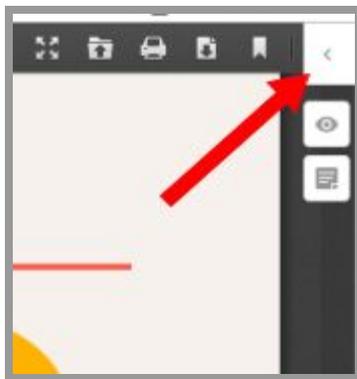# First, How to Give Feedback via Hypothesis

hypothes.is is an open-source, public annotation tool that allows you to select text and add private highlights or annotations that you can share or keep private. See this example.

To Get Started

1. View the Connected Learning Guide online via Hypothesis with this link (note: you may already be there): https://via.hypothes.is/https://resources.chicagolx.org/clguide/connectedlearningguide-clx-community-feedback-draft-2-21-19.pdf

2. Expand the sidebar by clicking here

3. Sign in or register here

4. Then highlight text and annotate (public) or highlight (private).

**5.** Need more? See this Quick Start Guide for Teachers.

Connected Learning Guide

Quick Reference for Practitioners—CLX Community Feedback DRAFT

Why Connected Learning?

Connected learning is a research-based description of the types of experiences that lead to deeper engagement among youth. Engagement matters because it is the key sign of a person's own motivation to learn. Connected learning stresses the importance of meeting youth where they are, connecting them to opportunity, and providing supportive relationships. It has been demonstrated to engage young people in learning regardless of their social or economic backgrounds.

Research has shown the importance of igniting the interest-driven motivations of young people to learn. In a five-year study, connected learning was a pronounced factor in improvements in student educational attitudes, attitudes towards persistence, and openness to iteration. See this review of literature to learn more. Among the many benefits of this approach is its potential to help narrow *learning equity gaps* in awareness, access, attendance, engagement, learning pathways, opportunity. These gaps represent barriers in the learning ecosystem rather than deficits of learners themselves. Working together, we can reduce these learning equity gaps.
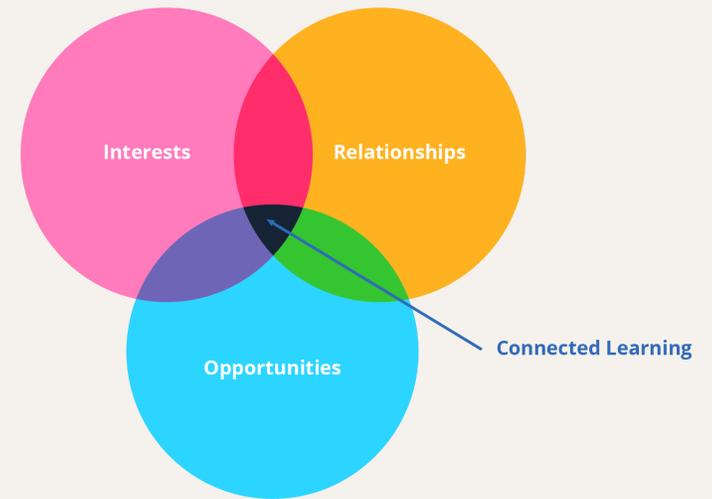
Purpose and Audience for This Guide

Because connected learning is focused on the learner and the conditions that lead to youth engagement, it does not necessarily instruct educators on how to create those connected learning experiences themselves. This guide is intended to provide in-school and out-of-school practitioners with guidelines and examples for how to design, implement, and reflect on the connected learning experiences they create. Organized around the three spheres of the connected learning—interests, relationships, and opportunities—the guide will be useful for those new to connected learning as well as those with some introductory familiarity who wish to delve deeper. For each of the three connected learning spheres it includes:

- **Design guidelines** for planning of connected learning experiences;
- **Implementation guidelines** for executing the programs you have designed; and
- **Reflection guidelines** for evaluation and growth as you continually design and redesign your programs.

I. Interests

Learner interests are the source of their motivation to learn and can be discovered, explored, and extended.

DESIGN
❖ Interests are what youth care about and want to get better at. Consider them to be the spark that can ignite a young person's own goal-oriented motivation to learn. As you plan, note that interests are also those things that are *in the interest* of youth and their community, like positive social causes. In this sense, learners' interests can be tapped to align a learner's passions with their purpose. ❖ Start with "Why?" as you design your learning experiences. Be clear in your planning about why learners should care and what the hooks and engaging questions are that will connect to an existing passion they have or awaken a new interest. See *Understanding By Design*. ❖ User-centered design can keep the focus on the learner. Consider IDEO's https://designthinkingforeducators.com/ or Stanford's K12 Lab. ❖ Whenever possible, co-develop learning goals with youth participants or engage youth in peer assessments. Host youth focus groups to invite early input into the planning and design phases of program development.

IMPLEMENT		
Connected Learning Approach	What This Might Look Like	Resources
→ *Encourage Curiosity and Exploration of New Interests*		
❖ Stay curious about what your students are interested in and be willing to learn with them. ❖ Connect learners to experiences to deepen current interests and to discover new ones. (Also see "Broker Opportunities" under Opportunities below.) ❖ Provide challenges to enable youth to "level up" to greater complexity	❖ Take active initiative to learn about and support diverse student interests to better understand youth priorities, values, and interests without pandering to trends in youth popular culture. ❖ Make a conscious effort to connect youth to other organizations that might help youth go deeper into an interest they have. Consider your own social networks. How can you activate your networks in service of your youth? ❖ Within an organization or school, progressive complexity can be supported by creating a learning pathway or "course sequence" or offering internships, peer mentoring, or stipended youth council positions.	❖ One way to give youth a chance to try new things is by engaging them in project-based, production-centered learning (PBL). To ensure that PBL assignments do not take on a prescribed, recipe-style approach with predetermined outputs, consider: ➤ Buck Institute for Educations PBL resources: http://www.bie.org/resources ➤ Edutopia's *5 Keys to Rigorous Project-Based Learning* ❖ Challenge-based learning experiences can be particularly powerful with clear pathways from beginner to more advanced levels. More than merely "gamifying" your offerings, leveled challenges clarify pathways to greater competency, especially when learners can progress at their own level. See for example FUSE Studios challenges.
→ *Be Led By Learners*		

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- ❖ Maintain flexible processes and be willing to change direction if you see that participants are becoming disengaged.

- ❖ Demonstrate respect for youth perspectives about what's important.

- ❖ Employ activities that genuinely have no right answer. Activities in making (e.g. a story, a photo, or lyric inspired by the topic) can allow youth to express themselves in the creation of an artifact.

- ❖ Establishing a youth council and incorporating their input in programmatic and strategic decisions shows a commitment to youth input. Actively look for places to compromise and explain the decisions you make when they differ from youth input.

- ❖ Challenges like those on DiscoverDesign.org--like redesigning your locker--are helpful examples of tasks that have no right answer.

- ❖ See LEAP Innovation's Learner-Led framework, particularly for those implementing personalized learning approaches in formal education spaces.

→ Use Technology for Creative Production and Expression

- ❖ Maintain a mix of high-tech and low-tech approaches, selecting the appropriate tool for the desired practice and for the skill level of the learners.

- ❖ Encourage and guide exploration of interests via online collaboration, sharing, and showcasing. (See Relationships below for positive norms.)
- ❖ Leverage technology to help amplify and disseminate youth voice.

- ❖ To avoid digital tools becoming barriers to entry, architecture interns who have never used 3D modeling software can start with pencil and paper sketches to invite creativity. Then, with a solid concept in mind, they can learn the tool to bring their concept to life.
- ❖ Create ways to work separately together – leveraging digital technologies to create projects that can be worked on in person and online simultaneously.

- ❖ Youth value authentic audiences for their creative production. Online technologies can enable low-barrier ways to produce and sharing original outputs, such as graphic designs, audio tracks, written words, multimedia art, or live-streamed performances.

- ❖ Digital tools can provide opportunities to produce experimental and active ways these free, open-source tools from Mozilla for experimentation with web content.

- ❖ Mozilla's Web Literacy Map contains guidelines and activities for online participation.

- ❖ To ensure higher-level uses of technology for creative production, not just consumption, consider the SAMR model. Learn from organizations like the Chicago Youth Voices Network (http://www.chiyouthvoices.net/) who are expert at using digital media as way to encourage the unique voices of youth.

REFLECT

- ❖ Promote youth voice with tools that enable feedback and self-reflection. Be willing to redesign programs based on youth feedback. Learn about what other interests youth participants have and consider how to redesign programs to engage those interests in order to create more entry points for future learners.
- ❖ Encouraging youth reflection can support development of growth mindsets. Students often associate "dislike" with things that are challenging. Through reflection, you can associate challenges with opportunities to learn from rather than be defined by challenges. It can be useful to restate that learning means you don't already know how to do something. Trying and failing means you're learning.
- ❖ These statements are good indicators that youth are having a connected learning experience. Ideally, youth in the programs you hold would agree with the following statements:
  - ➢ I am going to explore a new interest based on things I learned.
  - ➢ I learned things that will help me go deeper into an interest I already have.
  - ➢ I learned things that made me more interested in continuing my education past high school than I was before.
  - ➢ At this programs it is cool to be excited about your interests.

II. Relationships

Build supportive relationships with peers and adults.

DESIGN

❖ Create community or program guidelines that set expectations for your space. These might include ways to be kind, inclusive, constructive, and welcoming. See below for how to evolve these guidelines in order to develop shared purpose.
❖ Be prepared to connect youth to the appropriate social service professionals for issues where their mental or physical safety is at risk, and provide confidential ways to reach out to support from caring adults. Among the many channels for teens to receive confidential support are SMS-based hotlines for seeking support. See for example https://www.crisistextline.org/ or text HOME to 741741 in the US.
❖ When planning to use social media for building collaborative working relationships, consider Clay Shirky's simple *Promise, Tool, Bargain* framework described in chapter 11 of *Here Comes Everybody*. See this post's description of that framework.
   ➤ Promise: what promise is offered by the kind of engagement you're asking the group to have?
   ➤ Tool: what tools will be used to realize the promise of that kind of engagement?
   ➤ Bargain: what mutual expectations and agreements support the use of those tools to achieve that promise?

IMPLEMENT		
Connected Learning Approach	**What This Might Look Like**	**Resources**
→ *Cultivate Peer Relationships*		
❖ Support peer-to-peer sharing of expertise. ❖ Nurture ongoing, fluid partnering and collaboration in person and online. ❖ Affirm the role of adult mentors to help youth value learning together, and support these adults with their own peer professional learning.	❖ Encourage collaboration based on shared interests and skills instead of established social circles. When receiving a participant's request for help, give their peers a chance to volunteer their own knowledge and expertise. ❖ When assigning group projects or friendly competitions, provide tools and guidance for online collaboration where youth can share code, art, music, or writing. ❖ Talking openly about the things that you geek out is one way to cultivate trust and build a relationship. Dedicating time to learn from your adult colleagues can model the importance of peer-to-peer learning.	❖ Social media has become a powerful tool for supporting social connection. Google's Be Internet Awesome / Sé genial en Internet is a multilingual campaign for establishing positive norms for online interactions. ❖ Openly networked tools and platforms support collaborative development of goals and outputs with shared purpose. Consider tools that allow real-time collaboration, such as Google's G Suite for Education. ❖ Peer professional learning communities can support connected learning adoption. CLX's learning community in Chicago and the National Writing Project's online professional journal, *The Current*, are examples.
→ *Create Safe Space Supported by Caring Adults*		
❖ Model empathy and listening with respect with candid, but	❖ Treating youth with respect, giving them space to express their emotions without	❖ Use the Youth Program Quality Assessment (PQA) to assess the safety and supportiveness of

age-appropriate discussions with youth about their life experiences.

❖ Create clear pathways and roles for participation while maintaining flexibility.

❖ Set the inclusive expectation that everyone is welcome to participate, especially marginalized youth.

judgment, and really listening to them are the practices identified in research as most likely to help them feel safe and supported.

❖ Enable multiple ways to contribute, yet be willing to let youth observe while they get more comfortable. Balancing the tension between wanting a young person to participate and wanting to give them space to join in is challenging but can build trust.

❖ Ask youth what they need from you to feel more comfortable and be willing to make those changes. It's easier to broker an entry point for them if you know what they like and how they learn best.

your program environment (see sample assessment items here).

❖ ← [Suggestions welcome for related resources.]

❖ ← [Suggestions welcome for a resource on inclusive practices helping educators find ways to demonstrate the value that each participant brings to your program.]

→ Work Openly and with Shared Purpose

❖ Cultivate inclusive networks of youth and adults who love what they do and enable them to learn from and share with others.

❖ Create opportunities for youth to see how their passions relate to shared issues, enabling meaningful contribution to real communities.

❖ Allow shared purpose to develop over time rather than assuming it from the outset. Support its development by revisiting and upholding clearly articulated values.

❖ Online communities are important parts of openly networked infrastructures, even if accessible only to the participants in your program. Allow sharing externally (e.g. the posting of digital badges to LinkedIn).

❖ An end-of-program showcase can be held for an authentic audience of friends, family, policy makers, and the community, inspiring lifelong civic engagement.

❖ When cultivating shared purpose it can be helpful to have a collaborative project or event to encourage learners to work toward a shared goal, like in producing a zine, allowing them to set and revise group norms.

❖ The internet is a powerful tool for working in the open. Knowing how to read, write, and participate online– web literacy–is an important part of digital literacy. See Mozilla's Web Literacy Map aligned to 21st C skills.

❖ ← [Suggestions welcome for related resources.]

❖ ← [Suggestions welcome for related resources.]

REFLECT

❖ Create time for learners to reflect on their experiences, especially around collaborative activities. Model self-reflection and how to identify what you would do differently next time as an educator and as a learner.

❖ Acknowledge and reflect on the power dynamic adults have for dictating what's right and wrong. Provide a supportive space for adults to reflect on their encounters with youth.

❖ These statements are good indicators that youth are having a connected learning experience. Ideally, youth in the programs you hold would agree with the following statements:
  ➢ I know how to accept meaningful critique from others.
  ➢ I know how to meaningfully critique other people's work.
  ➢ I learned a lot from the adults at this program.
  ➢ I learned a lot from other youth.
  ➢ Adults at this program made sure everyone had a chance to participate and contribute.
  ➢ I worked with other youth to create something.
  ➢ I feel safe in this space.

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III. Opportunity

Connect to future opportunities with academic, civic, or career payoffs.

DESIGN
❖ Connecting youth to future learning experiences is important because it can deepen expand existing interests (see Interests above). But connecting them to actual *opportunity* goes a step further by intentionally planning how your program can lead to payoff of tangible value or currency in academics, civic life, or careers. ❖ While planning your program, do some legwork to discover other community resources, including organizations who offer similar but perhaps more advanced learning experiences, local colleges who award credit for out-of-school learning, or employers who offer youth internship opportunities.

IMPLEMENT		
Connected Learning Approach	**What This Might Look Like**	**Resources**
→ *Translate Learned Skills*		
❖ Visibly name the skills youth are learning, taking time to make the skills being learned completely transparent to learners. ❖ Help youth discover which of their skills and interests might connect to related academic or career paths ❖ Enable young people to learn from your unique skills, interests, and professional path.	❖ Often youth don't have the language they need to translate what they have learned into other settings. Give them the language they could use on a resume or when talking about their skills with others. ❖ If a young person is particularly taken by a topic or skill, invite in professionals or plan job shadow days to illuminate how their interest might translate into a potential academic and/or career pathway. ❖ Be transparent about your own career journey, struggles, and successes. Be sure to unpack the ways in which your privilege might have reduced barriers for you.	❖ To help learners reflect on the skills they've learned, equip them with skill-related words like this list of action verbs from Michigan State University, organized in helpful categories ❖ ← [Suggestions welcome for related resources.] ❖ ← [Suggestions welcome for related resources.]
→ *Broaden Contexts for Learning*		

❖ Illuminate learning pathways that connect current activities to the next learning experience, whether within your organization or beyond.	❖ Within your organization, digital badges can enable recognition of individual skills. They can also be used to communicate a connected pathway of learning experiences.	❖ Consider these LRNG playlists as examples of learning pathways:
		  ➢ Be Payday Ready
		  ➢ FSM Industry Pathways- Film and TV Career Exploration

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❖ Foster civic awareness, dialogue, and participation as a context for learning. ❖ Coordinate learning experiences across settings, dedicating time to partnership development.	❖ Support youth civic engagement through online communities and digital activism, helping youth use their voices to effect issues they care about. ❖ Service learning or independent study projects are one way to allow youth to earn in-school credit for self-directed learning happening out of school or in the workplace.	❖ ← [Suggestions welcome for related resources.] ❖ Here are resources for professional networking / collaboration (http://partnerships.hivechicago.org/).

→ *Broker Opportunities for Civic, Academic, and Career Payoffs*

❖ Equip youth to make their progress and achievements visible across settings ❖ Equip educators and mentors to broker connections to new opportunities. ❖ Be intentional in connecting teens to these opportunities and encouraging them to pursue them.	❖ Schools and colleges can award academic credit for out-of-school program participation and learning portfolio. Digital badges can support this kind of cross-sector recognition of skills. ❖ Foster collaboration among educators, organizations and parents/guardians to better connect youth to existing opportunities. ❖ Cultivating relationships and warm handoffs to other youth-serving professionals in interest areas beyond your program or expertise. You might also consider inviting an educator from the other organization to co-lead a session with you or come to meet your participants as a way to help them feel more comfortable trying a new learning experience.	❖ Digital badges are micro-credentials that contain data about the specific skills gained when earning the badge. Explore this growing list of badge issuers. ❖ In Chicago, the Chicago City of Learning's online platform provides access to a variety of youth programs around the city. See https://chicagocityoflearning.org/ ❖ CLX's innovation grants and other incentives for organizational collaboration provide tangible opportunities for developing cross-org learning pathways for youth. See more at https://chicagolx.org/work/grantmaking ❖ Event's like Remake Learning Days Chi make visible the city's abundant learning resources while making them more accessible. See https://remakelearningdays.org/chi/

REFLECT

❖ Successfully connecting to opportunities often involves challenges for learners and educators alike. We encourage including those struggles in the reflection process for youth and adults.

❖ Pre- and post- surveys can help you assess whether youth can identify the skills developed in your program or course. Feedback and self-reflection can be supported with free online tools like mentimeter.com for real-time, anonymous feedback.

❖ These statements are good indicators that youth are having a connected learning experience. Ideally, youth in the programs you hold would agree with the following statements:
  ➢ I learned things that I could use in a job one day.
  ➢ I learned things that will help me with school.
  ➢ I learned things that I could use in college one day, if I go.
  ➢ I understand how the activities we did here can be used in other parts of my life.
  ➢ I learned things that made me more interested in continuing my education past high school than I was before.
  ➢ I discovered a new potential self or career pathway through this experience.
  ➢ Adults at this program helped me understand how the activities we did here can be used in other parts of my life.

Connected Learning Resources

This is an collection of links to research referenced in the creation of this guide. A more complete bibliography is forthcoming.

- ❖ https://chicagolx.org/resources/clx-review-of-literature-research-foundations-for-the-chicago-learning-exchange
- ❖ https://dmlhub.net/wp-content/uploads/files/Connected_Learning_report.pdf
- ❖ https://clalliance.org/blog/connected-learning-connected-teaching-necessary-step-forward/
- ❖ Safe Space, Shared Interest: https://dmlhub.net/wp-content/uploads/files/SAFE-SPACE-final-with-addenda.pdf
- ❖ Program Quality Assessments (PQA)
- ❖ https://dmlhub.net/publications/good-intentions-real-outcomes-equity-design-learning-technologies/ /
- ❖ Educator Innovator (https://educatorinnovator.org/) and its open journal, *The Current* (https://thecurrent.educatorinnovator.org/). For example:
  - ➢ Transitioning from Conventional to Connected Teaching, a collection at The Current by Nicole Mirra: https://thecurrent.educatorinnovator.org/collection/transitioning-from-conventional-to-connected-teaching-small-moves-and-radical-acts
  - ➢ Sharing Connected Learning from Pittsburgh, a collection at The Current by Patricia Monticello Klievan from The Sprout Fund: https://thecurrent.educatorinnovator.org/collection/sharing-connected-learning-from-pittsburgh
  - ➢ (Forthcoming collection re: Interest-Driven CL Design - currently individual posts can be found on this topic)
  - ➢ https://clalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/teaching-in-the-CL-classroom.pdf
- ❖ https://ypp.dmlcentral.net/sites/default/files/publications/From%20Voice%20to%20Influence%3A%20An%20Introduction%20%7C%20Journal%20of%20Digital%20and%20Media%20Literacy.pdf

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This *CLX Community Feedback DRAFT* is being distributed to the CLX community for comment and feedback. To explore and join our community, visit https://chicagolx.org/community. To offer your feedback on this guide, join one of our upcoming events to give feedback in person, or provide feedback online here: https://clx.fyi/ConnectedLearningGuide.

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We wish to thank the many talented professionals whose input continues to inform the ongoing development of this public resource.

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