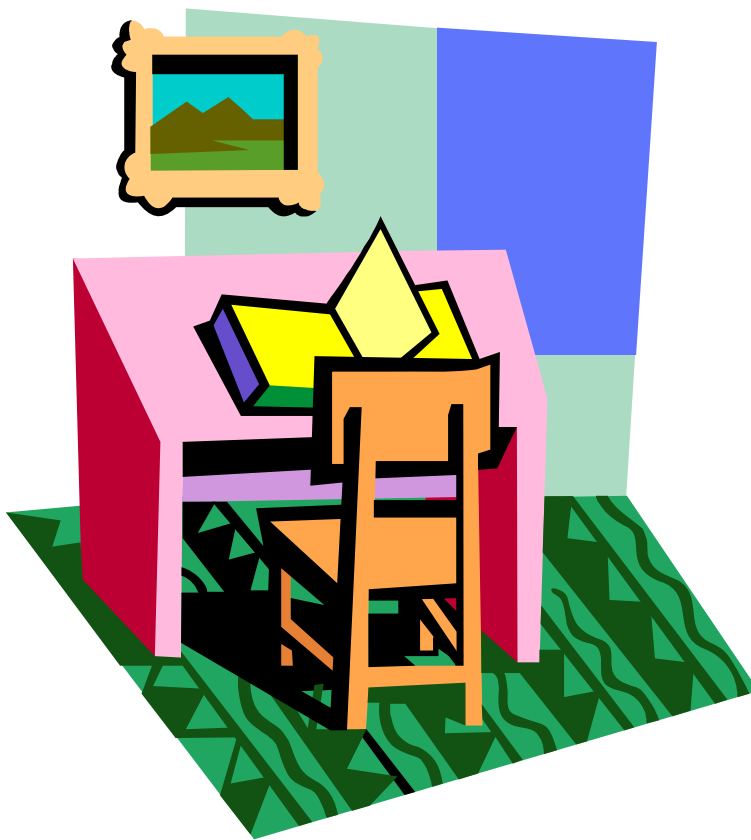


Choosing and Working with a Tutor

Produced by the Center for
Academic Enrichment & Outreach



The American School of Tegucigalpa

When you interview a potential tutor, you are looking for someone who will challenge and support your child or young person in learning. The following table explains some of the behaviors exhibited by an effective tutor.

An effective tutor:

Should:	Shouldn't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Answer most questions with questions ○ Listen perceptively ○ Show respect ○ Expect respect ○ Practice patience ○ Encourage collaboration ○ Be aware of different learning styles ○ Make sure the student is responsible for doing the task ○ Allow enough thinking time ○ Check for understanding with follow-up questions ○ Be on the lookout for misconceptions ○ Know what textbooks the student is using ○ Be aware of the methods of instruction used in their classes ○ Model different strategies ○ Use manipulatives ○ Be aware of math phobias and avoidance techniques ○ Look for real-world applications ○ Know what comes before and what comes after the skill they are teaching ○ Put the work in a meaningful context ○ Be cautious about teaching tricks and gimmicks ○ Share their concerns about students/teachers/their work out of earshot of students ○ Maintain high expectations ○ Be friendly, fair and firm and give praise when done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accept “uh-hunh’s” and head nods as proof of understanding ○ Assume much of anything ○ Give false confidence ○ Say something is easy when it very well may not be ○ Enable students when they complain about teachers and classes ○ Allow students to work on their homework during tutorial sessions ○ Be afraid to admit their areas of ignorance ○ Allow excuses (“nevertheless,” can be a very powerful response) ○ Use “should” statements (try “could” instead) ○ Do the work, allowing students to passively watch

As discussed in the table, the key to effective tutoring sessions is active involvement of the student in the learning task. The tutor acts as a guide in coaching students through learning tasks which will help them to acquire the skill or concept for themselves. The tasks should be meaningful and never busywork.

After your child begins working with the tutor, monitor their progress. If their understanding does not seem to be progressing, you should feel free to inquire about the techniques being used by the tutor.

Though most professional tutors have their own instructional techniques, you may wish to share some of the following methods with them in order to give greater variety to the study sessions and encourage deeper understanding on the part of the student.

Effective Tutors Are Well Prepared

They:

- .. Teach skills directly, in meaningful context with plenty of practice**
- .. Relate new concepts to practical applications**
- .. Build on what the learner already knows**
- .. Model use of skills**
- .. Use a variety of strategies**
- .. Change an activity when it is not working**
- .. Use multi-sensory strategies so the learner can see, say, hear, touch and develop full mental images that stick and make sense**
- .. Modify or substitute alternative strategies for those that are not working**
- .. Vary lessons, teaching in different ways**

Effective Tutors Create A Learning Conducive Environment

They:

- .. Establish orderly, consistent routines**
- .. Reduce auditory, visual distractions**
- .. Work in a private area with incandescent lighting**
- .. Give instructions orally and in writing**
- .. Emphasize learner strengths**
- .. Ensure that the learner sees the value of practice**
- .. Help the learner generalize from tutoring context to class**
- .. Praise even minor successes**
- .. Encourage use of learning aides (calculator, highlighters, computers, “Koosh balls”)**

For non-fiction types of material, the following techniques may be helpful:

SQ3R

SURVEY:

- 1. Glance over chapter headings and sub-headings to get a mental outline and activate your prior knowledge**
- 2. Briefly check vocabulary words and graphic and typographical aids.**
- 3. Read introductory and summary paragraphs.**
- 4. Glance over any study questions included in the chapter.**

QUESTION:

Turn headings and sub-headings into questions to further activate prior knowledge and gain purpose for reading.

READ:

Read to answer the questions you have formulated. Read only small chunks of material before pausing to answer questions. Reread if necessary. Write down the answers.

RECITE:

Answer the questions out loud.

REVIEW:

Summarize main ideas under each heading. Ask someone to quiz you using your book notes. Mark any incorrect or incomplete answers. Recite unlearned material. Review again.

Questioning techniques for both non-fiction and fiction work are very important in encouraging higher level thinking.

THOUGHTFUL QUESTIONS - Ideas from Grant Wiggins

1. What questions are we trying to answer?
Why?
2. Could you give me an example or analogy?
3. What are you assuming?
4. But what about ... ?
(That seems to be inconsistent with text, notes, what was said before?)
5. How do we need to modify our original questions and answers?
6. How does this relate to ... ?
What we said before, read last week, concluded yesterday, etc.?
7. I think we're lost. How can we get oriented?
8. I think I know what you mean, but can you say more about what you mean by ... ?

Level 1 questions are those dealing mainly with simple recall. Effective questioning should include levels 2 and 3 in order to challenge the learner to retain and apply the concept or skill.

3 Levels of Questions

Level 1:

The answer can be found in the text (either directly or indirectly). This type of question is very concrete and pertains only to the text. Literal.

Level 2:

The answer can be inferred from the text. This type question, although more abstract than a Level One question, deals only with the text. Critical.

Level 3:

The answer goes beyond the text. This type of question is abstract and does not pertain to the text. Interpretation.

The words used in structuring the questions help support the question level and resulting response.

Questioning Guide

1. Remember:

Define
Repeat
Label
Name

List
State
Record
Describe
Recall

Memorize
Match
Identify
Relate

2. Show Understanding

Restate
Discuss
Express
Tell
Recognize
Explain

Report
Infer
Review
Locate
Find
Extend

Summarize
Generalize
Paraphrase
Rewrite
Give examples

3. Use Understanding:

Demonstrate
Dramatize
Practice
Operate
Imply
Apply

Use
Compute
Schedule
Relate
Illustrate
Translate

Change
Pretend
Discover
Solve
Interpret
Prepare

4. Examine:

**Debate
Diagram
Distinguish
Select
Compare
Question**

**Inventory
Discriminate
Categorize
Analyze
Differentiate
Point out**

**Criticize
Experiment
Break down
Separate
Outline
Divide**

5. Create:

**Create
Draw
Compose
Suppose
Design
Propose
Arrange**

**Devise
Formulate
Organize
Combine
Plan generate
Modify
Assemble**

**Prepare
Revise
Construct
Write
Compile**

6. Decide:

**Select
Measure**

**Judge
Value**

**Predict
Rate**

**Choose
Assess
Estimate
Conclude**

**Summarize
Evaluate
Compare
Contrast**

**Support Evidence
Prove your answer
Support your answer
Explain your answer**

**Give reasons for your answer
Why or why not?
Why do you feel that way?**

An additional method for helping students with reading comes from the Rolling Readers Tutoring Program:

Prepare

Preparing the student for a task helps the student begin the thinking/predicting process.

Pause

A pause gives the student time to think and fosters independence.

Prompt

A prompt gives the student a clue and leads to self-monitoring.

Praise

Praise gives the student confidence.

Probe

A probe gives the student understanding.

For learning tasks requiring writing, the following process is used in the American School. Please note that the response and revision stage means that the student is required to read and revise prior to any tutor's input. Additionally, the student should actively work through the process with the tutor acting primarily as a guide.

The Writing Process

Prewriting

Drafting

Response and revision

Editing

Self-evaluation