Skills Label™

www.skillslabel.com

Map Learning in Skills. Map Jobs in Skills. Combine to Create Pathways.

Instructions for Getting Started Using the Skills Label System in the Classroom or For Training

There are five Android apps, two Windows 10 apps, and a significant website application. Download the apps from Google Play, or Windows 10, or create an online account. Use the sample data set to see how the apps work. This document is a guide to taking the next step by creating the actual content to use in a classroom, online, or for a training.

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Brief Introduction

The learning labels technology is a system to manage and track skills, more precisely a standardized representation of learning expectations. This includes a standard screen – 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 a good way to assign and show any set of education and training standards. A big value proposition is to track learning. Using the medium of skills, after the tasks represented as labels are completed, learning gets summarized through grades, degrees, and training. There are many other features in the system, like grading, creating series (learning plans), and supporting personalized learning,

The learning labels system also summarizes job requirements. By connecting learning expectations with job requirements in skills, new pathways get created. (As a teacher or professor this may or may not be a requirement, though could be useful to the organization or institution you represent.)

Objective

There are many ways to try (sample) the system to see how it works. For each of the apps in Android and Windows 10, there is a sample (Guest) account to test the functionality. In addition, it is free to sign up and use the website application. (Trying the Learning Labels Create app requires a valid admin account to use.)

Once you are familiar with the user interface and functionality, the question is: **(Got how this works) How do I get started?**

This is a short guide on how to adopt the learning labels system. How to conceptualize and use the apps and website application in your classroom or training modules.

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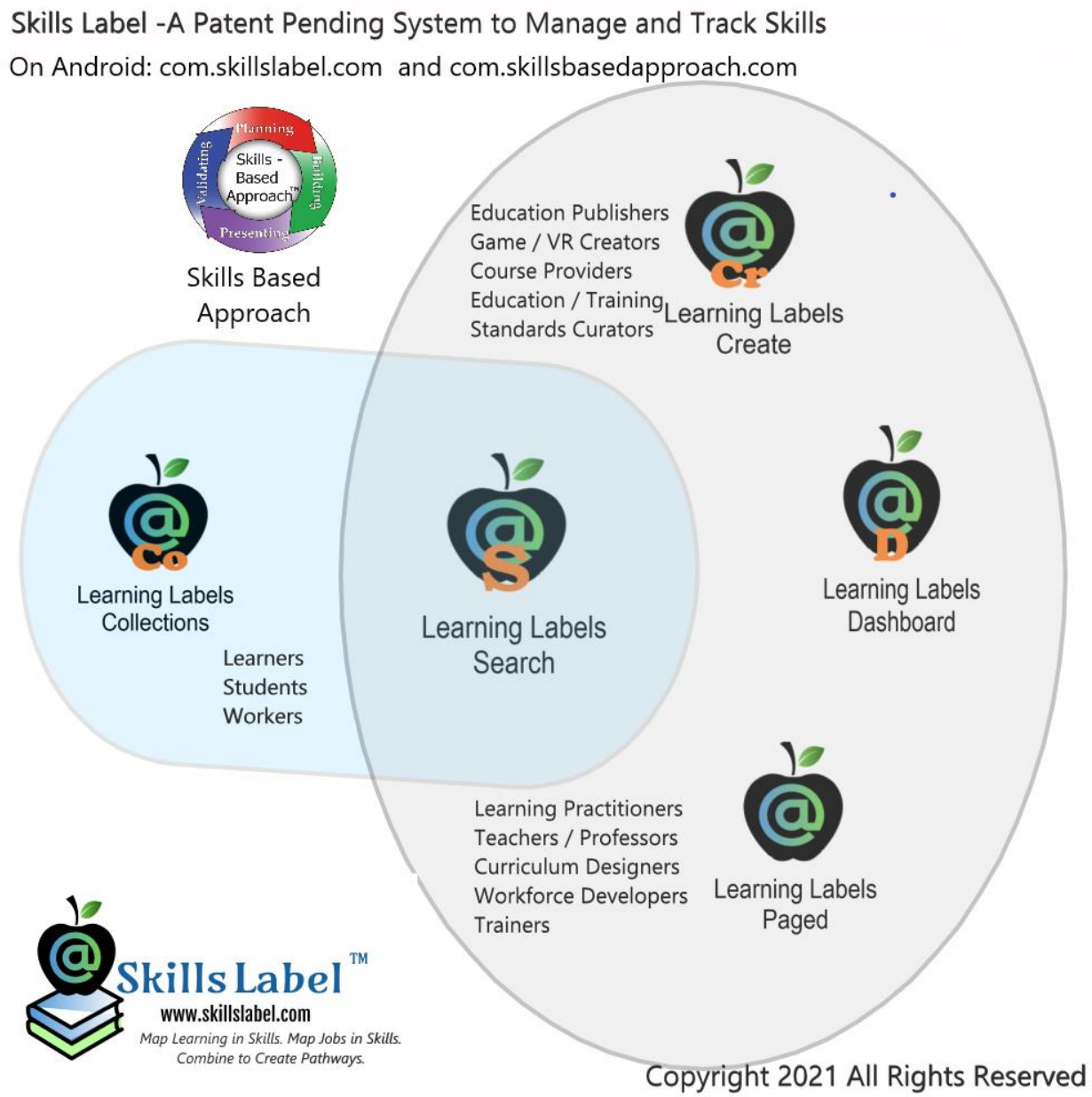

Figure 1 Five Learning Labels Apps on Android. (Skills Based Approach Also Designed to Work With Learning Labels.

Creating an Account (~1 minute)

1) Visit the website at: http://www.skillslabel.com/Account/SignUpTeacher?term=Teacher
2) Fill in the necessary fields and click submit.
3) Add default fields (helps speeds the process in creating future labels).

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4) Click button to Create First Label.
5) A screen the 'Skills Parser' appears. If you got a descriptive text or a link to the task or experience, then use it here. This is an optional feature. The goal is to aid you in defining what skills should appear on the label.

Or

1) From any of the apps, register and create an account from within the app.

Start Simple -Create Syllabus (~20 minutes)

Start by creating a syllabus at: www.skillsyllabus.com . (Already got a syllabus, open it and copy and paste into the web app. Takes less than a minute.) The syllabus contains all the fields of a standard syllabus, plus sections to support skills and learning labels. In addition, the syllabus is printable as a PDF – so students get a document they might print. Whether or not you use the syllabus with your class, it is a good container for the learning labels you create. All the skills data gets aggregated automatically. Learners manage the learning labels themselves in a Learning Labels Collections app (also Skill Based Approach app).

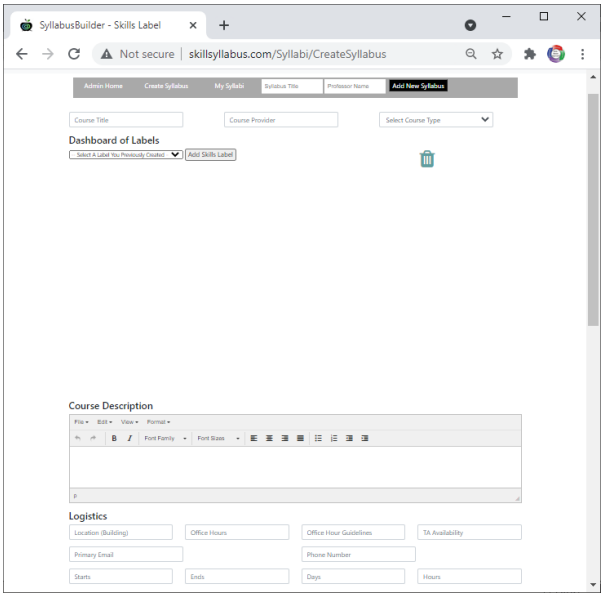

Figure 2 Skill Syllabus Interface: Create Syllabus

(Possible to also create a syllabus from the Learning Labels Create app in Android and the Windows 10 app. Though, this is abbreviated and does not contain the composition fields.)

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The general hierarchy of the learning label systems includes jobs, syllabus, projects / lesson plans, and tasks / experiences (learning labels). Projects and lesson plans are optional containers between learning labels and syllabus.

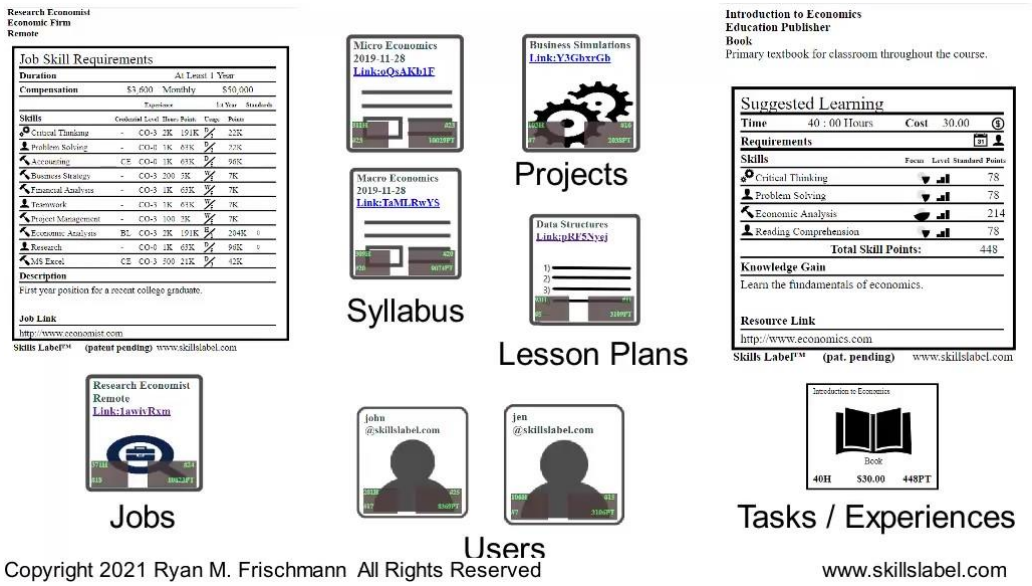

Figure 3 Hierarchy of Elements in Learning Labels System: Jobs, Syllabi, Projects / Lesson Plans, Tasks / Experiences And Users

Thought Preparation for Creating Labels (~10 to 15 minutes)

1) List the skills you are targeting in your class. Include all skills: technical, transferrable, behaviors, soft, and thinking skills. This could be a list as many as twenty skills.
2) Think of the learning objectives of the class (a semester) and what your expectations are for students. Identify the specific tasks, experiences, and assignments for students (probably 10 to 40). Also, think how the tasks could be put together into a series. Write them down here:

Title of Task	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 a Learning Label (~3 minutes)

The interface to create a label is intuitive, so you should understand the fields without many 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 four ways to add skills:

- Enter one at a time (using the field in the left section).
- Click on a skill from **My Skills**.
- **Search** on something (like a degree, field, trait, or career) and add skill by clicking on the result.
- Click on a skill in the **Suggested** section. (Could be a result of suggested skills from the skill parser.)

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The fields of a skills line item include **focus values** (the intensity and frequency of the application of the skill), **level of difficulty** (a range from primary to professional), **standards** (select the standard from a list, 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.

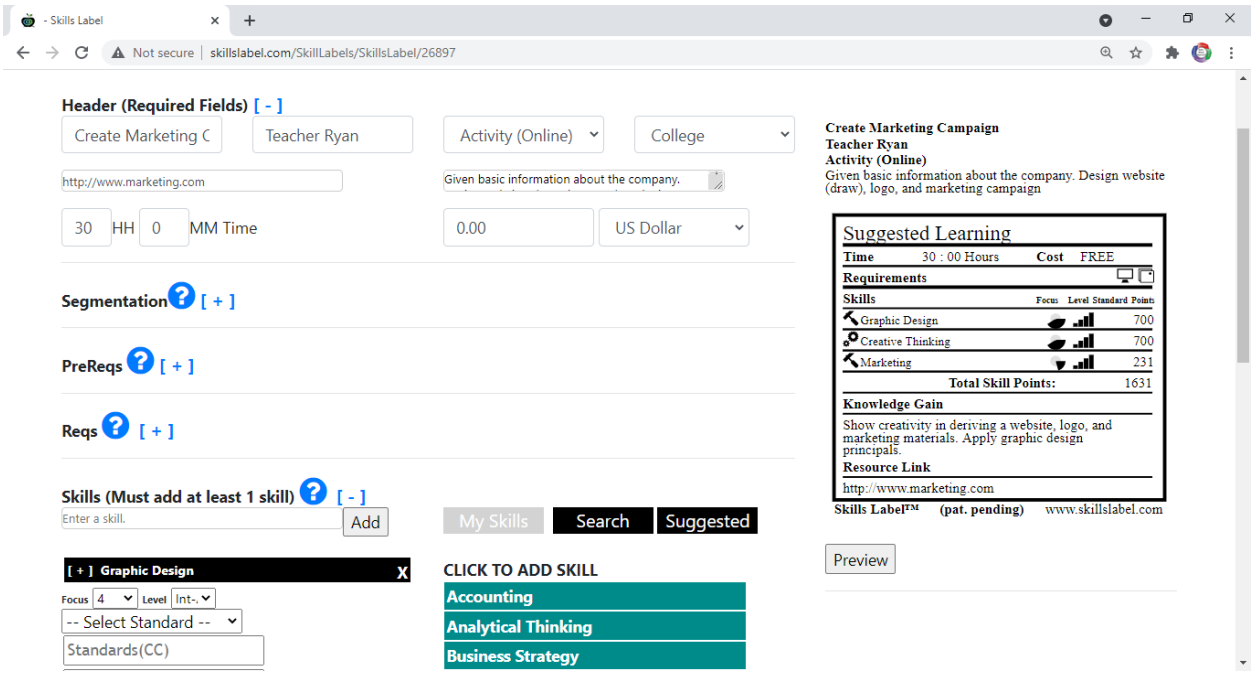

Figure 4 Screenshot Web Application Interactive Learning Label Creator

Figure 2 Interactive Label Builder

Creating a Series (10-30) of Learning Labels (~30 minutes)

Next, create a label for 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.

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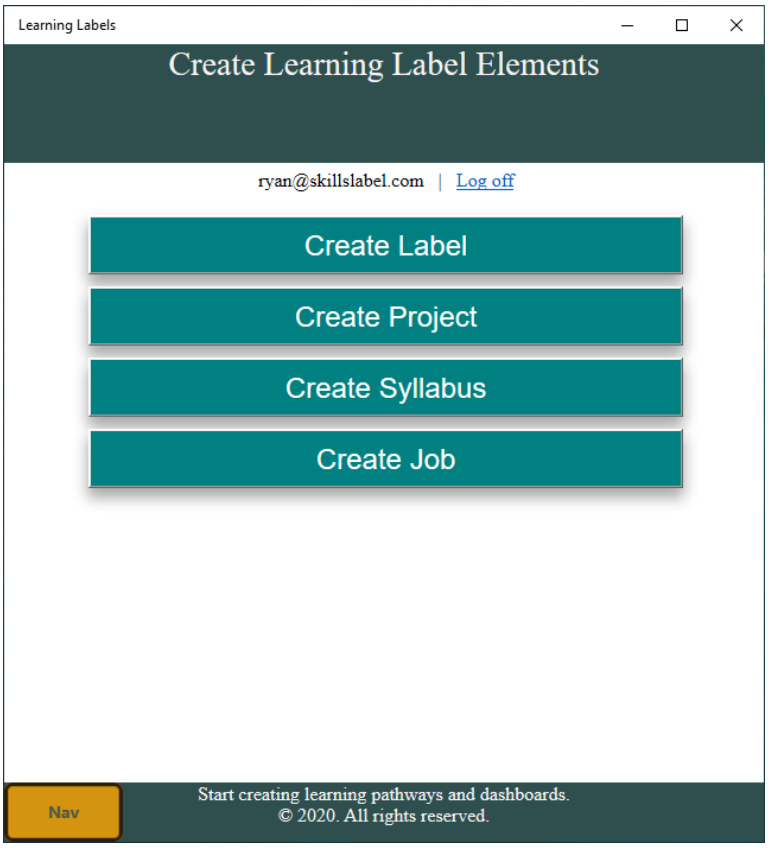

Figure 5 Screenshot from Learning Labels Windows 10 App

The process of creating the labels can also be accomplished by the Learning Labels Create app in Android and Windows 10 app.

Screenshot of Learning Labels Create from Windows 10 app.

Functionality to build all four main elements with a quick, touch-enabled interface.

Reflect and write any suggestions you have including missing fields or icons (in the requirements), 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. Open the Labels Dashboard. Double click on the tile

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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.).

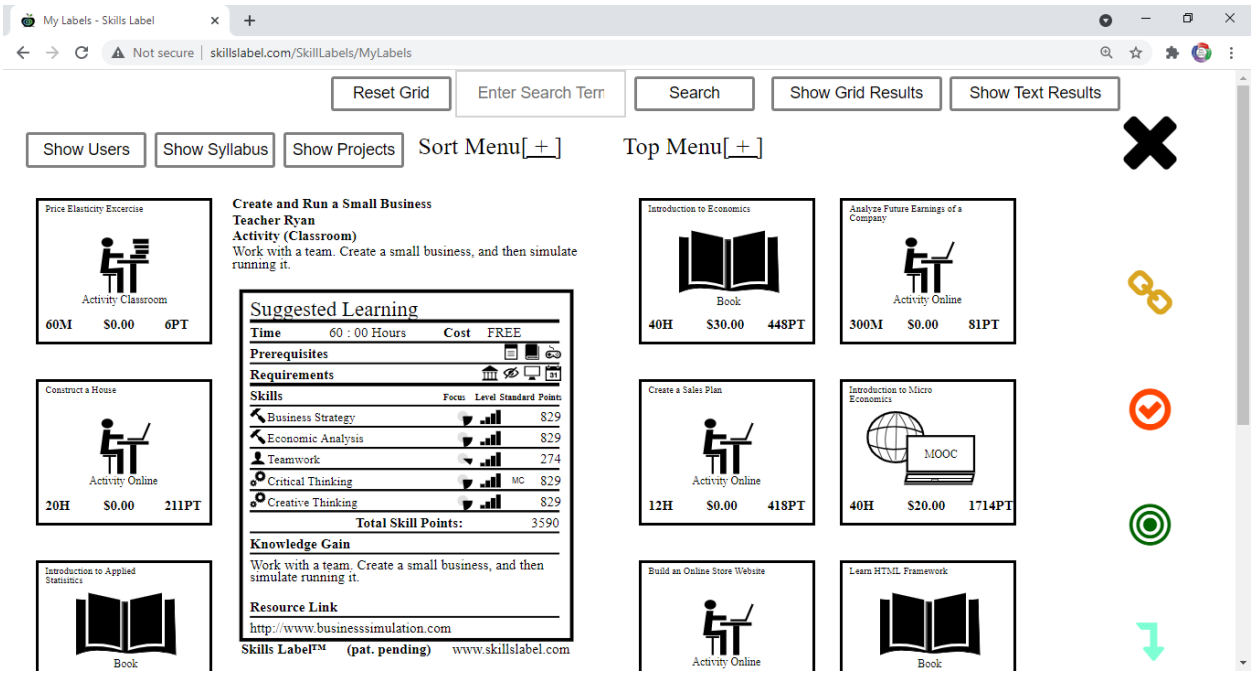

Figure 6 Screenshot of Learning Labels Dashboard. Tile Represent Labels. Double Click to Show Labels. Drag on Right Icons for Actions.

Using A Learning Label (~10 minutes)

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 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'.

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Figure 7 From Learning Label Page, Ways to Share / Distribute the Label

- 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'.
- 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.

Connecting Labels Together (~20 minutes)

A convincing feature of the learning labels is to create series, connecting 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.

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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.

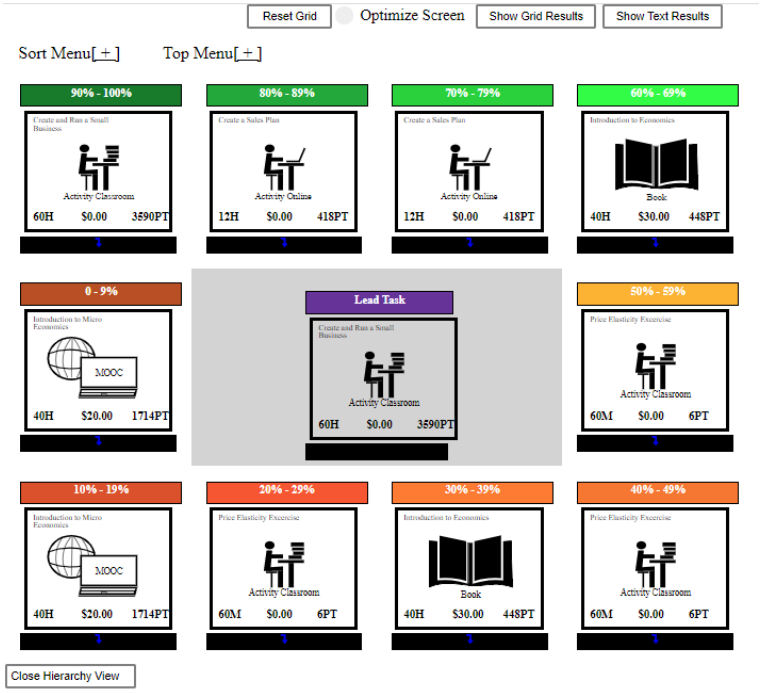

Figure 8 Hierarchical View of a Series of Learning Labels

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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. *Advise our team 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 use 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

Other Features

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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:

- Assign tasks to students.
- Add tasks to a syllabus (www.skillsyllabi.com) and let students choose a certain amount.
- Let students navigate through a series based on performance.

Education, higher education, and training standards are meant to anchor the learning expectations. There are some national standards built into the application (Common Core); other recognized standards could be added (simply give us a request). Finally, there are way to create your own set of standards. These custom standards could be built and shared by you and a team of learning practitioners.

There is a peer review process built into the apps and website application. Once you create a label (and it gets shared), a peer review verifies the accuracy of the learning expectations. A reviewer checks each end point, skill by skill to agree with the representation. (So with a teacher, this answers the questions: Can anyone put any representation on the labels? How does the label protect against inflating the learning to accumulate skill points?)

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Skills Emblem is a real-time graphic showing queued and completed work on a skill-by-skill basis. As users complete the tasks represented on the labels, the system tallies or summarizes the data on the labels. The emblems are built into the Learning Labels Collections app (for learners). A website provides information of the concept: www.skillsemblem.com. Though, in practice, this requires a healthy number of verified learning labels.

Final Thoughts

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

What LMS are you using? Does it work with assignments and tasks?	*(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.)*	
What set of standards do you work with?	*(Learning labels has Common Core and NGSS standards built into the system. The framework is meant to work with all standards.)*	
What education publishers or curriculum developers do you use? What influences your choices in providing resources (books, games, activities, etc.)?	*(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.)*	

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Do you have any recommendations on differentiating and marketing this application?		

Send Us Your Comments (Email Us This Document Filled-In): feedback@skillslabel.com

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: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-4XQxTDqyk&list=PLX3-ivTOkn13DaOwT1qD0-IuGrVGKSZ8x

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