

# **BE A GREAT MATH TUTOR!**

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## **Always look at the problem or examples in the book or on the worksheet.**

If the student is copying a problem or writing out an equation to solve a word problem, check to make sure that it has been set up correctly.

## **Ask student to explain the procedure s/he is using to solve the problem.**

You can troubleshoot and listen for erroneous logic or incorrect procedures at that time. Then guide the student through the proper procedure for solving the problem.

## **Reinforce any correct procedures**

(e.g. "This part is done correctly", or "You are correct here".) Then identify incorrect logic and ask the student to consider what else s/he might try. You can provide a hint, but avoid explanations until after the student has attempted a guess. (e.g. What part of the problem should you tackle first? Remind the student of the order of operations \*PEMDAS)

*PEMDAS - "Parentheses, Exponents, Multiplication and Division, and Addition and Subtraction". This tells you the ranks of the operations: When you have a bunch of operations of the same rank, you just operate from left to right.*

## **Check for understanding.**

Have the student re-explain the procedure to you. Avoid asking questions like, "Does that make sense to you?" and "Do you understand now?"

## **Disengage!**

(But don't stop paying attention.) The tutoring goal should be to help students become an independent learner. Encourage the student to work the next problem on his/her own, but let him/her know you will check the work after he/she is finished. Do not get drawn into working the next problem with an insecure student. S/he needs to develop the ability to apply what s/he is learning without your supervision.

## **Avoid doing problems for the student.**

If the student cannot get the correct answer and asks for help, the tutor should look at what the student has done and try to locate the error. Then have the student work a similar problem to make sure he/she has grasped the concept or procedure.

## **Encourage Students to Pay Attention in Class:**

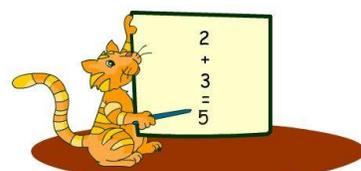
Some students believe getting help from a tutor is a substitute for what is happening in class. Students having difficulty in math must realize time spent with a tutor is additional to classroom time.

## **Address Math Anxiety:**

Tutors will deal with students with varying degrees of math anxiety. Avoid using phrases such as, "this is easy." Such phrases intimidate the student. If the student suffers from a high degree of math anxiety it may be helpful to talk with the teacher together.

These tips were adapted from those found the following web site.  
[http://www.educ.uidaho.edu/bestpractices/peer\\_train\\_math.html](http://www.educ.uidaho.edu/bestpractices/peer_train_math.html)

What is the sum?



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