have students print scores received for completing software *Workout* sections. Later, discuss scores with students. Are they pleased with their progress? What seems easier to them? What needs more practice?

Relate skills practiced with the software to material in social studies, science and language arts classes, so students can apply new skills to each subject area.

Ask students to try making up new titles for material being read in their social studies, science and language arts classes.

Ask students to make up sentences using vocabulary encountered in social studies, science and language arts classes. Let them work in pairs to share sentences.

Have students imagine they are making up reading/vocabulary questions for the Merit program being used. Give students a short text. Have them work in pairs to create and write their own skill-related question and answers.

Return to the software and let students try Merit's *Finals*, to help prepare for and de-mystify standardized tests.

Follow up software units with written post-texts.

Compare students' software results with gains on standardized test scores.

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