Skylar’s Run Trainer Training Guide

The Skylar’s Run Trainer Training Guide is your comprehensive resource for leading effective gameplay sessions in educational settings. It includes detailed instructions for setting up the play area, game mechanics, and conducting each session. As trainers, your role is pivotal in supporting players through the game without being overtly encouraging or acting as a therapist which could confound the effect of Skylar’s Run. This cognitive training, detailed athttps://thynk.com/research, focuses on enhancing attention, control, self-regulation, and a broad set of cognitive skills, using gameplay that integrates an AV headset for real-time feedback. Remember, Skylar's Run is a cognitive skill development tool, not a mental health treatment. After you have reviewed this guide, an in-person review with an Engagement Specialist is recommended to address any uncertainties and deepen your understanding, ensuring you’re fully prepared to guide players through their cognitive skill development journey with Skylar’s Run.

THYNK’s AV Headset

The THYNK AV headset is designed with three sensors on the forehead and one on the right mastoid behind the ear, enabling children to control the game through attention levels. It offers real-time attention measurement without the need for gel, but requires direct skin contact, meaning hair under the sensors must be cleared for it to work effectively. Proper fitting is crucial, and a fitting video is recommended for guidance. Please review here:

Headset Fitting Video.

Headset Fitting Procedure

To ensure proper headset fitting for "Skylar’s Run," follow this procedure:

1. Use alcohol prep pads to clean the player’s forehead and right mastoid area behind the ear.
2. Apply saline to sensors to enhance conductivity: two drops on each forehead sensor and 4-5 drops on the mastoid sensor.
3. Adjust the headset’s velcro strap for a snug fit, ensuring no hair interferes with sensor contact.
4. Position the mastoid sensor flush against the skin behind the ear, sliding it forward for optimal contact.
5. Align forehead sensors just below the hairline, maintaining the mastoid sensor's position.
6. Go back to the strap and secure it comfortably, adjusting its position based on the individual's head shape.
7. Re-adjust if there's undue pressure on the ear to avoid discomfort.
8. Document the fitting with a photo for reference, adjusting the mastoid sensor's height as needed for a correct fit.
9. If Mastoid is too high, lower Mastoid by placing headband at bottom of head - Keep sensors in front at top of forehead[



Headset Care and Storage

It is best practice for students to use the same headset every time they play Skylar's Run. Students should record their headset ID # (located on the mastoid bone sensor on their headset) and their username and password in an easy to find location. You can also utilize a document like the following that students can keep in their notebooks or taped to their desks:



Skylar's Run

THYNK
thynk.com

Quick Start Guide for Teachers & Students

Step 1: Charge your Headset and Connect your iPad to Wi-Fi

- Make sure to use a fully charged headset - the light on the headset should turn green!
- Ensure the iPad is connected to your Wi-Fi network.

Step 2: Put on Your Headset Once it is Charged

- Using a piece of blotting paper, blot the skin on your forehead and on the mastoid bone behind your right ear with a piece of blotting paper.
- Unplug the headset from the charger. Place the headset on as modeled during your orientation meeting and adjust as needed. All four sensors should be in contact with your skin.
- If you have any connection issues, add a few drops of saline to each sensor.

Step 3: Play the Game! Train your Brain!

- On your iPad, launch the Skylar's Run app.
- Input your username and password:
  - Username: _____
  - Password: _____
- Select your headset ID when it appears on screen.
- Begin playing Skylar's Run!

Questions?
Email support@thynk.com

Access this document here.

Headset best practices include:

1. Always keep the device charged
2. Ensure direct contact between the sensors of the headset and skin.
    a. The sensor must sit flush against your skin. Before putting the headset on, sweep all hair back — no hair should be tucked under the sensor or blocking any of the sensor pads
3. Boost connectivity with water! Dab the sensor pad with a small amount of water to lightly moisten it. This creates a moisture bridge for a faster, more stable signal read.

This classroom poster outlines these tips for students to reference as needed.



Access this poster here.

Skylar’s Run Overview

"Skylar’s Run" features a detailed program with 15 missions tailored to enhance executive function and cognitive skills, adapting to each player’s skill level. It focuses on developing attention, impulse control, and self-regulation through gameplay designed to progress in difficulty, ensuring foundational skills are established before advancing.

Runner

In "Skylar’s Run," beyond the first mission, each of the 15 missions is composed of a Runner and Fog Analysis module, demanding success in both for progression. During the Runner, the player directs Skylar, whose speed is influenced by the player's focus level, through a course filled with obstacles and tasks. Skylar's speed, displayed on the BCI meter, adjusts from 0 to 100 based on the player's concentration.

Each mission adjusts difficulty based on the player’s skill level during that session. The player is expected to need to replay missions in order to improve on each skill enough to move to the next level.

In order to pass a runner module, a player must get at least 1 star. The **power meter** on the left hand side of the runner screen shows you how close you are to getting 1, 2, or 3 stars (see picture below). The ability to get a star is either determined by Skylar’s speed or the ability to tap only the bots that match the **target scanner** at the top of the screen (see more details in the Mission Overview table below).

The player has 3 attempts/chances to pass the Runner module. After 3 attempts, the game will automatically move the player onto the Fog Analysis. In order for it to count as an attempt, *the player must get to the end of the runner, regardless if they pass or not*.



Fog Analysis

After completing the Runner, players proceed to Fog Analysis, where they apply skills in a new setting, symbolizing the practical application of learned abilities to new environments. This segment, requiring around 6 minutes, involves matching target molecules in a petri dish, challenging players to utilize attention and focus. Success in the Fog Analysis reinforces the transfer of in-game skills to real-life scenarios, emphasizing the importance of concentration and cognitive skills in various contexts.

During the Fog Analysis, players are presented with a petri dish on the center of their screen and three ‘target molecules’ on the left side of the screen. As molecules of different shapes and colors appear within the petri dish during ‘Freezing Mode’, players must quickly select only those that match the target molecules. They will see brackets appear around only the selected molecules. Once they’ve selected all correct molecules, they will need to wait patiently until the game switches to ‘Decoding Mode’. During this mode, the child must decode the molecules by focusing on the dish until all of the molecules fill up. Molecules will only fill up if they maintain a focus score above the threshold which appears on the bottom of the screen.

A player has 3 attempts/chances to pass the Fog Analysis module. After 3 attempts, the game will automatically move the player on and consider the Mission to be completed. In order for it to count as an attempt, *the player must get to the end of the Fog Analysis, regardless if they pass or not*. Watch this video for more information: **Fog Analysis Video**

Mission 1

Mission 1 of "Skylar’s Run" features 2 unique modules: The Calabrus for facial movement analysis to filter out AV Headset “noise” unrelated to attention, and the Vigilock, a 10-minute focus task requiring quick reactions to light flashes on the screen. It's crucial players don’t adjust their headsets during these tasks to avoid starting

over.

If the player gets a notification like the screenshot below because they either tapped the screen too many times before the light appeared or they missed the light too many times, they will have to attempt the Vigilock again. They will also have to re-attempt it if they move their headset. In this scenario, the player will then have to resituate the headset in order to re-attempt the Vigilock.

The Vigilock will automatically open ***after two attempts of the Vigilock (regardless of if the player gets to the end of the 10 minutes).*** In order for it to count as an attempt, the player must be playing for at least 3 minutes (the clock starts after the first tap on the Vigilock). If after 3 minutes after their first tap, they move their headset (and thus have to restart the Vigilock), this counts as a full attempt. Alternatively, if after 3 minutes after their first tap, they then proceed to miss the light too many times and thus they encounter the screenshot below, this would count as a second attempt. After these two attempts, the Vigilock would automatically open and the 12 hour timer would start for mission 2. If on the second attempt, the player moves their headset after the 3 minute mark, the Vigilock will open ***after they put their headset properly back on and press continue.***



During every other mission in the game, they will NOT have to start over if they pause or move their headset during the Runner or Fog Analysis.

Mission Overview

Below is a table that every trainer should become very familiar with. It outlines what occurs during each Mission's Runner and Fog Analysis. It also describes the difficulty level and how you can support the player as they complete the mission. Missions are organized by levels (3 missions per level). This is important to know because all 3 Missions in a level are identical besides the environment and difficulty level. For example, missions 7-9 (level 3) all target selective attention but missions vary by environment and difficulty level (i.e., mission 9 is the hardest mission in level 3.

Mission	Level	Runner Actions	Environment	Difficulty	Fog Analysis Actions	Player Support
1	1	Focus on getting Skylar to run in order to pass (get at least 1 star), no bots	Jungle	Low	Select all molecules to freeze them, focus to decode them	Remind the player that they only have to complete the Calabrus and Vigilock once. The Vigilock takes 10 minutes. Remind them of the time only if they are struggling. These can be boring but they are really important for making sure you feel connected to Skylar and can actually control him using your mind! In this mission, the player will get a sneak peak in to how to control Skylar using their mind. Make sure the player does not move the headset or take their headset off during the Calabrus or the Vigilock or else they will have to start over
2	1	Same as mission 1, continue to focus on getting Skylar to run, no bots	Desert	Medium	Select all molecules to freeze them, focus to decode them	Just focus on getting Skylar to run. Ignore the distractions on the side of the road. Maintaining Skylar's speed is more important than getting crystals.
3	1	Same as mission 1, continue to focus on getting Skylar to run, no bots	Desert	High	Select all molecules to freeze them, focus to decode them	Just focus on getting Skylar to run. Ignore the distractions on the side of the road. Maintaining Skylar's speed is more important than getting crystals.
4	2	Bots appear one at a time. Passing (getting at least 1 star), is determined by your ability to tap only the smogbots that match the smogbot scanner rule at the top of the screen (i.e., same shape, symbol, and color). While maintaining Skylar's speed is important so that you can finish the runner in a timely manner, Skylar's speed no longer determines if you pass or not.	City	Low	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	Getting Skylar to run fast is not the thing that will make you pass. Tapping only the bots that match the target scanner at the top of the screen is what will lead you to pass the runner.

5	2	Bots appear one at a time. Passing (getting at least 1 star), is determined by your ability to tap only the smogbots that match the smogbot scanner rule at the top of the screen (i.e., same shape, symbol, and color). While maintaining Skylar's speed is important so that you can finish the runner in a timely manner, Skylar's speed no longer determines if you pass or not.	Jungle	Medium	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	
6	2	Bots appear one at a time. Passing (getting at least 1 star), is determined by your ability to tap only the smogbots that match the smogbot scanner rule at the top of the screen (i.e., same shape, symbol, and color). While maintaining Skylar's speed is important so that you can finish the runner in a timely manner, Skylar's speed no longer determines if you pass or not.	City	High	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	
7	3	Smogbots appear in groups. Only 1 of the smogbots in the group will ever be the correct one to tap. Passing is determined by your ability to tap the bot in a group and ignore the rest. While maintaining Skylar's speed is important so that you can finish the runner in a timely manner, Skylar's speed does not determine if you pass or not.	Desert	Low	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	Get ready for this mission to be a bit harder than the previous ones. Take a deep breath. You got this! Bots are going to appear in groups. Continue to look at the target scanner in order to know which bots to tap.
8	3	Smogbots appear in groups. Only 1 of the smogbots in the group will ever be the correct one to tap. Passing is determined by your ability to tap the bot in a group and ignore the rest. While maintaining Skylar's	Jungle	Medium	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	This is the second time you will see bot in groups. Continue to take a deep breath before tapping a bot.

		speed is important so that you can finish the runner in a timely manner, Skylar's speed does not determine if you pass or not.				
9	3	Smogbots appear in groups. Only 1 of the smogbots in the group will ever be the correct one to tap. Passing is determined by your ability to tap the bot in a group and ignore the rest. While maintaining Skylar's speed is important so that you can finish the runner in a timely manner, Skylar's speed does not determine if you pass or not.	Desert	High	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	This is your last mission where bots appear in groups. The next time you will see bots in groups is mission 15 (so you have a break!) This is the hardest mission in the training. After this mission, bots go back to appearing one at a time. For this reason, mission 10 is actually easier than mission 9!
10	4	Smogbots no longer appear in groups. In order to pass, tap the smogbots that match the color OR shape of the smogbot scanner. Rules in the target scanner change very quickly. While maintaining Skylar's speed is important so that you can finish the runner in a timely manner, Skylar's speed does not determine if you pass or not.	Jungle	Low	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	This mission is a bit easier than mission 9 because bots appear one at a time again. Remember to only focus on the shape or the color, not both.
11	4	Focus on getting Skylar to run, smogbots no longer appear in groups, tap the smogbots that match the color OR shape of the smogbot scanner. Rules in the target scanner change very quickly.	Desert	Medium	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	
12	4	Focus on getting Skylar to run, smogbots no longer appear in groups, tap the smogbots that match the color OR shape of the smogbot scanner. Rules in the target scanner change very quickly.	Jungle	High	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	

13	5	Very similar to missions 4-6 except new or "novel" distractors will appear in and around the path. The goal is to not lose sight of the path as exciting new animals and creatures pop up around them!	City	High	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	
14	5	Very similar to missions 7-9 except new or "novel" distractors will appear in and around the path. The goal is to not lose sight of the path as exciting new animals and creatures pop up around them!	City	High	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	
15	5	Very similar to missions 10-12 except new or "novel" distractors will appear in and around the path. The goal is to not lose sight of the path as exciting new animals and creatures pop up around them!	City	High	Select only the molecules matching those in the target scanner to freeze them, focus to decode them	

A quick start, mission overview guide is also available here.

Ways in which you can scaffold/support a student's gameplay

The trainer can mention the following to the player, only if they are having trouble starting or continuing playing. If a child is progressing fine on their own, one does not need to say the following.

- If the student is having trouble **sitting down to start a runner or fog analysis** (e.g., they are telling you they do not want to play or they are having trouble sitting still), mention the following:
    - Explain to them what is coming up in the mission and if they are learning a new skill (i.e., it is the first mission in a level). If they are playing another mission in the same level, remind them that they are doing the same thing as yesterday (same runner or fog analysis actions) but that the mission may be a bit more difficult and that it is perfectly normal to not get 1 star on the first attempt and to have to try it again.
    - Remind them that it is *hard* to control the runner using their mind. Taking a deep breath before starting can help!
    - Help them get comfortable in a seated position, ideally at a table with the iPad propped up in front of them, the headset on comfortably, and their head upright (not leaning against anything) with the iPad in front of them.
- If the student is having trouble **during a runner or fog analysis**, mention the following:
    - The most important thing is getting to the end of the Runner or the Fog Analysis. Completing it, regardless of whether they Pass or Fail, should be the primary goal of every attempt. So, even if they can tell halfway through a Runner that they're not going to Pass, they you should still continue all the way to the end of the module.
    - In mission 4-15, it does not matter if Skylar is running slowly. Speed does not help you pass a mission. Tapping the correct bots is what gets you to pass.

    - If they encounter a bot and a crystal at the same time, they should choose a bot over a crystal. Crystals do not count towards getting a star. Only bots do!
    - If they encounter an obstacle and a bot at the same time, they should tap the bot first and **then** clear the obstacle. When they do this, they will get bonked by the obstacle. This is okay because taping the correct bot should is what helps a player to pass a mission. Once they tap the bot, then they can focus on jumping or sliding under the obstacle.
    - Tell them to try not to squint or clench their jaw paying attention to the runner–this will make Skylar run slower.
- After a student passes a runner
    - When a player fails a runner and then passes it on a second or third attempt, emphasize that the skills they built in the first attempt are what helped them pass the second attempt.

Implementing Skylar's Run Brain Training in Classroom Settings

To facilitate the Skylar's Run Brain Training Program effectively in a classroom, ensure a consistent schedule of 2-3 sessions per week. Setting up the right environment involves organizing the physical space, preparing necessary materials, and implementing a system for detailed documentation of each player's progress. Additionally, surveys will be administered to gather insights on the player's experience and learning outcomes throughout the program. This structured approach supports a comprehensive and effective cognitive training experience.

For an effective environment for Skylar's Run Brain Training:

- Ensure a distraction-minimal area.
- Provide comfortable, upright seating at tables.
- Maintain a stable and strong Wi-Fi connection, with login details readily available.
- Use secure storage for equipment, allowing for charging when not in use.

Materials Required

- Headsets (fully charged, using micro-USB cords)
- Devices (fully charged, with cases/stands – include specifications)
- Headphones (plug-in preferable to bluetooth)
- Saline (make sure all bottles are punctured by twisting the cap)
- Alcohol Prep Pads (for wiping down players' foreheads, mastoids)
- Hair ties
- Sharpened Pencils

Procedure/How to conduct a gameplay session

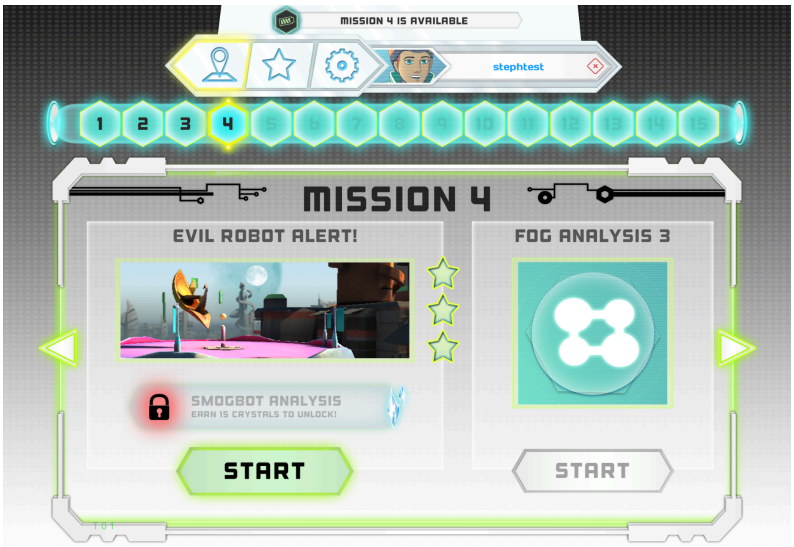
To conduct a gameplay session, focus on progressing through missions chronologically, starting with charging headsets and device. Ensure devices are connected to WiFi, Bluetooth enabled, and the game app is freshly opened. Players should consistently use the same iPad and headset. After completing a mission's Runner and Fog Analysis, ***a 12-hour rest period begins before the next mission unlocks.*** *Keep headsets charged and*

unplugged during gameplay for optimal performance.

Prepare a desk space for each participant, containing:

- Assigned headset
- Assigned device
- Assigned Headphones (if using)
- Skylar's Run Training Log (if utilizing)

When the player logs in to the game, they will be able to see which Mission number they are up to by looking at the visible/selectable numbers in the horizontal list. Unless told otherwise, the player should always Start the latest available Mission module. In the example below, the player should begin the Runner for Mission 4.



General Gameplay Notes:

- It is crucial to get to the end of whatever module (Runner or Fog Analysis) the player is doing in order for the game to count it as an attempt. Ensure that players wait a moment after the module is over to get to the end game (gameplay summary) screen before closing the app. This is an important step in order for the game and Portal to correctly capture gameplay data and accurately account for all completed attempts.
- Quitting the Skylar's Run app entirely (shutting it down on the iPad rather than just 'minimizing' it) should be done whenever a player is done with a gameplay session and as a first step in troubleshooting any apparent bugs.
- If a Runner attempt is completed and passed, the player will automatically be sent on to the Fog Analysis.
- If the Runner is completed and failed, the player will have to attempt again. If the player completes 3 failed attempts, they will automatically be sent on to the Fog Analysis.
- It's important to note that the player is still benefiting from playing the Runner, even if they fail the attempt. In order for a child/player to learn a skill, repeated practice is key. Each time they come back to the Runner, the player can take what they learned in the previous attempt and apply it to the new session.
- If the Fog Analysis is completed and failed, the player will have to attempt again. If the player completes 3 failed attempts of the Fog Analysis, they will be considered to have completed that Mission.

General Facilitation Notes:

It's important that the trainer is mindful of the time remaining as the gameplay session progresses. Ensure that there is enough time remaining before the player begins another module, so that they don't get cut off before they're able to complete the relevant module. ***On average, approximately 15 min is needed to complete a Runner attempt and 6 min is needed to complete a Fog Analysis attempt.***

- The trainer's familiarity with the game, their preparation for sessions and thorough documentation are all key to successful facilitation.

Sample Gameplay Session Sequence:

1. Welcome participants and mark as Present on the attendance sheet.
2. Show each participant to their assigned seat, where their materials should be waiting.
3. Instruct the participant to put their headset on, login, and select the headset they're using from the list within the game.
4. When participants finish playing, please ask them to quit the Skylar's Run app fully.
5. Have students fill out any reflections or trackers you may be utilizing:
    - Skylar's Run Training Log
    - Cohort Tracker
    - Skylar's Run Bingo Board
6. Wipe down headsets and headphones using electronic wipes, wipe down iPad screens using electronic wipes and cases using disinfectant wipes.
7. Plug headsets and iPads into chargers.