



# Glossary

## Learning Experience

### Quest Forward Learning™

Quest Forward Learning is a program designed to engage students in their own learning. It is a research-based method for student growth, a comprehensive four-year curriculum, and a technology platform that supports active, student-directed learning.

### Mentor

While all mentors are trained and skilled teachers, a much better term for our teachers is “mentors.” One-size-fits-all lectures are rare at Quest Forward schools. Mentors work with each student individually and personally, guide students, and facilitate learning. Mentors point each student in a useful direction, answering questions, and helping them as they learn. They focus on the whole person and help students customize their experiences to develop habits and skills beyond the academic content of courses.



### Skills-Forward Design

The Quest Forward curriculum and methodology are designed to foster learning that develops skills. In other schools, a content-based curriculum prioritizes students’ absorption of facts and concepts without considering what students will do with that knowledge. A skills-forward approach develops abilities, so students can act effectively in the context of real-world problems. Skills-forward design does not mean that content is ignored; some key concepts and facts are critical to effective action, and skills are often best learned in the context of detailed concepts or issues. However, skills-forward design maintains a focus on progress in skills as the outcome of those encounters with content.

### Skills and Habits

Quest Forward Learning is designed to help young people develop the habits and skills that will help them to succeed in life — no matter what career path they choose. The habits and skills prepare students to live balanced, healthy, and productive lives and to continue to learn well beyond their school experience. Students learn and practice three types of habits and skills: Essential Habits, Learning Skills, and Work Skills.

### Essential Habits

Quest Forward Learning embraces 6 Essential Habits, or self skills. These habits can help young people thrive in life, career, and school. We call them “habits” because they require thoughtful and daily practice to develop and maintain. The 6 Essential Habits are:

1. Express Curiosity
2. Manage Yourself
3. Learn from Setbacks
4. Communicate and Collaborate
5. Solve Problems
6. Live an Integrated Life

## Learning Skills

Each Quest Forward learning area is designed to help students develop 12 Learning Skills — skills that will help them to be lifelong learners. Students discover the skills, practice them, and apply them through quests they complete, the artifacts they create, projects they work on, and conversations they have with peers and mentors in their courses.

1. Establish Meaning
2. Ask Questions
3. Investigate
4. Interpret
5. Identify Patterns
6. Be Creative
7. Assess Arguments
8. Take a Position
9. Collaborate
10. Compose
11. Share
12. Reflect

## Work Skills

Quest Forward Learning helps students develop six Work Skills, or executive functions, that focus on how a person works. Students learn to plan and set goals, manage time, and work efficiently and to a high standard. These skills are emphasized through assessment and feedback mentors provide to students and are supported through tools and materials students use at Quest Forward Schools, such as weekly planners. These work skills include:

1. Focus
2. Work Efficiently
3. Plan and Set Goals
4. Manage Time and Resources
5. Organize
6. Document and Take Notes

## Grades and Courses

### Foundation Phase

Students begin high school with a grounding in the principles of Quest Forward Learning and a solid basis for the content and skills to come.

### Exploration Phase

In the Exploration Phase, students explore their interests and develop their talents more deeply. Students strengthen conceptions of themselves as drivers of their own education and see the relevance of what they are learning. As students progress through courses, they pursue subjects in more or less depth, depending on their interests and goals.

### Transition Phase

As they begin their transition from high school, students produce broad mastery projects that summarize their achievements. Students can conclude their preparation for college, begin their pursuit of military or a career, or transition to college courses while still working within the structure of Quest Forward Learning.



## Course

A course is a year-long collection of journeys, which appears on a transcript. A course is the expression of a subject in a given phase. There may be more than one course in a subject in a given phase. For example, Transition Phase students complete two Social Science courses: American Government and Economics.

## Journey

Journeys are thematic components of courses. A journey is a collection of quests, organized in levels and centering around a project and/or narrative.

## Level

A level is a component of a journey, similar to a chapter in a book or level in a game. Students begin a journey at Level 1. As they complete requirements in that level, they unlock the next.

## Quest

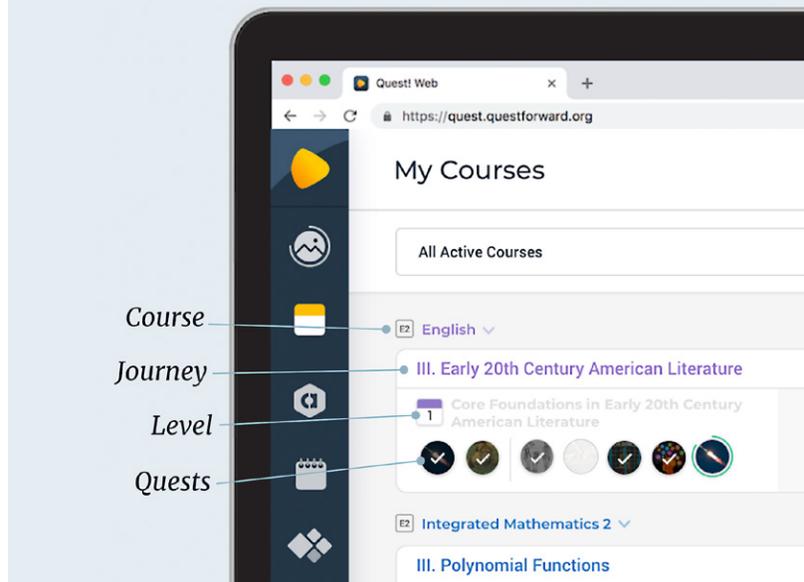
A quest is a series of activities students complete to practice and apply skills and learn the content that is the goal of a course and journey. Quests inspire exploration, curiosity, and active learning. Quests start with a driving question to guide students toward a goal. A quest might ask students to research, conduct an experiment, interview someone, or debate ideas. Students always complete an artifact during a quest. Most quest activities include resources — such as articles, videos, photos, and multimedia — and enable a student to explore varying perspectives on a topic. Quests are designed to meet national standards and achieve graduation requirements while incorporating valuable skills practice.

## Core Quest

Core quests are required for students to complete a level. They are integral to the curriculum. Typically, these are quests that all students complete in order to gain skills and knowledge needed to do more complex quests later in the course.

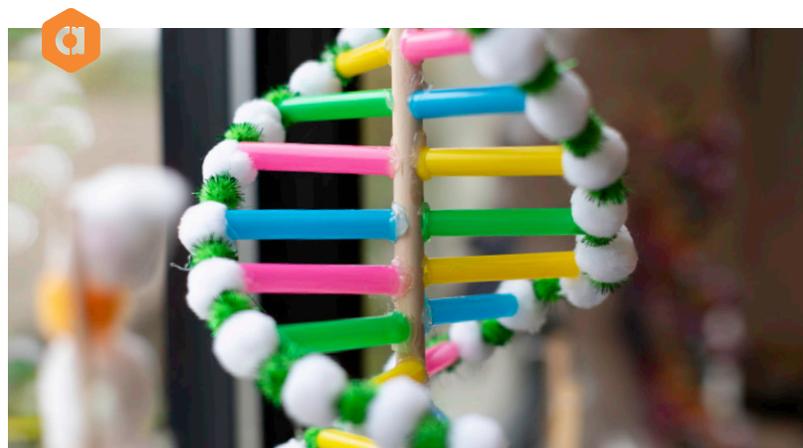
## Choice Quest

Choice quests are a separate grouping of quests within a level. A student can choose to complete whichever quests in this category that are most relevant to them. A number of the total choice quests is required (for example, “two of six”).



## Artifact

In quests, students are asked to create an artifact: something physical or digital that helps them to deepen their learning, communicate ideas, and demonstrate skills and knowledge. Creating is at the core of learning, and these artifacts are a substantial part of the work students do in Quest Forward Learning.



## Check-in

Activities where students complete artifacts are flagged as “check-ins” for students and their mentors. A check-in is intended to be a moment for discussion, asking questions, feedback, learning from others, and clarifying and managing goals and expectations.

# Feedback, Assessment, and Growth

## Feedback

Feedback comes in many forms in Quest Forward Learning. Much of it is discussed in person between mentors, students, and peers, but check-ins are a prime opportunity for providing feedback, both in person and within the app. Feedback is ongoing and is given frequently. Mentors can provide feedback to students at any time, and students can request feedback when they need it.

## Assessment

Assessment is embedded into Quest Forward Learning at many points in a student’s experience (as opposed to high-stakes, high-stress exams that are common in other educational models). All assessments are designed to provide insights into student work processes (e.g. engaging, effort, completing work on time) and learning, and to provide students with actionable feedback to improve.

## Engagement

Student engagement is captured after each class. Coming to class prepared, focusing and working hard, contributing, and investing in their own learning are indicators of high engagement.



Learning



On Time



Appropriate Effort



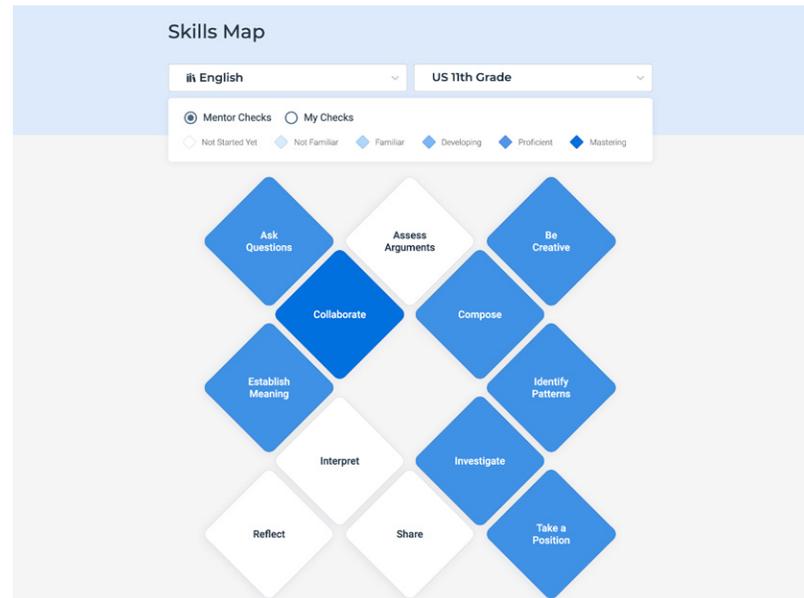
Support from Others

## Artifact Assessment

Mentors assess students’ artifacts in order to provide feedback and help students to learn, but also to document and track student progress. Artifacts are assessed on four dimensions: 1) display of intended learning, 2) timeliness, 3) appropriate effort, and 4) appropriate support from others.

## Skills Checks

Students are expected to demonstrate skills through the creation of artifacts and potentially through other quest activities. Skills Checks are completed by both mentors and students to reflect on skill development.



## Reports

### Student Activity Summaries

Each week student activity summaries are emailed to each student’s guardian(s). These summaries include information about what students worked on in each course during a given week, such as which quests and artifacts they completed and skills they practiced.

### Termly Reports

Each term report is made available to families. These reports include information about student performance as it relates to engagement, artifacts, skills, and progress through courses. Reports also include a projected or final grade and comments from mentors. Foundation Phase students receive a “pass” or “incomplete” whereas other students receive a letter grade.

### Transcripts

Transcripts and calculated GPAs are provided upon request. Official transcripts and other documentation are generated for all students transitioning to higher education or institutions that require them.

## Pathways Program

The Pathways Program offers students a thoughtfully designed sequence of interest and career exploration, internships, on-going career counseling services, and a network of counselors/advisors to support them into their first years at work.