



**THE LEARNING CENTER  
TUTOR MANUAL**



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## **Introduction**

The Learning Center Tutor Manual is a guideline for how tutors can better serve the students they serve. This manual will not cover every situation or topic that a tutor will come across. If a tutor knows of any additional information that should be added to this manual, they should speak with the TLC Coordinator.

## **The Learning Center Mission**

The Learning Center provides academic support services to facilitate effective learning. These services are offered in coordination with various academic and administrative departments on campus. FREE tutoring is available to all students. The program provides an opportunity for students to receive academic assistance, such as clarifying and reviewing subject matter, which has been presented in the classroom. Other Learning Center services include supplementary instruction (SI) and online tutoring (Net Tutor). A library of study guides, and background information needed in specific courses is available to supplement classroom instruction and individual tutoring.

The purpose of The Learning Center is to provide students with academic assistance, its main objective being to help students achieve academic success. The student always comes first at The Learning Center. The Learning Center offers individual tutoring, study group tutoring, supplemental instruction, online tutoring, STEP computer lab services, and other academic resources. The tutoring program has existed at this university since 1970. The primary mission continues to be to help students become more efficient, independent learners. Our programs, facilitated by trained peer tutors and professional staff, create a welcoming, supportive, and energetic community that promotes connection, collaboration, leadership, and growth.

As an employee of The Learning Center, one is responsible for becoming familiar with all aspects of The Academic Success Center and any additional resources the University of Louisiana at Lafayette may have to assist students in their search for academic success. With this knowledge, one can better serve the visitors of The Learning Center.

## Tutoring Services & Procedures

Only students of The University of Louisiana-Lafayette are permitted to use The Learning Center tutors and resources. If a student is not currently enrolled in classes, they must have at least applied and been accepted to the university. The only exception to this rule is if someone is requesting a private tutor (See *Private Tutoring*).

A student can utilize the tutorial services in The Learning Center in several ways. These include arriving as a walk-in student, scheduling an Individual (one-on-one) appointment, attending a Study Group (SG), attending a Supplemental Instruction (SI) session, or utilizing online resources. It is important that visitors know about each option, and that employees are able to explain the differences.

### ***Individual Tutoring Procedures***

Students can utilize an individual (one-on-one) tutoring session in two ways. Students can either make an appointment for a future day/time or participate in a walk-in session if a tutor is available (*see next section*).

Students can schedule appointments for either **30 minutes** or **60 minutes** using the following methods:

- Call TLC Front Desk – 337-482-6583
- Schedule online through TutorTrac
- Schedule online through TLC Chat
- Schedule in-person with the TLC Desk Staff in Lee Hall

**Tutors are required to remain on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of Lee Hall unless permission is granted by the Professional Staff. TLC Staff may work in the STEP Lab or do homework if they are not in a tutoring session. It is the responsibility of each tutor to check-in with the Desk Staff to see if they are scheduled for appointments. The Desk Staff should not have to search the building every time you have an appointment. Tutors are permitted to take a quick break if there is no appointment. However, tutors need to remain in the vicinity in case there are walk-ins.**

### ***Walk-In Tutoring***

Students may show up at The Learning Center at any time during the hours of operation for tutoring assistance. Those students who arrive without having a scheduled appointment are referred to as walk-ins. Students should be informed that scheduled appointments take priority over walk-ins if there are no tutors available to help. They should also know that not all subjects are available at all hours of operation.

**If a tutor is available, the walk-in should be seen immediately. If there is no tutor available, the walk-in should be given the option to wait for an available tutor, schedule an appointment at an available time, or given other options of campus resources (The resources listed on the website should be used to determine what other options are available for that particular subject.).**

### ***Study Groups***

Each semester The Learning Center offers study groups in several subjects. Depending on the subject, the sessions take place once or several times (depending on demand) per week and last 60 minutes each. A schedule of times and room locations are posted at the beginning of each semester in The Learning Center on the hallway bulletin boards, the TLC website, the ULink Tutoring tab, as well as other university communications (broadcast emails, digital signs, website, etc.).

Students are encouraged to attend the group as often as possible. However, they are not required to attend every time the group meets. No appointment is necessary. The students simply show up and check in. Punctuality is expected. It is up to the tutor to set a standard of punctuality and professionalism within their group setting.

**A Study Group leader will be assigned to one or more subjects, and is responsible for the content of his/her sessions. The tutor should be present at all sessions unless an absence request was submitted or the tutor is ill. In this case, it is the responsibility of the tutor to find a replacement.**

**The tutor is required to have a Student Sign-In sheet for each session. These are available at the Front Desk. All students attending TLC sessions need to record their name and CLID on the sign-in sheet. All services of The Learning Center must be recorded and reported to the Academic Success Center for assessment purposes.**

### ***Personalized Group Tutoring***

If two or more students would like to receive tutoring together for the same course, they can schedule a maximum of a one-hour tutoring appointment. The group should have two individuals sign up for consecutive 30-minute sessions. The group is still bound by only one scheduled session at a time, but they will benefit from the one-hour session. It is recommended that students also study together outside of class and the group tutoring. This will encourage shared learning and assistance even when tutoring is not available.

### ***Supplemental Instruction***

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a structured learning enhancement program. It is designed to organize and improve the ways in which students prepare for class outside of class and to provide students with a systematic and disciplined approach for processing the subject material assigned by the professor.

Through this program, an SI leader/tutor is assigned to a subject. This student has demonstrated proficiency in a targeted subject and undergoes SI training. The SI leader attends the subject to keep up with the subject content being presented and to model effective student practices and attitudes. The SI leader schedules and conducts from two to five group meetings a week at times convenient to members of the class. During these sessions, the SI leader uses interactive learning strategies that encourage involvement, comprehension, and synthesis of subject content. In addition, the SI leader will incorporate demonstrations of effective study techniques.

SI targets historically difficult subjects. In other words, this subject contains content that students consider to be challenging. SI is designed to support faculty teaching and is assigned to a subject because of *what* is being taught, not because of *the manner in which* it is being taught. SI leaders are trained according to established guidelines and standards; their activities and presentations are monitored. Cooperating faculty are provided with an end-of-term comparative analysis of student performance.

**A Supplemental Instruction leader will be assigned to one subject. This tutor is responsible for the content of his/her session as well as attending the SI course. The tutor should be present at all sessions unless an absence request was submitted or the tutor is ill. In this case, it is the responsibility of the tutor to find a replacement.**

**The tutor is required to have a Student Sign-In sheet for each session. These are available at the Front Desk. All students attending TLC sessions need to record their name and CLID on the sign-in sheet. All services of The Learning Center must be recorded and reported to the Academic Success Center for assessment purposes.**

### ***Private Tutoring Requests***

Each semester The Learning Center receives requests for private tutoring. The Learning Center acts as a liaison between tutor and client. Information will be recorded on the private tutoring request form and placed on the request bulletin board located in the employee lounge. The person should be aware no guarantees can be made that a tutor will respond. Tutor names and phone numbers will not be given to any inquiry. The tutor is responsible for contacting the client directly. The Coordinator will not be involved with the process further.

When you take a message, please complete the entire form including your name as the person who took the message. This way the tutor knows who to talk to if they have a question about the private tutoring form. A *Private Tutoring Request Form* is available on The TLC website.

### ***Online Tutoring***

Net Tutor is an on-line tutoring service to which The Learning Center has subscribed. UL Lafayette students have access to this service twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week through their Moodle. Net Tutor is a resource students can utilize when The Learning Center is closed or when a tutor is not available for the specific subject. Lab workers are available to assist students with Net Tutor and Moodle access if student is utilizing service in the lab.

### ***Employment at The Learning Center***

TLC hires new student staff members every semester. Applications are submitted via a webform on the TLC website. Paper applications and documents will not be accepted by professional staff.

Refer student to website: <http://studentsuccess.louisiana.edu/tutoring/jobs-tlc>

## Tutors/SI Leaders

In addition to the qualifications for all student employees, tutors must also have:

- Completed at least one semester of college coursework, preferably at UL Lafayette, before being considered for a position
- Minimum grade of B in all courses being tutored
- Minimum Cumulative GPA of a 3.0
- Recommendations from university faculty in subject area being tutored

### ***Tutor/SI Leader Job Description***

The tutor is responsible for the following duties:

- Greeting their appointments.
  - Tutor should make the visitor feel welcome and comfortable asking questions.
- Providing accurate information about The Learning Center services as well as other UL Lafayette campus resources
  - If the tutor does not know an accurate answer, the resource manual or the Coordinator should be consulted.
- Make sure each student visit is recorded at the front desk or student sign-in sheet.
- Providing direction and guidance to visitors.
  - Do not do the work for the visitor.
  - Do encourage questions.
  - Do support effort.
  - Use resources learned during training courses and orientation.
- Utilizing The Learning Center resources.
  - Use books, calculators, or other supplies as needed.
  - Remove and replace in proper location.
- Promoting The Learning Center services.
- Enforcing The Learning Center rules.
- Notifying the Coordinator if a problem occurs.
- Other responsibilities delegated by the Coordinator.

Daily tasks include:

- Checking for scheduled appointments.
- Keeping the tutoring room, study room, and surrounding area free of trash and clutter.
- Weekly rotation of cleaning duties.

Backup Responsibility:

- The tutor may work as a desk assistant if they have no appointments scheduled and there is no desk assistant available.
- Once a desk assistant is available, the tutor no longer needs to work the desk.

## Tutor/SI Leader Certification Requirements

All tutors are required to complete certification within 1 year of employment. If progress is not being made toward certification in the first semester, employment may be terminated. If certification is not completed by the first year of employment, the tutor will be dismissed.

**CRLA Certification Requirements:** (Required for all tutors)

**New Tutors/SL Leaders** must complete the following *within One (1) Academic Year*:

1. Provide one (1) recommendation letter from a professor (about your subject knowledge, professionalism, etc.).
2. Complete a total of 12 hours of training, of which you:
  - a. Must complete Eight (8) in-person trainings (your first employee/tutor semester orientation for 2-credit hrs. and six (6) monthly TLC meetings/trainings, 1-credit hr. each), for a total of eight (8) credit hours.
  - b. Must complete the two (2) mandatory online trainings/workshops AND must choose any two from the additional online trainings/workshops listed below, for a total of 4-credit hours. You may complete more. The topics must be different from those scheduled to be presented at the monthly meetings/trainings.
3. At least **25** tutoring hours.

**Veteran Tutors** (Already CRLA certified) must:

1. Attend TLC Orientation and three (3) monthly TLC meetings/trainings each semester to remain certified.
2. At least **20** tutoring hours
3. Complete the two mandatory online trainings each year (FERPA & Sexual Harassment Policy).

### **Mandatory Online Trainings/Workshops**

Understanding Privacy Laws (FERPA: Oops! Can I say that?)

Sexual Harassment Policy

**Tutors/SL Leaders may also choose from the following additional online trainings/workshops, worth 1-credit hour unless otherwise noted:**

Active Listening and Paraphrasing

Career Planning for Success

Communication

Critical Thinking

Cultural Diversity

Goal Setting and Planning

Learning Disabilities, Tutoring Students with

Learning Styles

Studying Math, Principles of

\*Combine with Study Skills

Study Skills

\*Combine with Principles of Studying Math

Time Management Skills

Proper evaluation and training forms must be completed. A list of training topics will be provided for each semester and are listed on the Current Employees page.



## **TLC Lead Staff**

The TLC Lead Staff positions play an important part in the development of student staff members, and the overall TLC experience for students, staff, and tutors. This leadership position is meant to offer assistance for on-site staff supervision & training, quick and concise communication between student and professional staff, and overall support to The Learning Center. The Lead Tutor will continue to be involved with tutoring students yet will conduct additional responsibilities in the Lead Tutor role.

### **Qualifications/Requirements**

- One year experience at TLC
- Successful completion of all CRLA Level One Tutor Certification requirements
  - Tutors only
- Satisfactory results on employee evaluations
- Practices effective interpersonal and communication skills with staff and students.
- Comfortable with learning new technologies and processes.
- Exhibits an advanced level of maturity and professionalism
  - Remain calm and patient in stressful situations.
- Demonstrates leadership potential and commitment to developing a successful TLC.
- Strong customer service skills and the ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Ability to communicate effectively, maintain cooperative peer relationships, work on a team, be dependable and attentive to detail
- Experience leading or mentoring others, especially peers (preferred)

### **Supervision**

- Lead Staff will cross-train on all procedures/protocols to gain a comprehensive understanding of TLC operations.
- Role model proper conflict resolution skills with staff and students.
  - Confidentiality
  - Tact and/or respect
  - Accountability to one another
- Participating in periodic observation and evaluation of TLC staff.
  - Retain trust with staff.
  - Helpful, yet confidential/discreet.
- Ensure that assigned TLC spaces are maintained in a clean and orderly fashion.

### **Recruitment and Training**

- Developing subject-based training for staff during orientation, weekly meetings, and as needed or assigned by TLC Professional Staff.
- Assist with recruitment and interviewing of staff tutors throughout the academic year, as necessary

### **Mentoring**

Lead Staff serve in a mentorship role for the student staff. These duties are carried out under the supervision of the full-time, professional staff.

- Responsible for mentoring a set number of new staff members on subject knowledge, tutoring/teaching techniques, and TLC processes.
- Conduct program recognition for staff members based on a programming guideline criteria.
- Provide on-site coaching to ensure best practices are being utilized.

## Ethics & Confidentiality

The **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** of 1974 is a Federal law outlining the right of privacy of students. This law provides that the institution maintain the confidentiality of student education records.

The Academic Success Center/Junior Division is responsible for processing records of all entering and other Academic Success Center/Junior Division students. Confidential records including test scores, grades, transcripts, and other transactions are recorded in the Academic Success Center/Junior Division. At times, as a student employee you may come into contact with these records, it is important that you are aware of the confidentiality of the work involved. No one has the right to disclose any information on any student without written consent, unless authorized by personnel within the office.

Certain information designated as Directory Information may be released without the student's permission: name, address, telephone number, date of birth, major, dates of attendance, degrees received, academic awards and honors, previous education agency or institution attended, and participation in officially recognized activities and sports.

Your cooperation in this matter is necessary to ensure the confidentiality that all students deserve. Failure to comply with the policy will result in dismissal from your job. At orientation, you will be asked to sign a form indicating that you have read a statement similar to this one.

## Tutoring Session Responsibilities

A tutor is usually described as one who instructs privately, but a tutor is more than just an instructor. They should be helpers, who teach students how to learn for themselves rather than dictate the learning process. They should be interested in helping others. Tutors must be able to relate to students on different levels and be sensitive to their particular needs. They should offer encouragement and support to students in their academic development.

Tutors are expected to be knowledgeable in the subject area they are tutoring. However, no one person can know everything about every subject. If tutors find themselves unsure about a particular area, they should not hesitate to ask another tutor for assistance or refer a student to another tutor for assistance. A responsible tutor will put the needs of the student before their own and will not be resentful about not knowing the material.

1. Tutoring is your job. You have committed to tutoring during your work schedule; you are expected to follow through with this commitment. It is your responsibility to schedule your other appointments and activities around your tutoring schedule.
2. The tutor's primary goal is to help the student improve his/her abilities, understanding, and skills in the course being studied.
3. The tutor should attempt to generate personal rapport with the student by inviting their help in setting goals and giving them full attention during the tutoring session.
4. At the beginning of the tutoring session, set basic goals that will be accomplished.
5. During a tutoring session, it is important to allow the student to do the actual assignments/problems. The student, not the tutor, should be doing the bulk of the work.
6. Some people learn in different ways. If your preferred style is not working, try a different style. If you do not feel you can provide adequate assistance to a student, please find another tutor that can connect with the student.
7. It should be our goal end each session positively. Ask the student to verbally summarize the information covered. This summary clears the student's mind and lets you know how much material has been understood.
8. Praise students whenever you can on their successes, no matter how small. Progress, however slight, is still progress.
9. Avoid criticism of faculty members or other university employees. Students should be encouraged to seek help from their professors and/or advisors. **Only focus on what we can control.**
10. Remember that many students are apprehensive about visiting The Learning Center for help. Never make the student feel ashamed or inadequate in any way.
11. Even when a student seems like they do not need assistance, ask them if they need help. Sometimes students are too shy to ask.
12. Do not give hazy or incorrect information to a student. If you are unsure about something, ask.

13. You should be interactive with the student at all times. Do not leave the student alone during a session. Give them your undivided attention of the entire session. Do not do your own homework, socialize with others in the room, answer or refer to cell phones or pagers, or let your attention stray from your student.
14. Cell phones and other devices should be turned off or muted during tutoring sessions. If you need to leave it on for an emergency, let your student know you are expected an important phone call, turn it to vibrate and take the call outside immediately. Your students should follow this same guideline.
15. No headphones should be worn by tutors during work hours.
16. Remember that not all students are like you. Try to avoid discussing your own feelings or coursework. The focus should be on the student, not you. Just because you did well in a course or can handle many courses at once, does not mean that every student can. Refer students to the Coordinator or another Academic Counselor for academic questions or problems.
17. Your role is a tutor, not a counselor. Any personal problems outside the scope of normal conversation should be referred to the Coordinator, or directly to the Counseling & Testing Center.
18. Do not try to handle difficult situations on your own. Refer to the Coordinator any problem students.

## Tutor Etiquette

- Enter the session with a positive attitude. Do not give up on yourself or the student before you even start.
- Respect the students coming to The Learning Center. Put yourself in their shoes, and give them as much help as you can.
- Be punctual and prepared for appointments.
- **Do not complete a student's homework.** Instead, work an example problem to get the student started, and check the homework when he/she is finished.
- Help students identify their weaknesses.
- Maintain Confidentiality at all times.
- Encourage students to make contact with their instructors and other resources.
- Help students become independent learners.
- If you are working with an appointment, devote all your attention to that student. Explain to any other student needing your help that they can set up an appointment or receive help from another available tutor.
- If you cannot help a student, make every effort to find someone who can. Simply saying "I Don't Know" is not an option, refer them to the Professional Staff if needed.
- Realize that it is okay if you do not "connect" with a student. At the end of the tutoring session, if you feel the student did not benefit from the tutoring, politely recommend another tutor for that subject. The most important thing is to get the student help.

If you have any problems at all, let the Professional Staff know. Everyone is here to help you as much as possible.

## Tips for Working with Students

### Before starting a session with a student

- Did you make the student feel welcome and at ease?
- Did you know the specific course to be tutored?
- Did you determine the specific problem or question?
- Did you have the necessary reference books nearby?

### During the session with the student

- Were you able to communicate with the student?
- Did the student participate in the session?
- If a student showed you a graded paper, did you refrain from making judgmental comments?
- If after going over the problem area with a student, if you found they were still confused or having difficulty, did you refer them to another tutor or the Coordinator?
- If the student was particularly aggravating, did you do your best to be patient and kind?

### At the conclusion of the session

- Did you give words of encouragement to the student?
- Did you try to motivate the student to continue using The Learning Center?
- Did you schedule another tutoring session with the student?

## Basic Tutoring Do's and Don'ts

### ***Do's:***

- Maintain confidentiality of all information pertaining to students.
- Be on time for work.
- Inform your student and your supervisor if you will be late or absent by calling (337) 482-5254 or by emailing the supervisor at caro@louisiana.edu
- Always put on nametag before entering the tutoring rooms.
- Make sure the student completes an evaluation form before leaving the facility.
- Encourage a positive student/teacher relationship.
- Praise student on success.
- Encourage students to meet with their teachers regularly.
- If you suspect a learning disability in your student, talk to your supervisor immediately. We may need to provide other accommodations for them.
- Set goals with the student before beginning the session.
- Try different techniques for getting the point across to the student.
- End session positively.

### ***Don'ts:***

- Do not give advice or answers on take-home tests or any other graded assignment.
- Do not edit students' work.
- Do not give wrong information. If you do not know something, do not guess. Tell the student you will check and get back to them.
- Never disagree with a grade received by a student, or say anything negative about the instructor. The instructor, not you, is in charge of grading.
- Do not criticize faculty, staff, TLC staff, or other students.
- Do not guess what the teacher's expectations are. If your student does not understand an assignment, and you are unsure about the teacher's expectations, suggest the student discuss it with the instructor.
- Never estimate grades for a student, even by implication.
- Do not interrupt other Tutors/Advisors when they are with students.
- Do not bring students' work (test, homework, etc.) out of The Learning Center.
- Do not use browse the internet or do personal communication, or projects while you are tutoring students.
- Do not eat in tutoring rooms while other sessions are taking place.
- Do not discuss your personal issues with students.
- Do not give out your personal information or information of other TLC staff members.
- Do not handle difficult situations, such as high stress, emotional, physical, or academic problems. Please refer the student to the Coordinator or a qualified counselor.

# Math Tutoring Tips

## Tutoring Tips

- Do not work problems out for students.
- Guide the student through the problem by questioning and probing.
- Use several different ways to explain.
- Work problems the way they are shown in the text.
- Encourage students to work together.
- Ask students for their notes and how the instructor approaches the topic.
- Understanding is key – Be sure the student understands each concept before progressing to the next step.
- Question the student often as to the understanding and the steps.
- Do not have a pencil in your hand when explaining – allow the student to do all the work.
- Encourage the student to visit the instructor.

## Student Responsibility

- Read the chapter carefully before class.
- Attempt all examples and problems before questioning tutors.
- Work with another student in your class – help each other.
- Being able to teach concepts to another person or object is helpful in math and science courses.
- Understand each concept before progressing.
- Ask specific questions to tutors.
- Develop practice test before the exam.
  - Use homework problems.
  - Do not cheat – replicate a testing environment.



## Tutor FAQs

*How do I handle the student who:*

- Expects me to do his work?
  - Guide students firmly toward doing their own work by asking them a series of questions
    - What do you think the thesis should contain?
    - What is the first step in solving this problem?
  - Phrase your questions to require more than a yes/no answer.
  - Never do the student's work. Help them solve the problem.
  
- Arrives for tutoring sessions unprepared?
  - The first time this occurs
    - Tell them coming unprepared is not helpful during a tutoring session.
  - If it persists
    - Explain that you can no longer help without first seeing work
  - If a complaint or problem arises
    - Refer to the Professional Staff.
  
- Says that he has a problem getting along with me?
  - This is not uncommon with instructors or tutors.
    - Ask how you may best help them.
    - Try to include some of their ideas in your teaching method.
    - If your relationship fails, ask the student to see another tutor, explaining that this is in the best interest of the student.
    - If problems persist, see the Coordinator.
  
- Ask for extra time?
  - Tell them you do not have authority to schedule extra time. Refer them to the Desk Staff.
  - If you are okay with extra time and no other appointments are waiting, then you can proceed.
  - If a problem arises, see the Professional Staff.

# Tutoring Resources

## *Essential Qualities for a Tutor of ANY Subject*

Your professional responsibility is to facilitate students' independent learning. Students will model your productive behaviors if you are patient and positive. Other qualities include the ability to:

- Demonstrate application of material
- Use strategies often
- Encourage responsibility for students' own learning
- Use open ended questions frequently
- Connect new information to existing knowledge

## *Setting the Tone of Each Session*

The tutor/client relationship is a partnership. Each party contributes to tutoring sessions in his/her own way. Hence, both are responsible for setting the tone and keeping the lines of communication open during each session. Because this is a partnership, Peer Tutors must not accept full responsibility for either a successful or a failed relationship.

In order to establish a productive working relationship with students, it is important that both parties have a clear understanding of tutor/tutee responsibilities. This sets the groundwork for realistic expectations. Once the tone is set, it is important to set expectations for each session. Allow the student to participate in setting these expectations so that s/he can begin the role of an active participant each session.

## *Learning to Mirror*

Mirroring is the process of accurately reflecting back the content of a message. Repeating back the content accurately is called flat mirroring. Flat mirroring can be more difficult than it sounds. It is very easy, without realizing it, to mirror back a little more than what was said, or a little less. A person who gives back a little more is doing convex mirroring. A person who gives back less, by zeroing in on one point that interests him and ignoring the rest, is doing concave mirroring.

Maximizers often "repeat" the message through convex mirroring by adding something of their own for the purpose, conscious or not, of shaping the other person's thoughts and feelings. An example of convex mirroring is the wife who mirrors back to her husband: "So you're feeling guilty that you came home late for dinner," when what the husband actually said was, "I'm sorry I didn't start for home sooner because the traffic was so bad."

Minimizers often "repeat" a message through concave mirroring by highlighting the one thing they think is important, but leaving out what the speaker thinks is most important. An example of concave mirroring is the husband who responds to his wife's difficulty with a car problem by saying, "So, you're telling me you couldn't figure out what was wrong with your car," when his wife actually said was, "I'm delighted that I was able to get the car to the garage for repair today."

Both convex and concave mirroring are common forms of paraphrasing. When we paraphrase, we state in our own words what we think another person is saying. However, we often assume that we know what the other person is saying when we really do not. We are just guessing. We may be good guessers, and we may be right most of the time, but unless we check whether we have it right, the

danger exists that we will be misunderstood. It can also be tempting during the process of mirroring to interpret before we understand fully. If our interpretation is based on errors of understanding, then our interpretation will be wrong. In contrast, besides ensuring accuracy, flat mirroring lets a partner know that you are willing to put aside your own thoughts and feelings for the moment in order to understand the other's point of view.

For most people this is a rare moment of self-transcendence. It is also a moment that creates safety and deeper emotional connection in your relationship.

### Objectives

- Learn to listen accurately to what your partner is saying.
- Create safety in your relationship.
- Develop clear communication and deeper emotional connection.

### STEP 1

Choose who will be the Sender and the Receiver. The Sender starts the dialogue by saying, "I would like to have a dialogue. Is now okay? If this is not a good time, the Receiver should suggest another time as soon as possible.

### STEP 2

The Sender begins with something positive, such as an appreciation for something the Receiver has done or said. It can be as simple as, "Thank you for setting aside this time for us to talk." Then the Sender conveys what he wants to say as clearly as possible. The message should start with "I" and describe what the Sender is thinking or feeling. For this first exercise, while you are learning the technique, choose a message that is neutral. Examples of neutral subjects are what happened at work today, how you felt about the movie you saw last night, what you want to accomplish in the next few hours, or what struck you in the magazine article you just read.

### STEP 3

The Receiver then mirrors back what he or she has just heard the Sender say. The Receiver will find it helpful to use this sentence stem: "If I got what you just said," (and then mirror). The Receiver then checks to see whether he or she has mirrored accurately by asking, "Did I get it right?" If the Sender indicates he or she heard accurately, then the Receiver says, "Is there more you want to say about that?"

If the Sender has more to say, he or she adds to the message. The Receiver continues to mirror and ask, "Is there more you want to say about that?" until the Sender has completed the message. The question, "Is there more you want to say about that?" is very important. It helps the Sender complete all of his or her thoughts and feelings, and prevents the Receiver from responding to an incomplete message. In addition, since it is limited to "more about that," it helps the Sender limit the message to one subject at a time.

### STEP 4

When the Sender has completed the message, the Receiver then summarizes the Sender's entire message with this sentence stem: "Let me see if I got all of that..." When the Receiver finishes the summary, he or she should check for accuracy with this sentence: "Did I get it all?" The summary is important because it helps the Receiver understand the Sender more deeply and to see the logic in what was said. This helps with validation, which is the next step. When the Sender acknowledges that the entire message has been heard accurately, then the Receiver can move on to validating.

### Make The Connection

Try to get to know your student as quickly as possible. Also, tell them a little bit about yourself. Ask them questions like: what is your major, what hall do you live in, what do you think about this class? Ask them about their extra-curricular activities and their background in general. However, try to be as informal as possible so they do not perceive your questions as intrusive. A good rule of thumb is – an open-ended question is always a good question. Hopefully you will make the student feel comfortable enough to express his/her concerns. This is the basis of trust and trust is an essential element to establish early on.

Do not be discouraged if the student does not make you a confidant by the end of the initial session. It takes time. Just be consistent and the student will see you as honest and sincere.

### Explore

During the first meeting, find out from the student what s/he needs (or thinks s/he needs). You may detect deficiencies that can be addressed in a follow up visit. Whether the student just wants a brief session to gain clarity or wants to set up weekly appointments, remember your purpose is to help her/him become successful and independent.

### Assess

Try to engage the student in conversation about her/his academic strengths/weaknesses, likes/dislikes. This will help you understand why the student is taking the class(es) in which you are tutoring. Be a concerned listener and avoid interrupting. If you would like more information, try asking why or how questions.

Determine a mutual set of realistic expectations. Help the student see that s/he is in control of the tutoring session and is an active participant in the tutoring experience.

### Encourage the Learning Process

Just about every student who schedules a tutoring session for the first time will have the false impression that you are there to answer questions blindly or check their work. In a helpful manner, explain your role as a tutor at the beginning of the first session. Refer to yourself as a resource that will assist her/him in learning how to ask and answer questions. In addition, your job is to help the student practice processing and organizing information, apply study strategies, and learn new ways to approach problems.

In order that students do not become intimidated by your role, reassure them that you will answer questions as needed. However, students need to appreciate their personal responsibility in the learning process. In the first session, as well as in subsequent sessions, engage the students in decision-making at all levels.

### When It Is Time to End

Closure should be reached before ending the session. Ask your student to summarize what has been covered. Then, help her/him evaluate the progress made toward goals agreed upon at the session's

beginning. This is the perfect time to point out the progress the student made during the session. Before the student leaves have the student fill out a “Tutoring Evaluation”.

An ancient proverb says, “Give a man a fish and he will eat for that day. Teach a man to fish and he will eat for the rest of his life”. That philosophy is incorporated into the tutoring program at The Learning Center and is especially appropriate when helping students with all stages of learning. While tutoring, you can try using the Socratic method– which encourages asking questions of students to help them discover corrections needed rather than have the tutor make corrections – is preferred. The goal of tutoring is to foster student independence following the principle that tutors can help students help themselves by stimulating active learning and building students’ confidence in their own abilities. Throughout all stages of the learning process, tutors use diagnosis and the Socratic Method to find students’ levels of comprehension before moving to new concepts.

Learning is a cyclical process, not linear. Through discovery and analysis, the student can readjust her/his learning style. Tutors encourage students by helping them identify first their strengths and use these to overcome weaknesses. Hopefully, students can then make necessary adjustments while developing the confidence to become independent writers.

## **Minimalist Approach and Others**

As you develop as a tutor, you will come to realize that one type of approach does not always work. The most effective tutors utilize aspects from an array of tutoring approaches with the goal of remaining minimalist.

### ***Minimalist Method***

This method requires students to solve their own problems under the supervision of a tutor who acts as a coach, a more experienced peer, rather than an editor. During each session, students engage in a series of tasks related to their latest course assignment. While tutors shape these tasks and advise students in the midst of them, it is the students who read, write, etc.

### ***Socratic Method***

You tutor by asking questions rather than just giving instructions. Socratic dialogues are active discussions between the tutor and a student that require the student to formulate and express his/her thoughts. This interactive exchange requires a student to become involved. Any passive or defeatist behaviors are put aside with this one-on-one attention and immediate feedback.

### ***Pemberton’s Laws of Tutorics***

Michael Pemberton, author of “Writing Center Ethics: The Three Laws of Tutorics, argues “that ethics should guide a tutor’s approach based on three “laws”: (1) a tutor should teach others revise their own work, not do the work for them, (2) a tutor should help students identify the most significant issues in their learning, so long as the help provided does not violate the First Law, and (3) a tutor should follow a student’s agenda for the tutoring session , so long as the agenda does not violate the First or Second Laws”.

# The Twelve-Step Tutor Cycle

## ***Beginning Steps***

1. Greeting
2. Identification of Task
3. Breaking the Task into parts
4. Identification of Thought Process

## ***Task Steps***

5. Setting Agenda
6. Addressing the Task
7. Tutee Summary of Content
8. Tutee Summary of Underlying Process

## ***Closing Steps***

9. Confirmation
10. What next?
11. Arranging and Planning Next Session
12. Closing

## ***Reminder***

Tutees should take an active role in the tutoring cycle. Make sure to encourage them to identify which tasks they need to work on and set the agenda for the session. Also, they should take an active part in setting goals and arranging times for their next tutoring sessions. (adapted from The Master Tutor, 1994)

# The Structured Tutoring Session

Structure is critical when it comes to tutoring. Just as a sports team faces each opponent with a set game plan, tutors should face each tutee with a structured tutoring session. Below you will find ideas how to organize your tutoring sessions.

## Four Ingredients for a Successful Tutoring Session

- ***Warm-up:*** Ask questions and find out what the student wants to work on. Not only should you have a goal for the session in mind, so should they. Find a particular “trouble spot” and set that one area as your goal for the session.
- ***Demonstration:*** Refer back to the textbook, review notes, have the student show you their notes—get them talking about what they know so that you can then fill in the missing pieces, not simply put the whole puzzle together for them.
- ***Practice:*** If you want to work on, for example, the bones in the body for a biology class, then have the student practice what you just worked on. This can help you assess if they do, indeed, know what you just went over. Do not take a “Yes,” as the answer to “Do you understand”? Make them show you they understand. The best way to learn a concept is to teach that concept, so have them teach you!
- ***Wrap-up:*** Make the end of the session uplifting and concluding. Do not just run out of time and run off to our next obligation. Plan what you will do next session, praise the student for all they just learned (confidence does wonders!), and attach a goodbye—these are small but important rapport-building moments.

(Adapted from Becoming an Effective Tutor, 1990)