Tutor Tips

• Smile, it’s an international greeting!
• If students say they don’t need help, pull up chair, sit next to them, and let them know you are there if any questions come up. Complement them on how hard they working. Sometimes students need to trust you and feel comfortable with you before they will ask for help.
• Take your time: don’t be concerned about “awkward silences”. Your tutee may need time to comprehend what you’ve said or asked and phrase his or her response.
• Names are important; remember and try to correctly pronounce their names. Your efforts will be appreciated!
• Know yourself and your own limitations. Be able to acknowledge not knowing something and be willing to seek help from other students, staff, or instructor when needed.
• Try to make sure you aren’t doing most of the talking.
• Recognize student's areas of excellence and show honest appreciation and praise.
• Use an accepting tone and body language to show genuine concern for the students.
• Be willing to go over concepts repeatedly, but change the method to fit the students. Ex: "Let's look at this another way".
• Consult with staff at the school when aware that a student's problems are not academic.
• You are not expected to change a life. You can, however, be a positive influence to help a student find their way in their academic career.
• Do not be afraid to ask your teacher multiple questions in order to understand the task.
• If you are having issues, your site coordinator and the student director are always people you can talk to about them.
• Though it's hard, try to find the balance between friend and authority to establish a mentor relationship.

More Resources

We have put together a collection of resources for tutors/mentors on our website: www.sandiego.edu/csl/youth/resources.php

The resources include:

• A presentation USD Learning and Teaching adjunct faculty and veteran teacher, Christine Kane created that focuses on putting yourself in the shoes of the child to learn how to better support their growth.
• An article on how to promote comprehension and help students read for meaning from Reading Rockets.
• Tips on how to tutor students in mathematics, created by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
• A two-page tip sheet on positive behavior management, created by USD Center for Community Service-Learning staff.
• And more! Also feel free to meet with your site coordinator and/or CSL staff!