

Skills Label™ : Patent Pending System to Manage and Track the Development of Skills

Focus Group – Instructions

Brief Introduction

The learning labels technology is a system to manage and track skills, more precisely a standardized representation of learning expectations. This includes being a display – something all parties understand (students, parents, and teachers). A good analogy to this is a nutritional label for food or a resume for professional experiences.

A learning label is the best way to assign and show education and training standards – like Common Core and NGSS. And there is functionality to add other standards.

Through a period, learning labels are an effective way to track learning. There are many other features in the system, like grading, creating series (learning plans), and supporting personalized learning,

Learning labels are effective in K-16 education and training. (There is one design for K-6 and another one for all other audiences.) The website is a good resource for understanding the technology www.skillslabel.com.

Objective

My team has been working on this learning development system since early 2016. Two patent applications were filed in 2016 and one in 2017. Twice in the last two years, graduate students, teachers, and professors analyzed the usability of the application; this addressed intuitiveness and ease of use.

There are essentially two different ways learning labels could be created. First, education publishers create labels for the resources they build (book, games, activities, etc.). Their approach might be to create labels for all their resources with a single upload or using the API. Second, teachers and professors create labels for the tasks and assignments in their classroom. Their approach is to create one label at a time using an interactive label creator.

This focus group is based on the latter. My team would like to understand how well the learning labels align to building your classroom curriculums. We would like to answer the following questions. Are all the fields available to accurately portray an assignment to your students? Is the learning label creator effective? What suggestions do you have to improve the application?

This focus group should take a couple of hours (might be worth breaking this into two or three sessions). My team would like for you to get immersed in the application, so we can get to understand the pedagogy behind the application.

Thought Preparation

- 1) List the skills you are targeting in your class. Include all skills – technical, thinking and communication skills. Could be a list as many as twenty skills.

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- 2) Think of two to three weeks in your classroom, a learning objective you are trying to impart with your students. Now, let's get more specific, think of specific tasks or assignments. Think of how the tasks could be put together into a series. Write down a list of ten tasks – give them a title, basic skills, and standards they are aligned to:

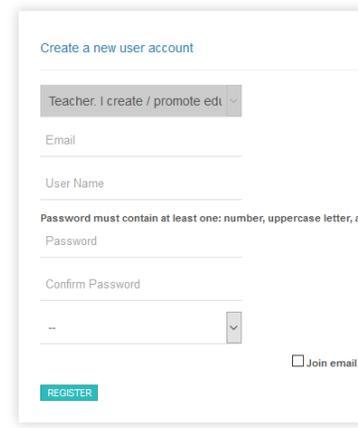
| Title of tasks | Skills | Standards | Sequence |
|----------------|--------|-----------|----------|
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- 3) Consider what prerequisites are included in the tasks. For example, a student might need to read some pages in a book before participating in a classroom activity.

Creating an Account

- 1) Visit the website at: www.skillslabel.com
- 2) Click 'Register' on the menu.
- 3) Select 'Teacher' and fill-in necessary fields. Click Submit.
- 4) Next, on the onboarding page. Fill in each of the fields. The provider field should be your name (suggest 'Teacher' and then your first or last name). Add the main skills you are targeting in the tasks (use your list in step 1). See the short video on the components of a learning label. Click the button to create your first label!

Register



The screenshot shows a registration form titled "Create a new user account". At the top, there is a dropdown menu with "Teacher: I create / promote edit" selected. Below this are input fields for "Email", "User Name", "Password" (with a note: "Password must contain at least one: number, uppercase letter, lowercase letter, and special character"), and "Confirm Password". There is also a dropdown menu for "Provider" and a "Join email" checkbox. A blue "REGISTER" button is at the bottom left.

Figure 1 Registering a New Account

Creating a Learning Label

The interface to create a label is intuitive, so you should understand the fields without much instructions. As you work through the different sections, if you have questions, click on the question mark.

The skills section needs some explanation. There are three ways to add skills. You can enter them one at a time (using the field in the left section), simply click on your default skills (in the right section), or toggle to the search, search on something (like a degree or career) and add skills from the result. Using your default skills is the fastest.

The fields of a skills line item include: focus values (the intensity of the application of the skill), level of difficulty (a range from primary to professional), standards (select the standard from the dropdown i.e. Common Core or NGSS, then in the box, start typing the prefix), and context (descriptive field for how the skills is applied). At a minimum, each skill requires proper focus and level of difficulty values.

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Home
Label Wizard
Interactive Label
Labels Dashboard
My Standards
My Badges

Header (Has Required Fields) [-]

HH MM Time

Segmentation ? [+]

PreReqs ? [+]

Reqs ? [+]

Skills (Must add at least 1 skill) ? [-]

My Skills

Search

CLICK TO ADD SKILL

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Accounting | Business Strategy |
| Create Assessments | Creative Thinking |
| Critical Thinking | Economic Analysis |

Suggested Learning

| Time | Cost | |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------|
| Prerequisites | | |
| Requirements | | |
| Skills / Behaviors / Values | Level | Points |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Total Skill Points: | | |
| Knowledge Gain | | |
| | | |
| Resource Link | | |
| | | |

Skills Label® (pat. pending) www.skillslabel.com

Figure 2 Interactive Label Builder

Add each of the tasks (use the table in step 2). After you complete a label, from the navigation menu, click on the menu item 'Interactive Label' and then add your next label. Repeat until you have created all the labels. Take your time; this should take at least 30-45 minutes to complete.

Please reflect and write any suggestions you have including missing fields or icons (in the reqs), or challenges with the user interface.

Notice there are two ways to see and manage the tasks: the admin 'Home' page (what you see when you first login) and the 'Labels Dashboard'. The latter is a tiled interface. Double click on the tile to see the label; double click on the label to see the badge (if available). Drag a tile over the icon to initiate the function (access the public page, grading, outcomes, etc.).

Using A Learning Label

The learning label display is designed to work across digital and print media. On the landing page of a learning label, there are ways to distribute a learning label through email, LMSs, social media, embedded on a website, and as files (PNG or PDF). There is also a QR code, which is readable on Smartphones. Let's try a few. Each www.skillslabel.com | www.learninglabel.com | www.educationlabel.com Copyright 2019 All Rights Reserved

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example starts from the landing page of a learning label. To get to a landing page, click the view link from your list on the 'Admin Home' page or drag a tile onto the gold URL icon in the 'Labels Dashboard'.

Email a learning label to yourself. Click on the 'Email Label' from the label landing page. Then enter your email address and click 'Send Email'. Check your inbox. There will be a message with the learning label as an advanced display. (As you build a distribution list of users, you can use send emails to groups.)

Create a label as a PNG and download it to your computer. Click on the far right 'Image Icon'. A page appears with the learning labels as a PNG; click on the link: 'Download: PNG'.

Similarly, click on the PDF icon to create a PDF with the label.

If you are ready to publish a learning label in social media, click on the Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter icons.

If you use Google Classroom, import a learning label into your classroom.

Click on the classic Google Classroom icon, 'Choose your Class', and with

'Choose Action', select 'Create Assignment'. The learning labels appears as an assignment in your classroom.

Finally, every learning label you create, or clone gets a unique URL. Use this URL in your LMS or as a link to an assignment in documents given to your students.

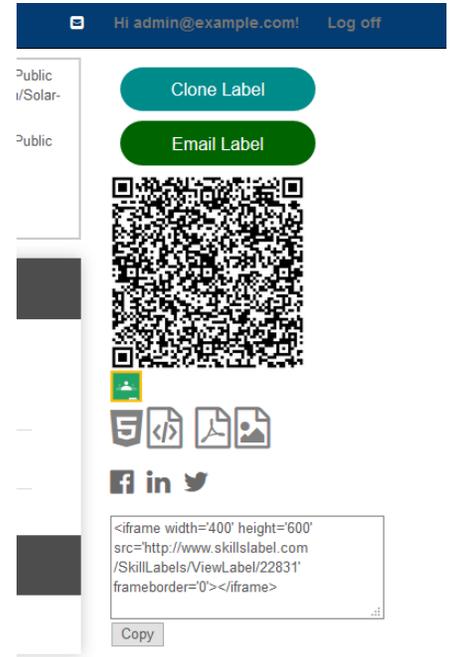


Figure 3 Ways to Distribute Learning Labels

Connecting Labels Together

A convincing feature of the learning labels is to create series, connected tasks together based on performance. This might represent a lesson plan, project, or course. And there are not limitations to the length of the series. So, working with a student could transcend across courses or education stages.

To initiate the process, from the 'Labels Dashboard', simply drag a tile (representing a task/label) over the 'Set Outcomes' icon (the green icon).

Select a number of possible outcomes (1 – pass, 2 – pass / fail, 3 – pass / progress / fail, or 10 - percentiles), Then, drag a tile over the color representing a desired performance. And do this for each of the scenarios.

Begin connecting your 10 tasks together. Let see how your series looks.

- From the 'Labels Dashboard', drag the first task in a series over the 'Public URL Link' (the gold icon). Notice right beneath the label, there are the performance links. To navigate the next one, click on the performance link. And you can keep moving forward or move backwards by using the breadcrumb's links above the label.
- From the 'Labels Dashboard', drag the first tile over the 'Hierarchy Link' (the aqua icon). This shows a hierarchal view of your series. Click on the links to move around.

Business Strategy Simulation
BusinessStrategy
Online Game C3:30-40/C4:40-50/C5/C6:50-80,90
 Simulation managing a small company. Learn how to price products, market the product and manage human capital.

| Suggested Learning | | | |
|--|---------------|-------|-----------------|
| Time | 15 - 21 Hours | Cost | 2000.00 |
| Prerequisites | | | |
| Requirements | | | |
| Skills | Focus | Level | Standard Points |
| Economic Analysis | ▼ | ▲ | 37 |
| Financial Analysis | ▼ | ▲ | 20 |
| Problem Solving | ▼ | ▲ | 20 |
| Business Strategy | ▼ | ▲ | 29 |
| Accounting | ▼ | ▲ | 13 |
| Critical Thinking | ▼ | ▲ | 13 |
| Total Skill Points: | | | 132 |
| Knowledge Gain Practice the typical interactions of someone managing a small business. | | | |
| Resource Link http://www.businessstrat.com | | | |

Skills Label™ (pat. pending) www.skillslabel.com

Progress indicators: 100%, 80%, 60%, 40%, 20%, 0%

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These series are also used in grading and other places in the application.

As the number of tasks in your collection grows, you create deeper and longer series. Consider using the application for a few years, you finetune the series; might add as many as ten different scenarios for your tasks.

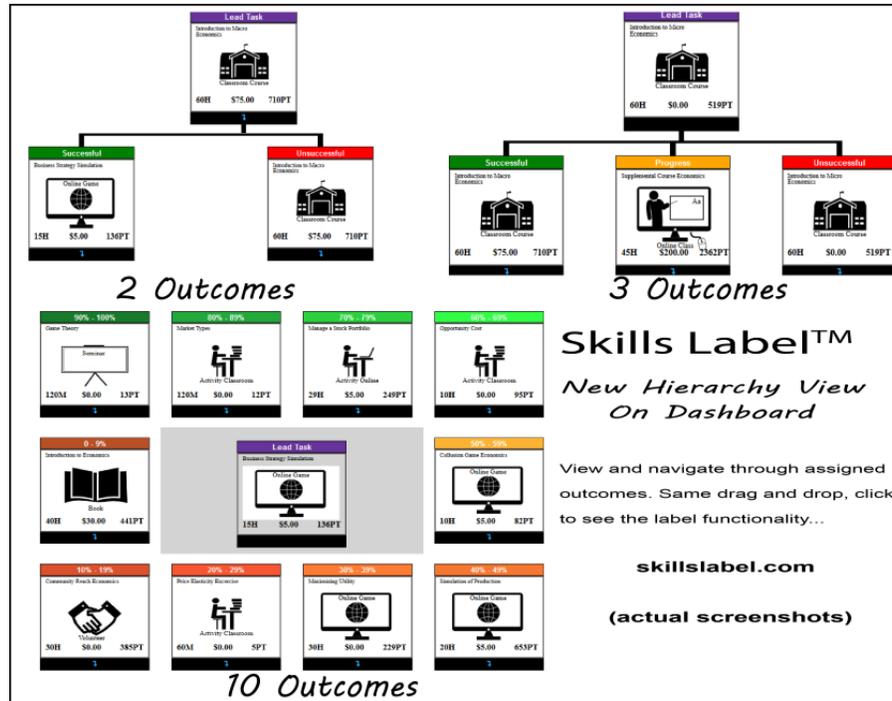


Figure 4 Connecting Labels In Series

Advise if you need help working through this feature. This is an important feature. The UI might not be intuitive yet.

Adding to a Community – Learners and Teachers (Optional)

From the top menu, click on 'My Profile'. First send an invitation; a user you are connecting with, must have a valid account. Enter any part of an email (for example, you might enter myschool.edu and all the entries will appear) and click the 'Find' button. From the list that appears, click on the 'Invite' link. A message and email invitation are sent to this user. Once the user accepts the invitation, they are part of your community.

The advantages of a teacher to learner (student) community include being able to send messages, appearing in your label's dashboard, and grading functionality. For a teacher to teacher community, there is advantage in sharing labels and standards.

Grading (Optional)

From the 'Labels Dashboard', drag a task (represented as a tile) over the grading icon. By default, you see only the students who have the learning label in their collection. If the student is an active user (with a learner account), then you enter their email and submit the 'Add New Record' button.

You can choose a different number of achievements (pass and fail, percentiles, etc.). Then give students a grade. If you have a series, then students automatically navigate through the series based on performance.

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Interested in how this works with your current technologies. Want to get them to work together.

Other Features

Possible to 'clone' labels, which means to copy a label and then get all the functionality as if you created the label. Might be a good way to share tasks with other teachers you work with. (From an idealistic point of view, every unit of learning should be defined with a single learning label and teachers clone it.)

For the menu, click on "My Badges". Upload your own graphical 'badges'. When students complete a task, they download and access the badge. From the menu, click on "My Standards". Create dynamic standards or add ones in practice with your subject. Write your own set of standards. Add them yourself.

Learning labels support personalized learning in three ways: 1) assign tasks to students; 2) add tasks to a syllabus (www.skillsyllabi.com) and let students choose a certain amount; and 3) let students navigate through a series based on performance.

Final Thoughts

As we look to introduce this into the classroom, we need to understand how your curriculum and technologies influence your routine. Please answer the following questions:

| | |
|--|--|
| What LMS are you using? Does it work with assignments and tasks? <i>(Learning labels are designed to work with LMSs. For example, it is possible to click on a button to bring a learning label into Google Classroom. We would like help to do the same interactivity with other LMS systems.)</i> | |
| What set of standards do you work with? <i>(Learning labels has Common Core and NGSS standards built into the system. The framework is meant to work with all standards.)</i> | |
| What education publishers or curriculum developers do you use? What influences your choices in providing resources (books, games, activities, etc.)? <i>(Education publishers, particularly the top 5, have significant clout in getting their resource into the classroom. They are building their own systems. We would like to know how these systems are being used and how much 'lock-in' teachers have. As said earlier, we think these organization could also create labels in bulk.)</i> | |
| Do you have any recommendations on differentiating and marketing this application? | |

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| | |
|--|--|
| Please share any thoughts or comments. | |
|--|--|

In a conference call or meeting, let's talk about some of the answers to these questions.

Opportunity

My team deeply appreciates the time and effort for participating in this focus group. We hope the experience was positive. In return, we offer you free lifetime access and use of the application. Currently, this is a free service- so spread the word. In the future, there will be a tiered pricing subscription.

From a pedagogical view, learning labels are meant to standardize how we represent learning and furthermore provide a framework to define learning for a single unit (task or experience). If you believe in the purpose of what we are trying to accomplish, then please join us and contribute by linking and posting in social media, giving suggestions, publishing in blogs, etc.

Two other resources my team have developed include [Skills Based Approach](#) (a methodology for learning) and [Skills Culture](#) (a growth mindset to learning). As you work with my team, consider all these resources.

Finally, there is a series of videos on YouTube which can be used as tutorials for the different functionality.