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## Chapter I

### The Back Story

*Back Story (definition):  
The history behind a  
situation at the start of a story*

The uBoost virtual world is located in a mysterious place that is inhabited by more than one race of alien creatures that seem to be part of a crew. Each year, students move in, and help unravel clues. There are many questions that need to be answered. For example, one of the biggest mysteries to be solved is: where is the world located?

Is it...

- An alternate reality in our midst?
- A world deep within the earth?
- A community aboard a spaceship?

There are also many unknown facts about the aliens inside the uBoost environment:

- Are all of the aliens friendly?
- Do they have any knowledge or powers that humans don't have?

- Who are the shamans, and what do they know?

There's a story unfolding from the minute you join, and that's part of the fun! Clues that will help answer these and many other questions will be sent to students through the uBoost message board.

### **How Does uBoost Work?**

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The uBoost software is designed to work with educational materials provided by your school. The system is designed to make learning easy and rewarding. All quizzes are tied to rewards in the form of points and points can be used to purchase virtual or real merchandise.

#### **FYI...**

As you'll discover, uBoost has many features. One important feature is the software's connection to quizzes. Once you're inside the virtual world, you'll find many links to school curriculum. uBoost captures your scores on quizzes, and translates them into points that can be redeemed for rewards (real and virtual).

The virtual world and curriculum is for students but there are other parts of uBoost designed for parents and teachers. Here's how adults use the uBoost software:

### **Teachers**

uBoost software automatically records a student's scores each time he or she takes tests. This helps free up a teacher's time so that more time can be spent teaching.

### **Parents (Grandparent, Aunt, Uncle or Family Friend)**

Adult family members who want to participate can put a software program called a widget on their desktop. When a student earns points, a message gets sent to the widget on an adult's desktop to notify him or her about the student's progress.



## We Want to Hear From You!

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Overnight, thousands of students will be joining uBoost and with that many people inside this new world, we anticipate many people will have questions or comments!

We consider your feedback valuable and we would love to hear from you! If you would like to contact us with a question or a suggestion, send us a message:

- a. Click on My Messages in the uBoost Navigation Bar (Figure 3, Chapter 2).
- b. On the screen that follows, click on the Send to uBoost tab (Figure 1).

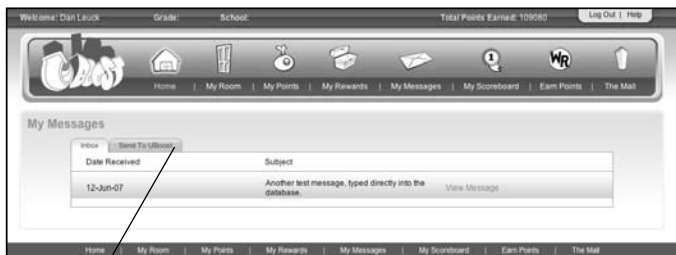


Figure 1

- c. On the screen that follows, add your e-mail address to the field labeled From, the e-mail address of the mail recipient to the field labeled To, a phrase that describes your message in the field labeled Subject, and a message in the box labeled Message (Figure 2).

- d. When you are ready to send your message, click on the Send button (Figure 2).

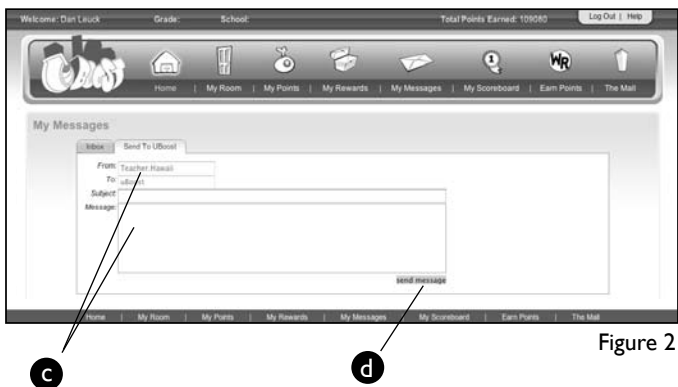


Figure 2

## Notes

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## Chapter 2

### Getting Started

*Virtual World (definition): computer-simulated environment intended for its users to inhabit.*

This chapter will introduce you to some basic details about the uBoost screens to help you get started. Like many virtual environments, there will be objects on your screen that respond to your mouse clicks. As a result, many people will want to just click away and watch what happens. Clicking on screens is a totally acceptable way to learn how uBoost works. However, some people may want to read about the uBoost screens to learn about how the software works.

#### **About This Book**

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There are different guides for the different groups who use uBoost including:

- Students
- Parents (coming soon)
- Teachers

### **FYI...**

This book was written prior to the uBoost beta release (version 1.0). Because the software team is speeding ahead with new developments, some of the screens you'll see in this book may be different than the screens you see on your computer.

## **System Requirements**

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If you would like to run uBoost at home, you'll need to check to see if you have what you need to access the uBoost Web site.

uBoost works inside an Internet browser, so the two most important requirements are the type of browser you are using and to some extent, your connection speed. Although uBoost will work over a dial-up connection, a high-speed connection is recommended.

Here is a list of uBoost-compatible Web browsers:

- Windows XP SP2 / IE 6.0
- Windows XP SP2 / IE 7.0
- Windows XP SP2 / Firefox 2.0.0.x
- Windows Vista / IE 7.0
- Windows Vista / Firefox 2.0.0.x
- Mac OS X 10.4.9 / Safari 2.0.4

- Mac OS X 10.4.9 / Firefox 2.0.0.x
- Windows XP SP2 / Safari
- Windows Vista / Safari
- iPhone / Safari

## **Other Hardware**

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Because points are used to purchase printable certificates, you will need access to a printer. Remember that you can access uBoost on any computer that is connected to the Internet. If you don't have a printer at home, you can log-on to uBoost at school or the library to print your certificates.

## **Adobe Flash Player**

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The Flash Player is an important component for accessing the uBoost Virtual world. Although much of the uBoost site can be accessed without the Player, we recommend that you download a free copy of the Adobe Flash Player ([www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)) so that you will be able to view animation, hear sound, and interact with pets inside the virtual world (Note: there is a version of the Flash Player that runs on Apple's iPhone).

### **FYI...**

The Adobe Flash Player is sometimes referred to as just Flash.

## The uBoost Home Page

Let's get acquainted with the uBoost landing page. Some of you will land on the uBoost site through your curriculum software, and others may arrive through the Internet. Either way, the uBoost.com home page is similar to a hub that contains a large amount of useful information.



Figure 3

Here's a quick summary of the components that you will find on the home page:

**a. Name**

Once your teacher registers your name in uBoost, your name will appear at the top of the screen every time you log on.

**b. Grade**

The uBoost system keeps track of what grade you're in.

**c. School**

Your school name will appear next to your grade.

**d. Total Points**

uBoost will keep a running total of the points you have earned.

**e. Log Out**

The log out link will log you out of the uBoost system.

**f. Help**

The help link will take you to an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section.

**g. Navigation Bar**

uBoost's main navigation bar provides button links to all of the destinations within the uBoost system.

**h. Room Building Wizard**

Building a room is one of the most popular activities in the uBoost system. The Room Building Wizard will help you choose a Virtual Pet as a guide and also help

you decorate your room with skins and backgrounds that can be changed at any time.

**i. My Points**

The My Points section provides a total of the points you have earned, the total you have redeemed, and your balance that may be used to purchase rewards from the uBoost Mall.

**j. My Scoreboard**

uBoost's achievement levels are reflected in the Scoreboard area that provides a visual for you to understand your achievement level.

**k. Message Center**

The Message Center is similar to e-mail except that in version 1.0 of the software, messages can only be sent to and from uBoost.

**l. My Rewards**

My Rewards contains icons that reflect the rewards you have purchased with your points.

**m. Hot Rewards**

The Hot Rewards section contains the most popular rewards. You'll want to keep an eye on this section because some rewards are only available for a limited time.

## Chapter 3

# Setting Up Your Room

*Room (definition): a place in which  
a person lives; abode; domicile.*

**W**e think you'll agree that your room inside the uBoost system is where you'll have a lot of fun! uBoost release 1.0 is just the beginning! You can expect many new features and additions in the weeks ahead. Watch the What's New part of your screen for news about important new developments.

uBoost is growing very quickly. You'll discover many new components that you can add to your room will be added to uBoost in the months ahead.

### **Launch The Room-Building Wizard**

---

The Room Building Wizard will take you through the room-building process step-by-step.

- a. Click on the My Room button in the uBoost Navigation Bar (Figure 3, Chapter 2).

- b. On the screen that follows, click on the character you would like to be your host (Figure 4).



Figure 4

- c. On the screen that follows, select a room style from the miniature drawings provided (Figure 5).



Figure 5

- d. Once you select a room style, the uBoost Wizard takes you through the virtual entrance-way into your room! You may see a splash screen that you can put away with a click on the close button (Figure 6).



Figure 6

### **FYI...**

The first room you select is simply a starting point as you learn the system with your guide. Once inside the room, you can select a different room using the control panel at the bottom of the screen.

## **Get Acquainted With The Room You Chose**

---

Each of the rooms has clickable objects. Use your mouse and click around in your room to see what objects are interactive.

### **FYI...**

Each of the rooms has different clickable objects but the destinations are similar.

For example, the uBoost desktop (Figure 7) has the following clickable objects (from left to right):

**a. Handbag**

The handbag brings up your Rewards.

**b. Photo**

The framed photo brings up your Scoreboard.

**c. Keyboard**

The keyboard takes you to your Curriculum.

**d. Mirror**

The mirror takes you to your Messages.

**e. Book**

The book takes you to your Points.

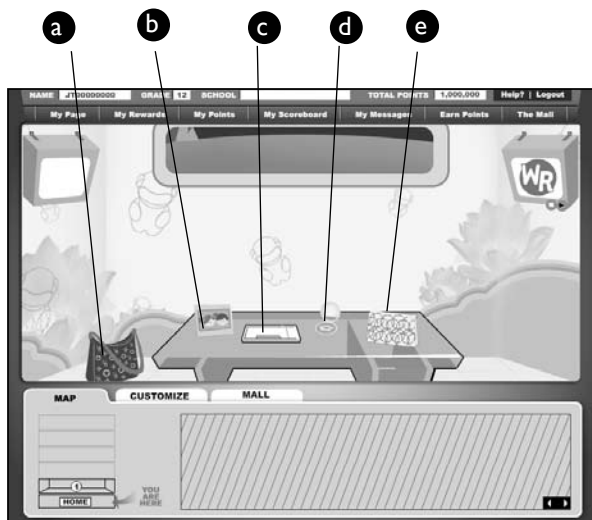


Figure 7

## The Map Tab in the Control Panel

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You're now on the Home level (Figure 8) and Map tab in the Control Panel will help you understand where you are.

- a. Notice also that the Map tab is currently selected in the Control Panel at the bottom of the screen (Figure 8).
- b. Notice the You Are Here message inside the Control Panel at the bottom of the screen (Figure 8).

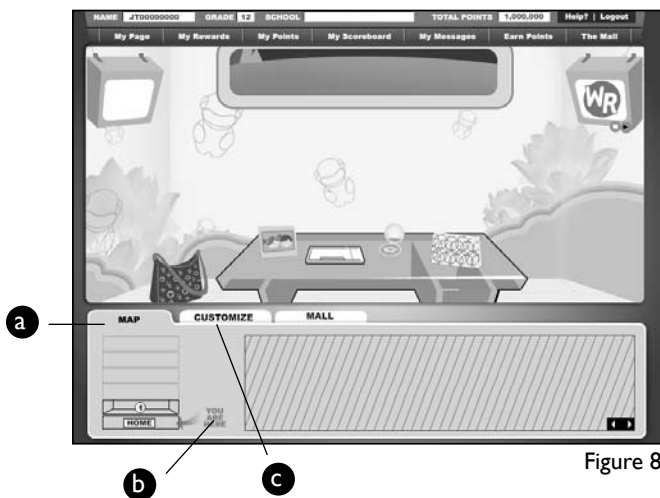
## Selecting Another Skin

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The Customize tab contains alternate skins and backgrounds that you can use to make changes on-the-fly.

Note: Selecting alternate skins in the Control Panel is equivalent to selecting a different room.

- c. Click on the Customize Tab in the Control Panel at the bottom of the screen (Figure 8).



- d. The room pattern (or skin) that appears in the box labeled Home is the room that is currently selected (Figure 9).
- e. Click on an alternate skin in the panel labeled My Home to select a different room (Figure 9).

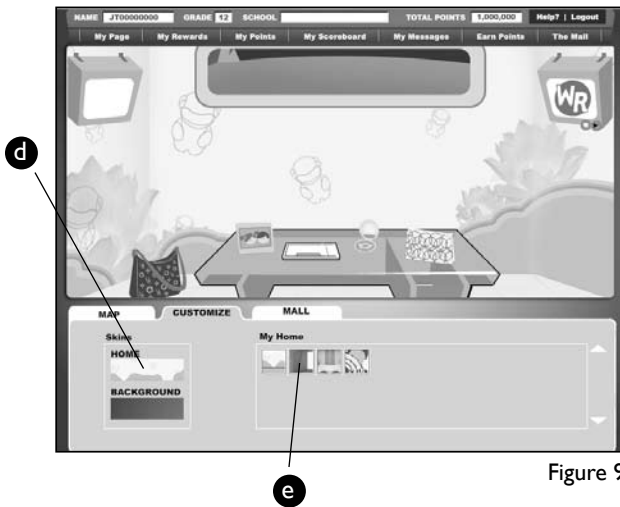


Figure 9

- d. Each room will have different clickable objects that you can explore. The bridge is an example (Figure 10).

**FYI...**

Your room is your command center or control room. Every uBoost activity can be controlled from this space!

## [Example] Exploring Objects on the Bridge

---

Learn what the destinations are by clicking on the objects  
For example, the bridge console (Figure 10) has the following clickable objects (from left to right):

- a. **Console panel #1** - brings up your Rewards.
- b. **Console panel #2** - brings up your Scoreboard.
- c. **Console panel #3** - takes you to your Curriculum.
- d. **Console panel #4** - takes you to your Messages.
- e. **Console panel #5** - takes you to your Points.

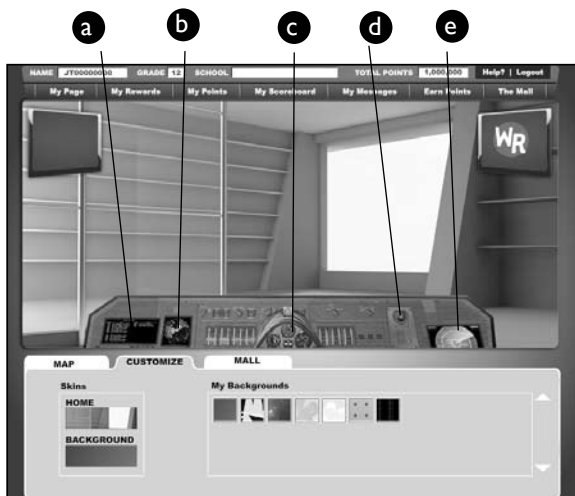


Figure 10

### **[Example] Exploring Objects in the Living Area**

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The handheld remote control (Figure 11) in the living area has the following clickable objects (from left to right):

- a. Rewards.
- b. Messages
- c. Curriculum
- d. Scoreboard
- e. Points

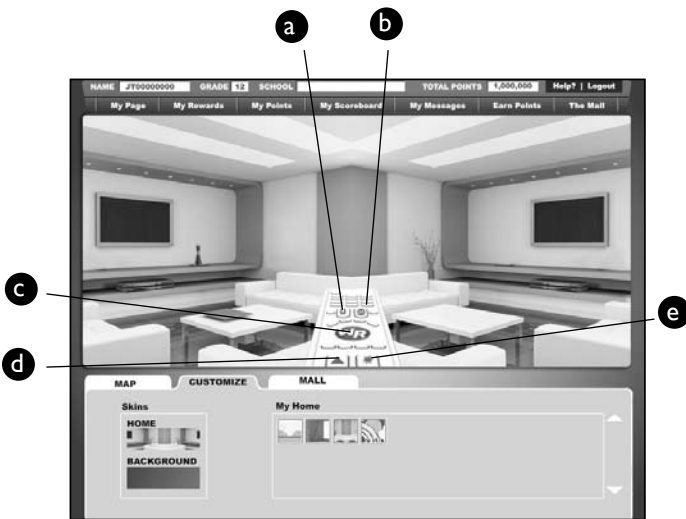


Figure 11

## FYI...

A skin is an Internet expression that originally referred to the background image in a browser.

## Selecting Other Backgrounds

A background is the area outside the uBoost screen that can hold a variety of different screen patterns.

- a. To make a change in the background on your screen, first click on the box labeled Background inside the box labeled Skins (Figure 12).



Figure 12

- b. Click on an alternate pattern in the box labeled My Backgrounds to make changes in the background pattern (Figure 13).



Figure 13

- c. Notice how the background changes when you click on an alternate pattern (Figure 14).

**FYI...**

Making a change in a skin allows you to change the appearance of a room without altering any of its functions.



Figure 14

## Explore Another Level

---

There's more! Now that you're acquainted with your room, you might like to explore different levels of the uBoost virtual world. In order to go to a different level, you'll continue to use the Control Panel at the bottom of the screen.

### Navigate to a Different Level

---

You're only just beginning to explore the virtual world—there's much more to see!

- a. To navigate to a different level, you will need to select the Map tab in the Control Panel (Figure 15).

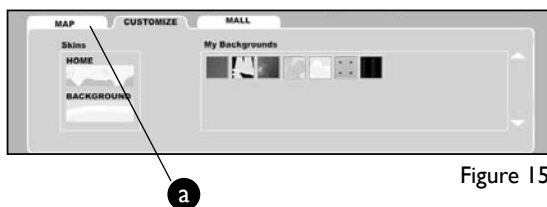


Figure 15

- b.** Click on another level in the list above the word Home (Figure 16).

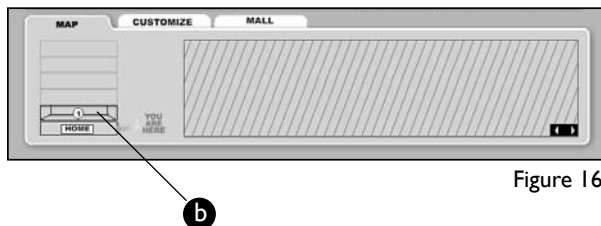


Figure 16

- c.** When you click on another level, uBoost will display the new level on your screen. Also notice that the You Are Here message moves to the level you chose (Figure 17).
- d.** Inside the new level, you'll see a message from your guide that will be displayed on a splash screen. Click close to put the splash screen away (Figure 17).

**FYI...**

Each room comes equipped with its own TV and sound equipment.

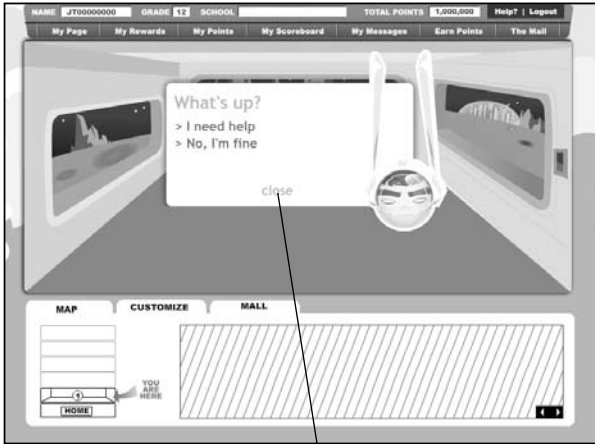


Figure 17

d

### Inflate Your Animated Pet

The first clickable object to explore in the new room is the cube that you can click to inflate your animated pet.

- a. Click on the cube until your pet is inflated. A visual thermometer will provide a clue about how many more clicks will be needed (Figure 18).

#### **FYI...**

uBoost animations contain many surprises! Get prepared!!

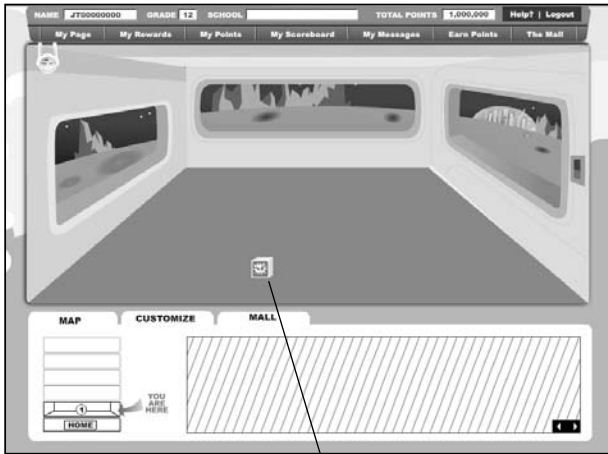


Figure 18

- b.** Your pet will finally be fully inflated and be ready with some surprising animation! (Figure 19).

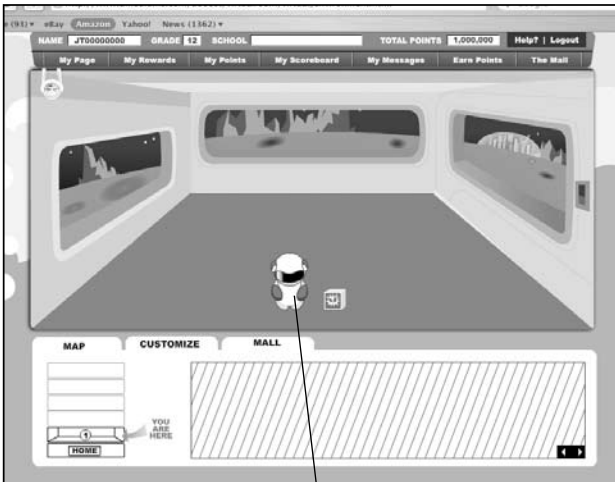


Figure 19

## Add Objects to Your Room

---

Before we cover how you can add object to your room, let's access the Customize Tab in the Control Panel:

- a. Click on the Customize Tab in the Control Panel (Figure 20).

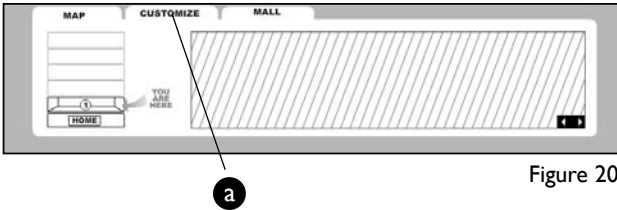


Figure 20

- b. Notice that when you click on the word Items, an inventory of objects appears in a box labeled, My Stuff (Figure 21).
- c. Double-click on an object to make it appear in your room (Figure 21 and Figure 22).

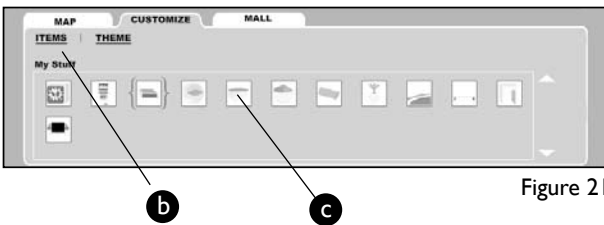


Figure 21

- d. To move an object around the room, position your mouse pointer over an object, press and hold your mouse button down, and drag the object to where you would like it placed (Figure 22).
- e. When you roll your mouse over the objects, you'll discover pop-up commands. For example, all of the objects have a command called Remove. Some objects have a command called Flip to help you position them in the room.

Now that you've learned how to move furniture and other objects into your room, go ahead and decorate!

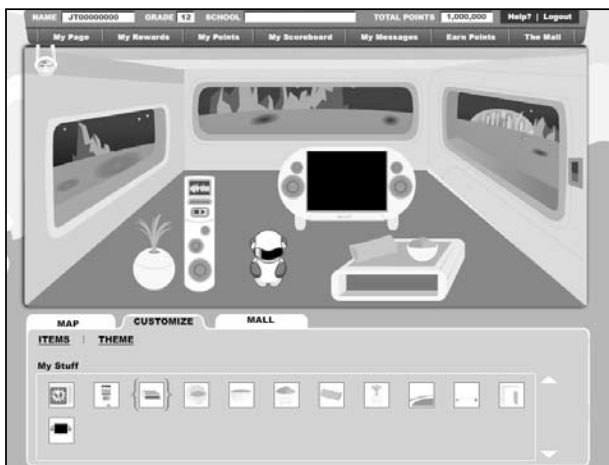


Figure 22

- f. The cubes are special objects that will animate your pet. We've already covered how to access an animated character by clicking on a cube.

Once an animated pet is out of a cube, the TV and stereo have commands that will control a pet's animation. These elements (the TV and stereo) have pop-up commands labeled Play, Stop and Remove.

To run an animation, drag over the pop-up and select Play. To stop the animation, drag over the pop-up and select Stop.

### **Customize Your Walls With Themes**

---

Every wall in your room can be decorated with a new scene called Themes.

- a. Click on the word Themes inside the Customize tab in your room's Control Panel. Notice that a miniature empty room appears below the label My Walls (Figure 23).
- b. Click on each of the walls inside the miniature empty room and notice that a variety of patterns are displayed that correspond to the left wall, the right wall, the center wall, etc. (Figure 23).

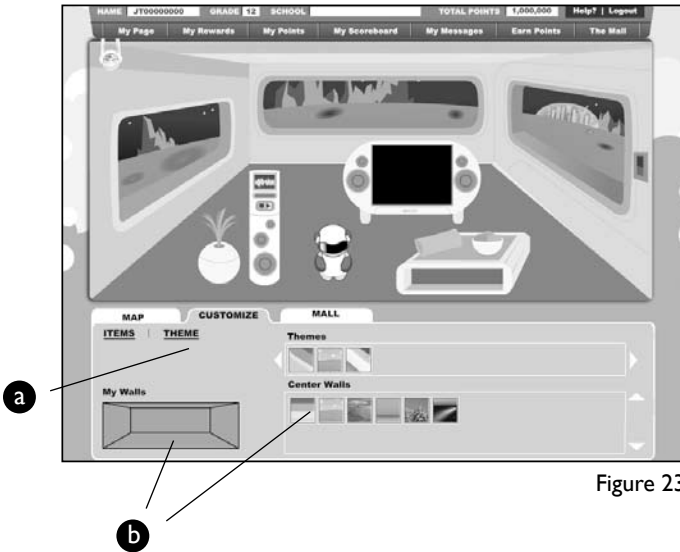


Figure 23

- c. To decorate any of the walls in your room with an available pattern, first click on the wall you would like to decorate and then click on one of the patterns. You'll see the pattern on the wall you selected change in response to your mouse click (Figure 24).

**FYI...**

Be sure to send us a message if you have a suggestion for a new component that you'd like us to add to uBoost!



Figure 24

## Turn the Lights On and Off

If you have not yet discovered the lights in your room, you might like to try turning the switch on and off:

- Click the light switch to dim the lights (Figure 25).
- Notice that your animated pet sleeps when the lights go out! (Figure 25)
- Click the light switch to turn the lights back on.

### **FYI...**

When you purchase furniture or other objects for your room, they will appear in your room.

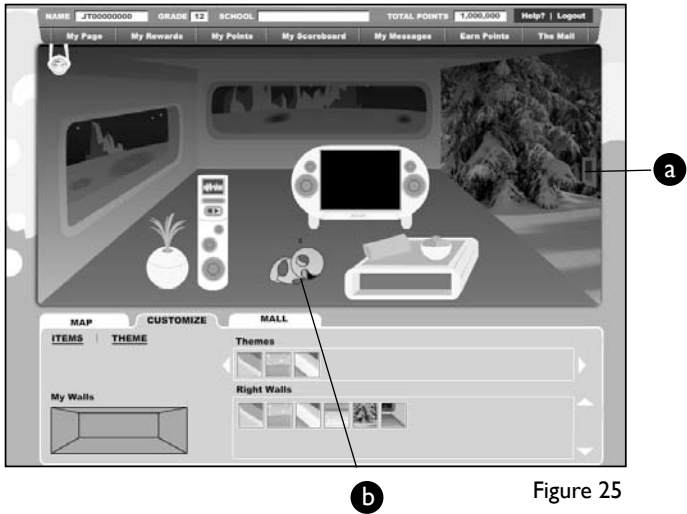


Figure 25

## Getting Help From Your Guide

---

Your guide is stationed off to the side of the room—waiting in case you need help!

- a. Click on your guide when you need help (Figure 26).

### **FYI...**

uBoost is a mysterious environment with many different creatures. You'll be receiving messages that contain details and clues about who else is here...

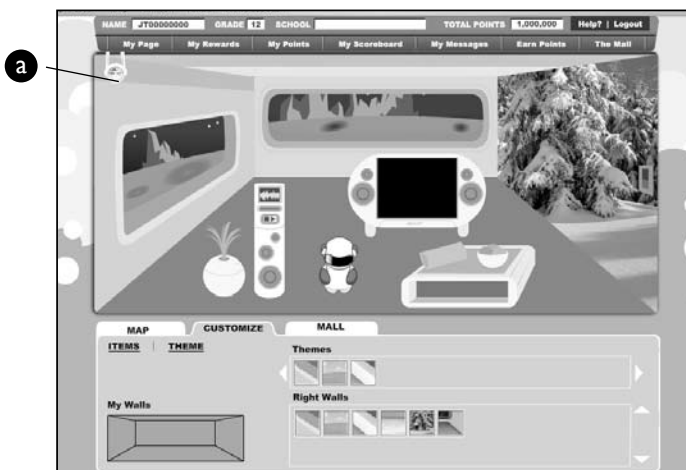


Figure 26

- b.** If you would like your guide to move to his/her station at the edge of the room, click the word Close (Figure 27).



**b**

Figure 27