



Essential Skills



Online Manual

Teaching & Practice Software



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OVERVIEW

Essential Skills Online programs provide systematic and explicit instruction to students from K-6 grade level. These programs use hundreds of colorful graphics, sound effects and music rewards to motivate students to continue learning with the software. Additionally, a help system allows students to work independently and frees up teacher time.

Every subscription has access to the Teacher Dashboard - a tool which allows administrators and teachers to monitor students' progress as they work through the programs. This tool also allows teachers to assign pre-tests, post-tests and custom activity assignments.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Essential Skills Online is a web application that runs in your web browser on almost every platform including Windows PC, Apple OSX and iOS, and Android. It is compatible with iPads, Chromebooks, Android tablets and more.

WINDOWS SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- Reliable internet connection
- Printer recommended for printing student reports
- Any browser application (Google Chrome recommended)

APPLE OSX SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- Reliable internet connection
- Printer recommended for printing student reports
- Browser app (Google Chrome recommended)

APPLE iOS SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- Reliable internet connection
- Browser app (Google Chrome recommended)

CHROMEBOOK / ANDROID SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- Reliable internet connection
- Printer recommended for printing student reports
- Google Chrome

LOGGING IN TO THE SOFTWARE

ADMINISTRATOR PASSWORDS

Logging in with the Administrator username and password will give the user access to every class and student in the database. The administrator can assign and edit any teacher or student username and password.

CLASS PASSWORDS

For each class created, a class name, username and a password will be assigned. This username and password will allow a teacher to login and view and edit the students in the class. A teacher cannot view or change any details in any class but their own.

STUDENT PASSWORDS

Students can only access their accounts with a valid username and password. Creating a student automatically generates a corresponding student password. You can find student's username and password in the Classes section of the Teacher Dashboard.

GETTING STARTED WITH YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

1) YOUR WEB BROWSER

We recommend the use of Google Chrome, although the software is compatible with most other browsers. Ensure that whatever browser used is kept up to date.

2) GO TO ESSENTIAL SKILLS ONLINE

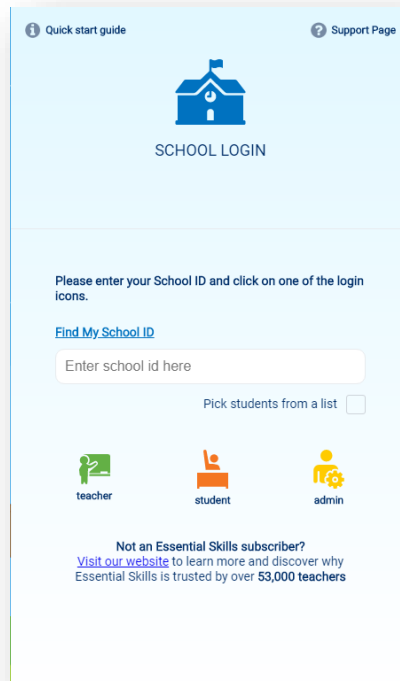
Begin by browsing to the <https://online.essentialskills.com>, following the link provided in your signup email, or browsing to our homepage <https://essentialskills.com> and clicking on the “School Login” button on the banner at the top of our site.

3) YOUR SCHOOL ID

Enter the School ID provided by Essential Skills in the email you received from support when you registered.

It is recommended that you either print out this email or make a note of your School ID and login information for future reference.

You can recover a lost school ID by simply clicking the Find my school ID link and following the instructions

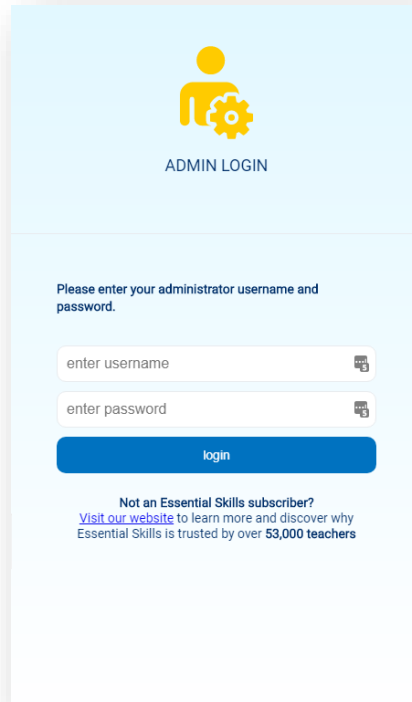


The screenshot shows the 'SCHOOL LOGIN' page of the Essential Skills platform. At the top, there are links for 'Quick start guide' and 'Support Page'. Below these is a blue house icon with a lock, labeled 'SCHOOL LOGIN'. The main content area prompts the user to 'Please enter your School ID and click on one of the login icons.' It includes a link 'Find My School ID' and a text input field labeled 'Enter school id here'. Below the input field is a checkbox labeled 'Pick students from a list'. At the bottom, there are three login icons: 'teacher' (green person with a question mark), 'student' (orange person at a desk), and 'admin' (yellow person with a gear). A footer note asks 'Not an Essential Skills subscriber?' and provides a link to 'Visit our website' to learn more, stating that Essential Skills is trusted by over 53,000 teachers.

Note: If you bookmarked or clicked on the “School Login page” link in your email, you won’t need to enter your School ID.

4) LOG IN AS AN ADMINISTRATOR

Once your school ID has been entered, click on the Administrator icon to access the Teacher Dashboard

A screenshot of the 'ADMIN LOGIN' form. At the top, there is a yellow icon of a person with a gear. Below the icon, the text 'ADMIN LOGIN' is centered. The form has a light blue header and a white body. The body contains a prompt: 'Please enter your administrator username and password.' Below this are two input fields: 'enter username' and 'enter password', each with a small icon of a document. A blue 'login' button is positioned below the input fields. At the bottom, there is a link: 'Not an Essential Skills subscriber? Visit our website to learn more and discover why Essential Skills is trusted by over 53,000 teachers'.

Note: There are separate login portals for administrators, teachers, and students.

Enter the administrator username and password supplied by Essential Skills upon signup. The administrator can view all the teacher and student data in an account, as well as view and edit all usernames/passwords.

5) CREATE YOUR FIRST CLASS (TEACHER ACCOUNT)

Upon login, you will be prompted to create a New Class. Classes have names, usernames and passwords that are assigned by the administrator. The display name is what will be displayed as the class name in the program. The username and passwords are used for logging in as a teacher.

Note: Once logged in, teacher accounts will only be able to view and change details within their own class.

Type your class' display name, username and password in the corresponding text boxes. Click on Add to Class List to finalize the class creation. After your class is created you will be prompted to create students.

6) CREATE YOUR FIRST STUDENT(S)

Students have display names, username and passwords that work just like the teacher account. To create a student, type your student's display name, username and password in the corresponding text boxes. Click on the Add to Student List button to finalize the student creation.

7) CREATING MULTIPLE STUDENTS

Alternatively, there is an option to add multiple students at once. Do this by clicking on the Bulk Add Students button. Type in their display names in the space available in the left text box. You can choose what you want their usernames names to be in the middle box. In the third box, you can assign them all a password. The password can be the same for all the students or randomly generated with a few options. Click Verify when you are ready to create the students. If all the new student's names are highlighted in green, you can click on the Create Students button. If they are highlighted in red, there is a conflict with another student account (the student's name might already be taken).

Click on the Create Students button to finalize the creation of the list of students.

After your student(s) creation, you will be placed in the Class section of the Teacher's Dashboard. Here you will be able to add more students, view passwords, and edit the Class(teacher) options and login credentials.

GETTING YOUR STUDENTS STARTED

STUDENT USERNAMES AND PASSWORDS

You can find student's username and password in the Class section of the Teacher's Dashboard. Click on the yellow Password List button to get a complete list of the class's login credentials. You can print or save the page that pops up for reference.

STUDENT LOGIN PAGE

It is recommended that you bookmark the Essential Skills login page for quick and easy access whether it be on your desktop or in your browser's menu bar. Enabling cookies for your browser can make subsequent logins quick and easy by retaining needed login information. For example, your school's ID will no longer be needed once typed in, requiring only your student usernames and passwords to log in.

The Essential Skills Online system offers two different login procedures to satisfy your needs based on your school's privacy policies.

STUDENT LOGIN (USERNAME METHOD)

The Private Login method requires your student to select their class from a drop-down menu. No student lists are ever displayed to the screen. If cookies are enabled your student is only required to enter their username and password as the school ID will be retained by your browser.

- 1) Enter the School ID
- 2) Click on the Student button
- 3) Select the student's class from the dropdown list
- 4) Type the student's username in the first text box
- 5) Type the student's password in the second text box
- 6) Click on the green Login Button

STUDENT LOGIN (CLASS LIST METHOD)

Using the Open Login method, a student can enter their School ID and School Password to select their class and name from a list instead of entering their username. The School ID and School Password will be saved by the browser if cookies are enabled.

- 1) Enter the School ID
- 2) Check the box for "Pick students from a list "
- 3) Enter the School Password in the text box
- 4) Click on the Student button
- 5) Select the student's class from the list
- 6) Click on the green Go Button
- 7) Select the student's name from the list
- 8) Type the student's password in the text box
- 9) Click on the green Go Button

USING THE PROGRAM

A good starting point is to provide your students with a brief demonstration of how the program works. Essential Skills programs can contain hundreds of activities, but a similar format is used throughout. This enables students to familiarize themselves with navigating the user interface across all the programs.

The main menu allows students to access a program's primary units. Each unit has its own menu, which provides access to that unit's activities.

Teachers are advised to configure the Teacher Dashboard before students use the program for the first time. This is a very simple procedure, whereby a class is created within the Teacher Dashboard, and then the name, username and password for each student is entered for that class. All the options for adding, moving, and deleting students and classes can be accessed through the Classes menu. Detailed instructions are provided in the "Using the Teacher Dashboard" section below.

Each time a student logs in to their account, they will see the list of programs available to them. If they have any pre-tests, post-tests or custom assignments, these will be displayed instead of the full list of programs. Students can click on the "Show All" button to access the complete list of programs.

Once a program is selected, the student will be placed in the first menu of the program. If they have used the program before, they are automatically placed in the menu where they last left off.

It is recommended that activities be completed in a sequential order from top to bottom.

When a score of 80% or better is achieved in an activity, the student receives a gold star. A gold star represents mastery of an activity. Some activities require students to achieve an average of 80% or better on at least two trials for a full star to appear.

The mastery level can be changed by the administrator or teacher account linked to the class.

It is advised that students work on the program for at least 20-30 minutes, three times per week to receive the full benefits of the software.

*As a security measure, students that are inactive for a period of twenty minutes will be automatically logged out of the program.

PRE-TESTS

A pre-test is a placement test. If a student achieves less than 80% for any module tested, then an assignment will be created for them based on the results. The assignment will either place them at a relevant starting point in the program or lock the modules they do not need to complete.

There are two types of pre-tests. One tests a student until they achieve less than 80% for a module and then creates an assignment comprised of the module the student failed and all subsequent modules. The other type of pre-test will test all modules within a program

and then create an assignment of only those modules they failed. The modules they passed will be locked. This is based on program content and cannot be selected by an instructor.

If a student achieves 80% or more on all the modules within a pre-test an assignment will be created with all the modules locked. This indicates that the student does not need to do modules and should move on to a more challenging program. The modules can be unlocked by deleting the pre-test in the Teacher Dashboard

POST-TESTS

A post-test can be assigned after a pre-test has been completed. It functions like the pre-test and the results will be weighed against the pre-test in the reports section of the Teacher Dashboard. Multiple post-tests can be assigned. The post-tests will be compared to previous post-tests and the original pre-test so the student's improvement can be tracked in the reports.

ASSIGNMENTS

Each program consists of different modules. An Assignment is comprised of a selection of modules that the student should complete. Modules that are not part of the assignment are locked and indicated in red text.

Assignments can be useful in several ways. The standard usage would be to tailor an assignment for a student(s) that should be completed over a time period. Another usage is to create an assignment for the class containing only one module, which ensures all your students will be working in the same area of the program. Lastly, an assignment can be created where all the modules are selected. This simply has the effect of promoting the program to the Home Page. Thus, making it easier for you students to find it if there are many Essential Skills programs registered to your school. The Program Selection Menu will also indicate which programs a student has Pre-Tests and Assignments for by coloring and labeling the icons.

SUMMARY SCREEN

When students exit, they are shown a summary report of the work that they have completed for that session.

USING THE TEACHER DASHBOARD

Teacher Dashboard is a tool used by teachers to manage students and classes; view student marks and reports; assign pre-tests and assignments; view Scope and Sequence documents; license programs; and adjust system settings. The Teacher Dashboard can be accessed from the School Login page. The different sections of the Teacher Dashboard can be accessed by clicking on the tabs that appear along the top of the screen.



SUMMARY

The summary section displays a summarized report of program usage over a set amount of time. It displays the number of activities completed and mastered per day, number of hours spent, total accuracy score, and the number of logins. The data can be displayed in chart or table formats. By default, the reports being displayed are based off the last 7 days. This can be changed by clicking on the blue Set Date button and setting the range manually or selecting one of the premade options. (14 days, 30 days, 6 months or 1 year)

REPORTS

In this section of the Teacher Dashboard, marks and reports can be displayed, printed and downloaded. Using the menus and lists, select the desired class and student, program and report type that you would like to view (report types are outlined on the next page). You may then save the reports to a file, send to your browser for full screen view or simply print.

REPORT TYPES

- **Skill Report:** Displays the number of correctly answered questions and the number of attempted questions broken down by individual skills.
- **Activity Report:** Displays the results of every activity completed by the student within the date range selected.
- **Unit Report:** Displays a summary of every unit of activities completed by the student within the date range selected.
- **Hot-Spot Report:** A "hot-spot" is an activity that has been attempted by the student three times without mastery. The hot-spot report notes how many hotspots vs. total activities attempted there are in total for the student. The report goes on to list the unit name and activity name for each hot-spot, along with the number of attempts, the average mark and time spent in each hot-spot. Once a student masters the program listed in the hot spot report, the activity will no longer be listed in the report.
- **Pre-Test Report:** Lists the modules in a pretest, how many questions the student answered correctly, and if the module has been assigned to the student.
- **Post-Test Report:** Displays a graph of the student's progress across post-tests.
- **Mastery Report:** Displays the number of mastered activities, as well as number of questions attempted and number of questions answered correctly. The predefined mastery level is set to 80% by default. This is the percentage students need to achieve in order to earn a gold star, which is their visual cue that they have mastered an activity or unit, and that it is time to move on. The mastery level can be adjusted in the "Account" section of the Teacher Dashboard under the "Options" heading.

ASSIGNMENTS

The Assignments section allows for the setup of pre-tests, post-tests and module assignments.

- 1) Click on the "Select Class" button, click on the class that needs assignment changes, then click on the "Select Class" button below.
- 2) Select the program that needs assignment changes.
- 3) Click on a student to edit their assignments. More than one student can be selected at a time.
- 4) On the right side, click to assign or remove Pre-tests, Post-tests or Modules.

Note: Assigning a new pre-test for a student has completed it will overwrite the saved pre-test data results for that student. Post-tests can be assigned repeatedly to gauge progress.

- 5) Click OK to finalize the assignment

Assigned Pre-Tests, Post-Tests and Modules will all appear on the student's program selection page. To access unassigned programs, the student can click on the "Show All" button.

PRE-TESTS

A pre-test assigns a series of questions to the student, which represents an overview of the entire program. This allows the pre-test to identify areas of student strength and weakness. The results of the pre-test are then used to automatically generate an assignment based on the areas that need improvement.

After a pre-test is assigned, it will appear on the student's program selection page the next time they log in.

POST-TESTS

A post-test assigns a series of questions to the student, which represents an overview of the entire program. This allows the post-test to identify areas of student strength and weakness. The results of the post-test are then used to automatically generate an assignment based on the areas that need improvement.

After a post-test is assigned, it will appear on the student's program selection page the next time they log in.

MODULE ASSIGNMENTS

Modules can be assigned manually. Module assignments from pretests can be changed here

CLASSES

The Classes section allows you to add, remove view and edit classes. Specific settings can also be applied to affect all students in a class. You can access these features by clicking on the green Edit button.

If you do not have a class created yet, you will need to do so before you can access most of the functions in the Teacher Dashboard.

Once logged in as a teacher, the user will only be able to view and change details within their own class.

Creating A New Class

- 1) Create a class by clicking on the green New Class button at the top of the menu.

Note: Classes have names, usernames and passwords that are assigned by the administrator. The display name is what will be displayed in the program. The username and passwords are used for logging in as a teacher.

- 2) Type your class' display name, username and password in the corresponding text boxes. Click on Add to Class List to finalize the class creation. After your class is created you will be prompted to create students.
- 3) Click OK to proceed to student creation or hit Retry to go back to the Class List.

Deleting A Class

- 1) To delete a class, click on the plus symbol to the left of the class name to select it. The row will be highlighted in blue, and a checkmark will replace the plus symbol.
- 2) Click on the red Delete button at the top right of the class list. A confirmation window will pop up asking you to confirm that you want to delete the class.
- 3) Press OK to delete the class. You will not be able to delete a class if students of that class are currently logged in.

Class Profile Settings

To manage settings for an individual class, select the desired class from the class list on the left-hand side of the screen.

Click the Edit button. From this window, the class name, grade level, theme, menu numbering, and mastery level can be changed.

The Numbered Menus option controls whether numbers will appear in front of the unit and activity names throughout the programs. This can be useful for students with reading difficulties. This is a cosmetic option and does not affect any other aspect of the programs.

The Mastery Level setting determines what percentage a student must achieve for an activity to earn a gold star (to master it). The default Mastery Level is 80%.

The Favorite Program section is used to select which programs the students in the classroom will see when they log in. The students will only see the programs that have been selected. If no programs have been selected, then the students will see every program that are in the subscription.

Creating New Students

- 1) Select the class to add a student to by clicking on its name.
- 2) Click on the green “Add Student(s)” button.
- 3) Type the student’s display name, username and password in the corresponding text boxes.
- 4) Click on the Add to Student List button to finalize the student creation and return to the class page.

Creating Multiple New Student

- 1) Select the class to add students to by clicking on its name.
- 2) Click on the green “Add Student(s)” button.
- 3) Click on the yellow “Bulk Add Students” button the right.
- 4) Type the names of the students in the text box on the left. Press enter after each student name to add another.
- 5) The middle section is used to select what the student’s usernames will be. There are options to choose Full Names, First Names, Last Names or First Name plus the first letter of the last name.
- 6) The right section is used to choose how passwords are generated for the student. Generated passwords with letter and/or numbers, one single password for all students being added, or leave the passwords blank with None.
- 7) Click on the green Verify button at the bottom so the dashboard can check for any issues that might arise (i.e. conflicting names, usernames, or passwords).
- 8) If everything is highlighted in green, click on the Create Students button to finalize the process. If there are errors, they will be highlighted in red. Click on the Retry button to return to the previous menu.

Importing Students from A CSV File

CSV - stands for comma-separated values. CSV files store data (numbers and text) in plain text. Each line of the file is a data record. Each record consists of one or more fields, separated by commas.

CSV files can be opened and edited using any spreadsheet editing software (i.e. Excel). It is important when creating a CSV file to not include commas as these are used to separate the values.

- 1) In the Classes section, click the New Class button.
- 2) Click the Import Class/Students from CSV File Button.
- 3) Click on Choose Files and select the CSV file you wish to import from.
- 4) Choose from one of the 4 options. (You may need to edit your CSV file so that it is compatible.) Make sure that the Class Names, Student Names (and optionally the Usernames and Passwords) are highlighted with the correct color in the example table you are shown.
- 5) Make sure the class and student names match up using the coloring system. Below is an example of how the classes are meant to be highlighted.

ODSS Feedback Help Logout Admin

Home Reports Assignments **Classes** Subscriptions Database Account

Classes / Create Class / Import

Importing Classes and students from a CSV file: Cancel

Step 2)
The first 5 rows and columns of your file is displayed in the table below. Please check for any mistakes before continuing. **Make sure you see the data starting on the first row.**
Select the option that shows how your file is formatted using the color codes below.

Row Options
* Option 1 Option 2

Column Options
Option 3 Option 4

☐ Class Name ☐ Student Name ☐ Username ☐ Password

Mr. Blonder	John Simons	Asron Nguyen	Kylie Hart	Sam Miller
Mr. Brown	Doug Hamm	Anty Andrews	Mike Sanchez	Tim Samson
Mr. Jones	Christi Lee	Michael Harp	Daniel Chan	Will Henderson

Back Choose

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Deleting Students

- 1) Select the class you wish to remove a student from by clicking on its name.
- 2) Click on the student's name to highlight it. More than one student can be selected.
- 3) Click on the red Delete button. A prompt will appear to confirm the deletion.
- 4) Press the OK button.

Note: Deleting a student will also delete any work completed by the student.

Renaming Student

- 1) To rename a student, first select the student from the list on the left-hand side of the screen. Then click on the purple Rename button in the middle of the screen. This brings up a yellow highlighted panel on the right-hand side of the screen, with the selected student's name in a field. You can rename the student in this field. When you are finished, click the green Ok button at the bottom of the screen to save your changes.

Moving Students

- 1) Select the class you wish to move a student from by clicking on the class name.
- 2) Click on the student's name to highlight it. More than one student can be selected.
- 3) Click on the blue Move button.
- 4) Select the class to move the selected student(s) to, then click Choose.

Linking Student Across Classes

Students can be linked across two classes so that more than one teacher can view the student's progress. The student will only be able to log in under their original class.

Once a student is linked, their name will be displayed with the class they are linked from. (i.e. LinkedClassName: StudentName)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Subscriptions section displays a list of your current programs, their expiration dates and the number of licensed users for each program or bundle. The total number of classes and students is displayed in the top right corner of the page.

Clicking on the name of the programs will display Scope and Sequence documents that detail the activities within the programs and the targeted skills they are associated with.

DATABASE

The Database section allows the administrator to reset the online database for their account. This will remove all the classes, students and marks that have been recorded. This feature is useful when starting a new school year.

ACCOUNT

UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

The Account section is where Administrator's name, email address and phone number can be updated.

UPDATE ACCOUNT LOGIN CREDENTIALS

The School Password is used for student login using a list instead of prompting for usernames.

UPDATE ADDRESS INFORMATION

The account address information can also be updated in this section.

SUPPORT

Please contact us should you have any questions or concerns. Support is free and unlimited for the duration of your subscription.

You can reach support by email at support@essentialskills.com.

Toll-free phone number is 1-800-753-3727.

Our offices are open Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm EST.

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