

Youth Tutoring Program

Tutor Training Manual



“No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship”

– Dr. James Comer



**VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF YTP! IN ADDITION TO OFFERING ACADEMIC SUPPORT,
VOLUNTEERS ARE FRIENDS, MENTORS, AND ROLE MODELS TO THE STUDENTS.**



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1. History and Overview

Thank you for volunteering with the YOUTH TUTORING PROGRAM! This manual is designed to give tutors introductory information about the structure of YTP, our students, our expectations, and specifics of the tutoring hour. It is also designed to be used as a reference with tips to return to throughout your time as a tutor. In addition, our staff members are a wonderful resource and will be happy to offer you advice and support throughout your service. Training resources are available at the tutoring centers, you will receive emailed tutoring tips through the year, and you will also be notified about in-person training opportunities. You can also rely on some of your tutoring center's veteran tutors for advice!

▪ The Youth Tutoring Program ▪

The Youth Tutoring Program is an evening educational enrichment program for students living in Seattle's low- and mixed-income public housing communities. Starting in 1991 as a partnership with the Seattle Housing Authority, the Youth Tutoring Program provides kids with a safe, positive, and stimulating environment to explore learning and experience academic and personal success. The program focuses on building reading confidence, revisiting foundational academic skills to that build a strong base for our students, and supporting students with homework. The program employs 10 dedicated staff, and each year over 500 volunteers work with approximately 450 students.

▪ Our Mission ▪

YTP's mission is to tutor, guide and inspire vulnerable youth living in public housing to achieve academic success. We create a challenging, safe and enriching environment where youth are matched with adults who offer academic support and mentoring throughout their school years. We partner with parents and advocate for students in their schools and in their communities.

▪ Our Vision ▪

All YTP students will be empowered to succeed academically and will possess the skills they need to realize their potential and achieve their hopes and dreams.

▪ Our Values ▪

The Power of Education: We believe that education is a powerful tool that empowers youth to achieve their dreams.

Teamwork, Respect, Integrity: Staff, volunteers, and students work together in an environment of respect and integrity. We foster and promote diversity within our organization respecting difference of religion, ethnicity, and experience.

Hard Work, Focus, and Productivity: Staff, volunteers, and students achieve success through hard work, focus, and a high level of productivity in all we do.

Continuous Effort towards Excellence: We believe that it is only with continuous attention to improvement that we will attain excellence as students, tutors, and as a program

▪ Our Success ▪

In a survey conducted at the end of the 2014-2015 school year, 85% of students reported that YTP helped them improve their grades or schoolwork, or maintain academic success. Additionally, 88% of students reported that YTP helped them improve their reading or maintain reading success. Success is similarly echoed in our parent and teacher survey results, including 66% of teachers who stated that students improved in academic skill at a faster rate than anticipated.



Engagement with Seattle Public Schools (SPS) resulted in access to aggregate academic information through the Automated Data Report (ADR) for many students, including 259 of the roughly 280 SPS students enrolled since last fall. For these students, YTP was able to track indicators including: 80% of students had 10 or fewer absences; 79% of secondary students had no E or F grades at the end of either term; and 100% of high school students are on track to graduate.

▪ Our Story ▪

When the Seattle Housing Authority applied for funds under the federal drug elimination grant program in 1991, it surveyed the families living in public housing to determine what services they needed and wanted. The families overwhelmingly requested a neighborhood based after-school educational program that would provide academic help for their children. YTP became that program and has been serving SHA and Section 8 housing communities for over 25 years.

▪ Our Agency ▪

YTP is a non-religious program of Catholic Community Services, the largest private social services provider in Washington State.

YTP stands with CCS's core beliefs that ...

- ... every child should grow up in a safe, loving and nurturing environment.
- ... the elderly should be able to live in security and dignity.
- ... healthy family life should be affirmed and supported in our communities.
- ... in compassion, love and respect for all people, especially the poor and most vulnerable.
- ... in joining with others to change the systems which oppress, discriminate or otherwise cause human suffering.
- ... employees and volunteers should work in an environment which offers respect, teamwork and excellence.
- ... in all these things for all people, whatever their color, whatever language they speak or however they worship.



▪ **Our Staff** ▪

YTP employs a team of ten individuals with diverse backgrounds.

Site	Person and Contact Information
High Point 6400 Sylvan Way SW (Room 214) Seattle, WA 98126	TBA (as of Sept. 2016)
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	highpoint@ccsww.org
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Main Office	Contact Information
Heidi Neff, Program Manager	heidin@ccsww.org; 328-5719
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2. Our Students: Culture, Characteristics, and Learning Styles

The Youth Tutoring Program serves children living in or near Seattle's low-and mixed-income housing communities, many of which are run by the Seattle Housing Authority, who provides affordable housing to nearly 24,000 people in the City of Seattle. We serve five of SHA's housing communities and another affordable housing community in Rainier Beach. YTP serves approximately 450 1st-12th grade students each year. 83% of our students come from households earning below 50% of the area's median income. Over 75% are from immigrant and refugee families, primarily East African, and 86% do not speak English as their primary language at home. With these facts in mind, it is important to address the unique needs many of our students bring with them to our tutoring centers. Our only qualification for students enrolling in our programs is that they live in SHA or other state or federally-supported housing. We do not have a certain academic threshold students must above or below to participate. That is, we serve students regardless of the success or lack thereof they are showing in the classroom.

Different Cultures, Traditions, and Language

Students come from many cultures with different values, behaviors, and expectations. Since our first classroom is our home, and our first teachers are our family, our cultural background can greatly affect how a student learns, performs in school, and responds to you. Below are some potential differences to be aware of:

- **Learning Styles:** Many cultures have oral language traditions, in which knowledge is handed down from one generation to the next through storytelling, music, or dance. Many cultures also emphasize cooperation when learning. This is not often emphasized in American classrooms.
- **Eye Contact:** In dominant American culture eye contact suggests attention, honesty and respect. Your student, however, may be from a culture where eye contact is a sign of disrespect. Therefore, you may think that your student is not paying attention, when in reality s/he is showing you respect.
- **Discipline:** Cultures differ greatly in how they define appropriate or inappropriate behavior. The system of rules and consequences vary depending upon the culture. These differences may be difficult for your student to understand and adapt to.
- **Time:** In dominant American culture, punctuality and sticking to the schedule is normal and expected. In many cultures taking care of family and community comes first, ahead of any other obligations, including showing up on time to tutoring.

How to incorporate culture into your tutoring experience...

Learn about and affirm your student's culture. If you and your student come from different cultural backgrounds, you have an opportunity to learn about each other.

- Ask questions if there is something about your student's cultural background you don't understand. Practice taking in information without being judgmental.
- Encourage students to share information and stories about their families, communities, and culture. Share your own holidays and family traditions and turn it into a cultural exchange. Ask students to teach you a few words in their native language.
- Incorporate cultural information into reading, writing, and learning activities.
- Spend some time looking through the Culture Binders at the tutoring centers with your students.
- Use the Internet or country binders to plan a "trip" to your student's native country (or their parents' country) or create a travel brochure about a country.



If you sense your student struggling, help your student understand the school culture and expectations. Discuss how values, behaviors, and rules may differ between home and school culture. Talk about how American school behavior and expectations may differ from school culture in other countries.

Most YTP students are fluent in conversational English. Where they tend to have the most language difficulty is in reading and writing skills.

- Start where your student is, not with his/her grade level.
- Find out if your student began to learn English in his/her own country and if s/he learned to read in his/her native language.
- Use pictures or photos from magazines to increase word recognition and promote discussion.
- Share stories and relate topics to the student's own experience.
- Encourage journal writing to help your student develop reading and writing fluency.
- Practice reading often and re-read stories and chapters in textbooks.

Many ESL/ELL students may develop conversational English that appears fluent and adequate for everyday communication. Under ideal conditions, it takes the average second-language learner two years to acquire **Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)**, or everyday conversational language. On the other hand, **Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)**, or academic language, takes five to seven years to acquire. While your students may be conversationally fluent, they may still struggle with **CALP**, and have difficulty in areas such as reading, writing, spelling, science, social studies, and other subject areas where there is little context to support the language being heard or read. Be aware that this "**BICS-CALP gap**" leads professionals to falsely assume that the children have language-learning disabilities.

Social, Economic, and Family Pressures

While it is inappropriate to create blanket statements, many of our tutors backgrounds are very different than the lived experiences of our students. It is important to keep this in mind as we work to relate to and understand our students' situations.

- **Social:** Students are faced with many social pressures (popularity, wearing the right clothing brands, etc.) that may encourage them to participate in risky behaviors such as membership in gangs, using violence to assert their identity, or experimentation with drugs and alcohol.
- **Poverty, hunger:** The majority of our students come from low-income families, and the pressures from financial insecurity affect the whole family. Stressed parents may not be able to make the time to respond to the needs of their children, including supporting their nutrition needs. Students may be hungry by the end of the day, which makes it hard for them to concentrate.
- **Changes in family members and friends:** Any transition may greatly affect a student's ability to learn. Students may mourn the loss of a family member due to separation, divorce, or death. They may find it difficult to adjust to blended families when parents re-marry or when a cousin, grandparent, or friend comes to stay with the family. They also may struggle with housing relocations and changes in community and peer groups.
- **Family violence, abuse and neglect:** Family violence creates continual chaos. As a result, students may have poor attendance, be unable to concentrate at school, fail to follow through on tasks or complete homework assignments. They may also show problem behaviors including withdrawal and aggression. *If you suspect any kind of child abuse or neglect, you must alert the center staff or volunteer coordinator immediately.*
- **Drug and alcohol use:** As you may expect, many middle and high school students have been exposed to and have experimented with drugs. Drug and alcohol use have a negative impact on the student's ability to concentrate and learn.



How to work with a student under pressure...

As a tutor, your job is not to solve social, economic, or family difficulties but to assist students in making a transition from personal concerns to school.

- Listen when your student needs to talk. Be supportive and non-judgmental.
- Encourage your student to talk to the school counselor or another trusted adult.
- Encourage your student to write thoughts and feelings in a journal.

Provide students with a sense of control over their own school success.

- Give your student choices about the structure of the tutoring session. For example, let him/her decide when your first break will be or what worksheet to do first.
- Have your student set short term goals, and then give specific praise for his/her efforts and accomplishments.
- Help your student brainstorm ways to solve problems such as how to study for an upcoming test or how to turn assignments in on time.
- Together, organize your student's binder. Backpacks are often so crammed with papers it's almost impossible to find homework assignments.
- Many schools provide assignment planners or calendars to help the student turn in schoolwork on time. If your student has a planner, read it over and ask questions about his progress.

Different Learning Styles

People have different ways of processing information. If teaching methods of the classroom do not match a student's strengths, this may impact his/her learning and slow progress. There are three main learning styles: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Recognize your student's learning style, and make adjustments to the way you present information. Most students are a combination of these three styles.

How to incorporate learning styles into tutoring...

A great activity to do with your student to discover your and the student's learning style is to take a Learning Style Inventory (you can take it too!). The Barsch Inventory can be found online and is a quick 24 question inventory. After you each take the inventory, discuss your learning styles, compare and contrast ways that you each learn. Ask the student to think of some activities that would appeal to his/her learning style. This is a great way to get your student thinking about how they learn and an opportunity for you to gain clues for most effectively tutoring your student.



Learning Styles	Tutoring Tips
1. Characteristics of a Visual Learner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remembers words by their appearance Notices details Enjoys books, pictures and demonstrations Pays attention to color, size and location of objects or details 	Strategies for a Visual Learner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use matching games, charts, maps and graphs Use color to highlight concepts Highlight important details of a lesson Make flashcards as a memorization tool Use models and demonstrations. Use pictures to reinforce vocabulary or spelling words
2. Characteristics of an Auditory Learner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learns best by listening and speaking Needs verbal discussion to learn new concepts Easily memorizes words to songs or poems Enjoys talking Often asks questions about instructions 	Strategies for an Auditory Learner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recite and practice spelling words aloud Use tape recordings for reinforcement work Help the student talk through the tasks/concepts Give instructions verbally as well as in writing Read aloud to your student and have them read to you Teach your student how to use a mnemonic device for memorizing facts
3. Characteristics of a Kinesthetic Learner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learns through movement, experiencing and hands on-projects May be restless and need frequent breaks Needs an organized, consistent schedule Wants to feel and touch things 	Strategies for a Kinesthetic Learner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan activities, projects and hand-on lessons Take short breaks and move around Use concrete objects to demonstrate concepts in math or vocabulary Work in different locations and positions Model skills and let the student try using drama or role-play

Learning Disabilities

Many of our students are behind for various reasons. While some are catching up from transitioning to a United States, English-base school system and the family disruption that might come with such a move, others may have identified Learning Disabilities. If this is the case, ask your Center Supervisor for guidance and resources at any time throughout your tutoring experience.

Learning Disability (LD) is a neurological condition that interferes with a person’s ability to store, process, or produce information. Learning disabilities can affect one’s ability to read, write, speak, spell, compute math, reason and also affect a person’s attention, memory, coordination, social skills and emotional maturity. For example, Dyslexia is a common learning disability that impairs the ability to recognize and process phonemes (letter sounds).

- Learning disabilities are not widely understood and many students with learning disabilities go undiagnosed. Approximately one in seven Americans experiences some type of learning disability.
- Students with learning disabilities are generally of average or above average intelligence. Their learning disability creates a gap between ability and performance.
- Often the biggest challenges for students with learning disabilities are behavior and self-esteem issues.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder (ADD or ADHD) is a neurobiological disorder that interferes with a person’s ability to sustain attention or focus on a task and to delay impulsive behavior.

- Kids with ADD/ADHD often are labeled as troublemakers in school, when in reality they do not have the tools to pay attention for long periods of time, and may have trouble controlling their own behavior.
- Kids with ADD/ADHD may need a very structured tutoring session. Talk with the Center Supervisor if you suspect your student may have ADD/ADHD.



How to work with a student with a learning disability...

- The most important way to help students with special needs or learning disabilities is to **focus on their strengths** rather than their difficulties. Everyone wants and needs to be successful, so do activities and say things to your student that give him/her a sense of accomplishment. Work to build your student's self-confidence.
- **Provide structure.** Be clear about what you expect, what specifically the student will do, and how long you are going to spend on given activities. Break it down into details.
- Always read printed materials - stories, textbooks, directions, assignments and tests - out loud. Have your student read aloud if they are able.
- Help your student find creative ways to get their thoughts into writing. For example, have your student dictate stories or ideas to you, as you write them down.
- Ask students to think and talk out loud as much as possible.
- Provide them with opportunities to discharge their energy.
- Provide them with a quiet environment with few distractions.¹

¹ Adapted from "Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorder" presented by the Learning Disabilities Association of Washington.



3. Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

The Youth Tutoring Program is able to offer the relationship-focused 1:1 tutoring that we do because of all the dedicated individuals that volunteer their time. This program could not run without them. With over 500 tutors a year, spread across six different tutoring sites, it is important that we set high expectations and provide ongoing and strong support for our tutors. In this manner, we are able to offer consistent and quality tutoring to our students regardless of the center they are at or the tutor they are with. With that in mind, we ask that you uphold your level of commitment and ask your Center Supervisor if you ever have questions about how to best work with one of your students.

Tutor Characteristics

While we have a structure to our tutoring sessions, each student is unique and sometimes unpredictable. Needs and emotions change day-to-day for some of our youth, so we ask that you stretch your own character and remember to be there for the students. Set firm boundaries, but bring kindness and understanding to your time with your student. Over the years, we have identified that the best tutors are able to come to our tutoring centers with the following:

- **Dependability:** Your students depend on you! Even if they don't always show it, they look forward to the time they spend with you each week, and the more consistently they see you, the more effective your relationship will be. It is very important to inform your Center Supervisor (CS) if you plan on missing a session or being late.
- **Flexibility:** We try to keep you matched with the same student(s) every week. However, if a student misses the session, you will be assigned another student for the evening. Furthermore, there may be occasional sessions where we do not have enough tutors to match every student with a tutor. If you are comfortable tutoring more than one student, you may be asked to tutor a small group on an occasional or regular basis.
- **Creativity and Resourcefulness:** Remember that many of our students are behind their peers in their academic ability. It helps if you can find creative ways to demonstrate a concept. We also do not expect you to know everything. Modeling the process of looking up information or asking for assistance is a good thing to do with your student.
- **Positive Attitude and Patience:** Setting high expectations and supporting your students in meeting them is important. However, don't be discouraged when your students' academics or your relationship doesn't improve as you would like. Stay positive and keep trying.
- **Striving for Cultural Competence:** Our students come from diverse backgrounds and we need tutors who are culturally aware of our students' different perspective expectations. We do not expect all tutors to have a perfect understanding of cultural differences, but we hope everyone grows in understanding the more they work with our students. Some simple ways to practice cultural competence are to dress modestly; most of our students are Muslim and dress modestly themselves. Ask culturally sensitive questions and never make assumptions. We try to make our tutoring centers a safe place for our students to express themselves, and our tutors' cultural competence helps to make that happen.
- **Ability to set appropriate boundaries:** Generally, what is appropriate in a school classroom is appropriate at the Tutoring Centers. Sit beside your student during tutoring sessions. Sit at the student's level, smile, and use quiet "high-fives" or other signals of praise to encourage your student's efforts. Behavior like hugging



should always be initiated by the student. Never allow a student of any age to sit on your lap. YTP tutors are not permitted to arrange contact with students outside of the tutoring center. As the relationship with your student progresses, s/he will begin to trust you and may confide in you. Let the student know you are there to listen, but always respect their privacy. You also should never promise to keep any secrets. As an adult working with youth, you are mandated to report (through your Center Supervisor) any suspect abuse or maltreatment. **Do not exchange contact information with your student. Initiating contact outside of tutoring can result in dismissal from the program.** More information about boundaries will follow.

Be a Communicative Tutor!

- ✓ Contact the Center Supervisor at least 24 hours in advance if you will be late or need to miss a session.
- ✓ Have the tutoring center phone number and email address on hand.
- ✓ Try to make up missed sessions within one week.
- ✓ If possible, let your student know when you will be absent.

IMPORTANT **Volunteer Awareness of Abuse**

As you are someone who will be working with children, it is important that you are aware of the signs and symptoms that a child may exhibit if s/he is experiencing some form of abuse or neglect. **If you suspect that anything inappropriate is going on in your student’s life, it is important that you tell the Center Supervisor immediately after the session.** Make sure you are out of earshot of anyone else, so that you can maintain confidentiality. If a child reveals anything to you in confidence about something inappropriate occurring in his/her life, **do not tell the child that you will keep the information a secret. You are required to report this information, and do not want to make promises you will have to break and risk the trust you have developed with that student.**

Signs and symptoms of physical neglect may include:

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Consistent hunger	Begging or stealing food
Malnutrition	Consistent fatigue, falling asleep
Inappropriate dress for season or activity, inappropriate clothing size	Extreme behavior – aggressive, withdrawn, clingy
Unattended physical or medical needs	

Signs and symptoms of physical abuse may include:

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Unexplained bruises and welts	Wary of adults
Unexplained burns	Overly adaptive – too eager to please
Unexplained lacerations or abrasions	“Invisible” – never noticed, blends in too well
Unexplained fractures	Sudden change in behavior unexplained by life’s events

Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse may include:

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Abrasions or bleeding in genital or anal areas	Regression to earlier age or behavior
Infection, inflammation, soreness or bruising in	Unusual or new fears or phobias



anal or genital areas	
Torn or stained clothing	Sexual knowledge which is too specific or otherwise inappropriate for age
	Sexual play with other children, toys, self

Signs and Symptoms of emotional abuse or neglect may include:

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Failure to thrive	Extreme behavior – aggressive or withdrawn
Very few physical symptoms	“Invisible” – never noticed, blends in too well
	Very low self-esteem
	Consistent negative affect ²

Confidentiality

If you have a good relationship with your student, s/he may trust you with sensitive information about his/her life. Remember that this information was told to you in confidence and should be kept confidential.

However, if you hear something that indicates your student is in any kind of danger (physical or emotional), you have an obligation to pass that information on the Center Supervisor. The CS will decide what to do from there, and may decide to call CPS or another appropriate authority. Please remember to have this conversation in private so no one else can overhear.

In any email communication about your student it is important to never use the full name of the student. Please use initials of their first and last name. For example with “Kenny Luo”, write “KL”.

Harassment

All Catholic Community Services programs have a zero tolerance policy for harassment. If you feel you are being harassed by another volunteer, a staff member, or even a student, report it as soon as possible. You can report it to:

- The Center Supervisor
- The Volunteer Coordinator, who can be reached at Volunteerytp@ccsww.org or 206-328-5695
- The CCS Anonymous Tip Line: 1-877-207-3326

Infectious Diseases

Tutoring Centers are busy places, and from time to time a cold or the flu goes around. However, if one of our students, staff, or volunteer is diagnosed with a more serious disease, we will inform the rest of the Center about it so they can take the necessary precautions. If you are diagnosed with an infectious disease, please contact us so that we can do this.

Emergencies

The Center Supervisor is the first person you should talk to in case of emergency, unless the situation merits a call to 911. In certain situations, the CS may ask you to fill out an incident report after the fact so we can report it.

² Adapted from "Appropriate Touching: Guidelines for Teachers and School Personnel," a joint project of the Seattle Education Association and The Seattle Public Schools



Internet and Computer Usage

All Tutoring Centers use computers for online reading tests, academic games, or research. When you are on the computer with your student, please remember the following guidelines:

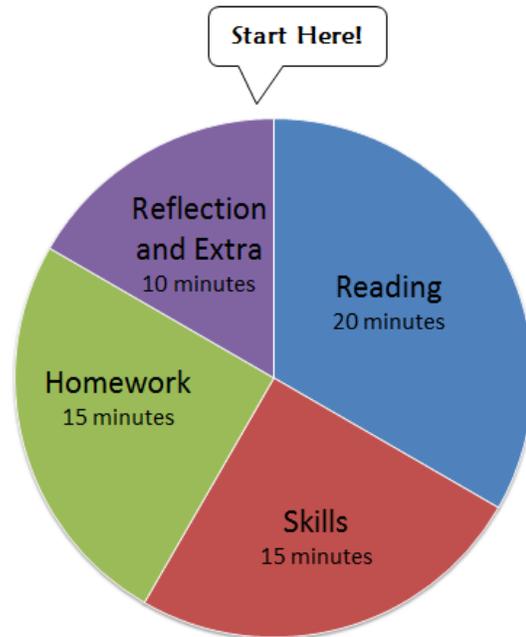
- Absolutely no political activity may be done on these computers (this would interfere with CCS's non-profit status)
- All websites should be appropriate for all ages to view
- If you think something might be illegal or problematic, don't do it.



4. Your Academic Year Tutoring Hour

Overview

Our tutoring sessions consist of a one-hour work session with students. We have a general format for the hour, but it will also be shaped by your student's grade level and SMART goals. These goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely. At the beginning of the year, Center Supervisors identify unique goals for each student for them to focus on during their tutoring sessions. As a tutor, you help students stay focused on these goals and manage their time during tutoring sessions as well as the year to accomplish these goals. The goals will be written at the top of each student's Tutoring Plan. There are three basic tutoring plans: Elementary, Middle School, and High School. Tutors and students will fill out the Tutoring Plan each day, using it as a guide and record of the work that day, but also as a reflection tool, and way to communicate notes to other tutors that work with that student as well as the Center Supervisor.



Each time you tutor, you will review the previous day's tutoring plan to see where your student has left off and what notes the previous tutor wrote down for you and the Center Supervisor. You will then familiarize yourself with the current day's tutoring plan, look to see if the Center Supervisor made any notes for you, and then plan what your hour should look like with your student. A typical hour is broken down into Reading, Rocket Math, Skills Curriculum, Homework, and "Extra" time if permitted.

Reading

Accelerated Reader

YTP utilizes Accelerated Reader (AR) to determine students' reading levels and to provide post-reading quizzes to aid in comprehension. Each YTP student takes the "STAR Test" at the beginning of the year which determines their reading level. For example, you might see a student with a reading level of 3.0-3.7. These numbers correlate with school grades, so a 3.7 means where a student is reading at a level that corresponds to being in the 7th month of 3rd grade. Many of our students have reading levels that are below their grade level. It is important for students to read books ONLY within their given range in order to see the greatest gains. Students will not progress if they are reading books that are too easy or too hard for them.

AR is also utilized because it provides comprehension quizzes for books that are in their system. Most all books in the tutoring center library are in the AR system. When students finish a book, they can log onto AR (each student has their own login information) and take a quiz on that book. If students are reading each day at tutoring, engaging in conversations with their tutors about what they are reading, and taking periodic AR book quizzes, students' STAR Reading level should improve. If you feel like your student is reading at a too low of level, please tell your Center Supervisor, and the student can be retested.

The Reading Library

Each tutoring center has a modest library of books for students to read. Some students will bring books from school. If that is the case, please make sure the book is at their reading level. You can go to arbookfind.com



to type in the name of the book and find the level. If a student does not have a school book, they will pick one out from the library within their reading range. Quizzes can be taken after reading, but it is not required.

What if a book seems too hard?? Use the Five-Finger Book Test!

This is a great way to determine if a book is easy, a little difficult, or too hard for a student to read on his/her own.

- 1. Ask the student to open a book to any page and begin reading. Older students reading more advanced books should choose a paragraph and begin reading.*
- 2. When the student reaches a word s/he doesn't understand, s/he should put up a thumb.*
- 3. For each word that the student cannot read in the page or paragraph, put up another finger.*

Scoring:

0-1 fingers up = this book is probably easy for the student to read by him/herself.

2-4 fingers up = the student is probably able to read this book with some help.

5+ fingers up = this book is too difficult for the student.

Rocket Math

Rocket Math is a simple paper-based system that which helps students memorize their basic math facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Each student has a goal for how many math problems they have to successfully complete within one minute. As they complete a level, they track their own progress by coloring in a "level" of their illustrated rocket tracker.

Students take a quick assessment before beginning Rocket Math. ALL students start with addition because this program builds on itself. Each student will have a worksheet with the picture of the rocket on it. Your tutoring center will have filing folders with each corresponding Rocket Math level. Students work on one worksheet each tutoring session. The worksheet has 2 parts: the top half is practice, which the student completes at their own pace (typically 3-4 minutes); the bottom half is a one-minute timed test. If the student reaches their goal, they pass that level and color in their Rocket. If they do not meet their goal, the tutor records which level they tried and the date, and the student will try that level as many times as needed until they pass.

Skill-Building Curriculum

The Common Core

In 2011, Washington state and Seattle Public Schools adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which aim to develop common learning expectation for K-12 students across the country. Currently 48 states, including Washington, have begun implementing CCSS. They establish consistent goals for each grade level and break them down into Standards that students should be able to achieve by the end of the academic year. For more information on the Common Core, you can refer to resources and SPS's website: [Common Core Resources](#).

YTP's Skill-Building Curriculum

We have created our own Skill-Building Curriculum aligned with the Common Core Standards. Our goal with the Skill-Building Curriculum is to offer additional academic support, aside from homework. Many of our students are below grade level and struggle to get the individualized attention to work on foundational skills in a large classroom setting. Our Skill-Building Curriculum allows students to focus on skills that will make them be successful both in the classroom and with their homework. Center Supervisors use a variety of indicators (report cards, conversations with teachers, and in-house assessments) to determine where students



should start with our Skill-Building Curriculum. It is important to recognize that students do not always start at their grade level.

We currently have structured Skill-Building Curriculum packets for 1st-8th grade Common Core Standards in Math, English & Language Arts, and Writing. Your Center Supervisor will have SMART goals identified around the completion of a number of standards in one or all of these sections. There will be a corresponding packet in the students' binder that will direct you to either work on worksheets within the packet, use resources around the center, or play a specific learning game with your student. These games are organized and located in filing cabinets at your center.

For High School students, we are currently developing activity packets to support college planning, but for now, most High School students stay focused on homework and school projects for the hour. Additionally, we have High School Resource ideas available for extra support and enrichment.

Homework Support

We are not a homework center. Instead, we want to support students with academic concepts that they are struggling with. If they can do the homework on their own, then it doesn't need to be done at the Tutoring Center. At the beginning of your tutoring session, ask your students what they have for homework, and what they might want to prioritize and work on during tutoring. If there are activities you know students are competent with, you might want to encourage your students towards working on homework that they will need support with during tutoring time. Some tips for homework support:

- **Don't do the work for your student!** Assist them by asking questions to test understanding, use example problems and model working through a similar problem.
- **Have your own pencil and scratch paper.** Avoid taking a pencil out of the hands of your student. You want them to have a sense of control and ownership over their work. Having them be prepared to work is important. If you have your own materials, you can work alongside your student.
- **Model processes taught at school.** Students are expected to work through problems in particular ways that might be different from when you learned to do particular math problems. Ask the student how the teacher has explained it at school and try to model those methods. It is ok to share different tips that help you, but they should be secondary to how the student is expected to work through a problem.

RULER and Socio-Emotional Learning

RULER is a socio-emotional curriculum developed by Yale University's Center for Emotional Intelligence. It is now being used at 50 Seattle elementary and middle schools. RULER promotes a process for students to successfully manage one's emotions and navigate life experiences with:

- **R**ecognizing
- **U**nderstanding
- **L**abeling
- **E**xpressing
- **R**egulating

During the 2015-16 school year, YTP staff participated in RULER trainings led by Seattle Public Schools and decided to adopt various tools to use at the tutoring centers. In addition to the use of RULER, some centers are also expanding socio-emotional learning into students' SMART goals, making it a direct focus for some



during the tutoring hour. As a tutor, you may be asked to work with students on their interpersonal skills, personal responsibility, or future planning.

General Tutoring Tips

While our tutoring plan is a detailed outline, what is most important is the relationship between you and your student and how you are able to encourage them into a good space to learn, explore, and remain persistent with challenging activities or concepts. Throughout your hour, remember to:

1. **Ask open-ended questions.** Open ended-questions require more than a yes or no answer and a nod of the head. These types of questions will encourage more conversation and inquisitive thinking.
2. **Use specific praise and encouragement.** Language such as "You're so smart!" lacks focus on specific efforts or processes and sets a student up towards a particular level of "smartness". Something more targeted, however, such as "I appreciate how hard you worked on those problems!" or "You stayed focused during our entire reading time!" helps students identify behaviors or actions that they can replicate in other situations. This not only sets them up for success with one subject or activity, but can support their own self-perception in all facets of life as they learn to identify achievements on their own.
3. **Encourage critical thinking and connections to personal experiences.** It is often tough to help students stay motivated through the tutoring hour. Try drawing connections to other experiences or ideas they are interested in through more open-ended questions that encourage critical thinking and problem solving.
4. **Maintain a balance of being kind yet firm.** Your relationship should be one that is respectful and firm, but friendly. You will connect best with your student when they see you as a respected adult that they can talk to and who listens to them. Understand that students often bring with them a "backpack" full of emotions. Be patient, but still maintain the hour as an hour for academic work and conversation.



5. Summer Learning Program

Overview

Our six-week summer programming shifts in both structure and foci. Our centers run “Literature Circles” in two 1.5-2 hours sessions Monday-Thursday for 1st-8th grade students. In small reading groups, students take on different roles such as Character Captain, Discussion Director, or Word Wizard to build reading confidence, comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition. Guided by one or two tutors, students take turns reading aloud, each from their own copy of the book. On Thursdays, we change the pace for student as they engage in enrichment activities ranging from science and math to art and poetry.

One of our centers, Yesler Terrace, is supported by additional grant money and runs a six-week, Monday-Friday, full-day program for about 75 1st-5th grade students. This program’s focus is broader, and includes language arts, math, and enrichment activities. Each week culminates with a theme-related field trip.

Group Management

As a summer tutor, expectations are similar to the academic year. You can still volunteer one day each week for one or two sessions, and you are still expected to be consistent with your commitment for the six weeks that the program runs. One difference worth noting, however, is the added emphasis on group management. With a small reading group, you will be observing the dynamics between a group of peers, and it is important you feel confident being able to assert yourself with reminders of rules and expectations if need be. With students at different reading levels, your involvement in the reading group will also require the ability to foster a space where students respect each other and each student’s abilities. Your Center Supervisor will outline group expectations, but you will be responsible for re-enforcing them in your group. In more involved cases, your Center Supervisor will be able to support any discipline issues.



6. Working Successfully with Youth

Building Positive Relationships

A good relationship is key to making your tutoring experience positive and effective. It's normal to feel a bit shy or awkward about meeting your students for the first time. Your student may feel the same way.

When you first meet your student you may find...

- They may have learned a variety of defenses against failure.
- They may also have a lot of issues outside of school that make it difficult to focus on their schoolwork.
- They may be nervous, withdrawn or antagonistic at first.
- They most likely are struggling academically. The students we tutor are frequently one or two grade levels behind their peers.

Keys to Success

- **Get to know your student.** Be sure to learn the student's name, know the correct pronunciation and use the student's name often. Share with them who you are, and why you are tutoring. Many of our students live in large families and do not have the opportunity to really be heard at home. At school, their time is extremely structured, leaving little to no time for relationship building with a caring adult. Although our program is very structured, there is always time for tutors to get to know their students.
- **Display enthusiasm and interest.** Your students can tell if you are genuinely interested in them and their work.
- **Be empathetic.** You may not like the way your student has handled a situation, but it's important to try to understand *why* s/he acted in that way. Always believe your student is doing the best s/he can and go from there.
- **Set high expectations.** Research shows that teacher/tutor expectations are a great predictor of student success.
- **Be honest.** If you are unsure of an answer, admit it and work it out together. Model techniques for finding out an answer you don't know; teach resourcefulness.
- **Give positive reinforcement.** Give specific praise and positive feedback often.
- **Be a good listener.** Avoid talking too much. Don't explain anything you don't have to explain. Allow enough "wait time" for your student to think through questions (at least 7 seconds, which is longer than you think!)
- **Be patient.** Try not to become frustrated if things aren't going the way you planned. Let your student set the pace for the relationship. Be patient with the student's progress.
- **Be a positive role model.** Model appropriate and productive behavior. Your student learns from what you do as well as from what you say.



- **Have a sense of humor and don't take it personally!** Your student might not warm up to you right away. Building a good tutoring relationship takes time and patience. Hang in there! If you are feeling frustrated with your match, talk to the center staff. They know the students' individual needs and interests and can give you some great tips.

Icebreaker Ideas

- Guessing Games- I Spy, Twenty Questions (maybe try 5!), etc.
- Hand Tracing- Trace your hand, and write something interesting about yourself in each finger.
- Name Poem- Write your name down the length of a page. Think of a word that describes you for each letter of your name.
- Three wishes – What would your student wish for? What about you?
- Be creative! Try to think of some fun icebreakers to help you get to know one another.

Motivating Students

Often your biggest challenge as a tutor is to keep your student motivated and on task. Some students are motivated by a lot of attention and praise. Others seem to need a reward system or special privileges. Figure out what works for you and your student and stick with it – consistency helps you both know what to expect from each other.

Keys to Success

- **Keep things moving and interesting.** Especially when choosing books, make sure it is a subject your student actually wants to read about.
- **Break up activities into shorter blocks of time.** Use the resources available at the center to keep things interesting. Break tasks up by stretching, getting a drink of water or playing a quick game.
- **Relate subject matter to your student's interests.** For example, if your student is interested in sports, read the sports pages. Look at a city map and locate their neighborhood and places they have visited. Teach them a card game or magic trick.

Stretch Break Activities

- Jumping Jacks – Plan and simple, it gets the blood moving and the jitters out!
- Shake Down – Starting with the right hand, shake it out while counting down from 10. Move onto the left hand, right foot, and then left foot. Continue as needed.
- Balancing Act – Have a contest to see who can stand on one foot longer – you or your student.
This is great for refocusing the mind.

Providing Incentives

If your student needs more than verbal praise or tutoring breaks, the tutoring centers have incentives available. Talk with the staff about options. Some centers try to move away from material incentives, so



check in with the Center Supervisor before promising something to your student. Some examples are stickers, pencils, good notes home, etc. **Please do not give a reward if the student hasn't earned it - this sends the wrong message!**

Responding to Testing by the Student

It's very normal for students to "test" their new tutors. They often like to see what they can get away with and how the tutor will respond. They will continually ask to sharpen a pencil, go to the bathroom, get a drink of water, or take a long time picking out a book. Don't be discouraged or frustrated if your student uses one or more of these tactics when you first start working together. You will need to set the limits by saying something like, "I know you are really thirsty, but you can only get water one time." Having a sense of humor always helps too! If you need additional support, ask the center staff. That is what they are there for!

Using Creative Behavior Management

Some students may try to test your limits and see what your tolerance is for odd behaviors. **It's important to remember that discipline problems often occur for reasons that have nothing to do with you, but rather something that happened to the student that day or issues going on in his/her life.** Your job is to set the tone for positive and productive interaction during the time you are together. **Students need clear definitions of how you expect them to behave.** It is perfectly okay to spend time during the session discussing expectations, center rules, etc. Behavior management should never include any physical contact, including pushing, hitting, or slapping, or threats.

Keys to Success

- **Give choices:** This empowers the student. For example, "Do you want to read first or should I?"
- **Set expectations:** Give clear directions on what you want to accomplish during your tutoring session. Know the rules established by the tutoring center and discuss them with your student. When needed, describe in detail the exact behavior you expect.
- **Expect respect:** Your student should respect you and your time. You respect their time by being engaged, and you can expect that in return.
- **Listen:** Find out why your student is acting out or having trouble focusing. Ask if something happened that day and if they want to talk about it. Your student may need someone who will listen before they can move on and get to work.
- **Proximity:** Sit next to your student. Model learning and assume appropriate posture.
- **Eye contact:** Direct eye contact can let the student know you are paying attention to her/his behavior and that you expect her/him to focus on the task at hand. Develop and use a "look" (eye contact that asks, "What exactly are you doing?") that is not a challenge, but rather a means of communicating to a student that her/his behavior does not fit the present situation.
 - Remember, though, that some students' culture have different norms about eye contact. There are many ways to show that you are paying attention.
- **Ignore low-level distractions:** Proceed as though what you are doing is far more important than a student's off-task behavior.
- **Display a sense of humor:** Laugh or smile to break the tension. It helps to avoid taking yourself (or your student) too seriously.
- **Use specific praise:** It will help your student know when they are doing something "right". This encourages more of the strong behavior you want to see!
- **Consult with the Center Supervisor:** They are a resource for you!



Conclusion

Putting these tips into practice is a great way to make reading and writing a fun and interactive experience for you and your students! Teaching kids to relate reading to their own experiences will not only help keep them interested during the tutoring session, it will become a useful tool they can use throughout their lives. Thank you for your interest and commitment to the students of the Youth Tutoring Program—we hope it will be an enriching experience!

Acknowledgements

The majority of the content comes from the Seattle Reads Tutoring Compact Tutoring Handbook. Other important sources include: The Washington Mutual One-to-One Tutoring Handbook, the Youth Tutoring Program Training Manual, and resources noted within the manual. Other contributors include: Sally Haber, Director of Seattle University's Children's Literacy Project; Lori Renner, former CLP director; Katherine L. Schlick Noe, Ph.D. Seattle University; and many others willing to give their much appreciated "two cents".



Updated August 2016



7. Appendix – Tutoring Tips

READING

Practices to Implement During Reading

Before

- Choose an **appropriate book**.
- **Preview** - take a “walk” through the book. Talk about the cover illustrations, title, author, headings, chapter titles, pictures, etc.
- **Use predictions** about what will happen. Draw on what the child already knows and allow the child to use the information gathered during the preview.
- **Make real life connections**. Draw the child into the book. You are the bridge from the child’s world to the author’s world. *Ex.: “Have you ever done that?”*

During

- Have your student **read out loud**. Lean in and look at the pages with the student. If you perceive the student needs a break, take turns reading out loud or try reading together (choral reading).
- **Check for comprehension**. Pause at an appropriate time and discuss the story as you read. Ask questions such as: “Why do you think he did that?”
Other comprehension strategies include:
 - **Retelling**: Ask your student to tell you about the chapter s/he just read.
 - **Making inferences**: Your student should be able to understand when something is implied but not necessarily said. For example, s/he should know that, “The girl frowned” probably means that she was mad, sad, etc.
 - **Connecting to real-life experiences**: Connecting a story to a child’s own experience is one way to make reading more meaningful. You can help your student make personal connections by asking, “What do you think of this book? Does it remind you of anything in your life?”
- **Help with vocabulary** the student doesn’t understand. Let your student try to figure out themselves first (silently count to seven), then encourage them to try one of the following:
 - Sound it out.
 - Break the word up into parts and sound them out (chunking).
 - Skip the word and come back.
 - See if they can tell what it means from the rest of the sentence (context clues).
 - **TUTORING TIP**: create a list of vocabulary words and save them in the “reading” tab of your student’s binder.

After

- Ask your student to retell the story. Talk about the characters, plot twists, etc.
- Identify new words or difficult words, and make a vocabulary list or flash cards.
- Ask the student how he/she might behave or react to a similar situation.
- Discuss what they learned from the book/story and what they might like to learn more about.
- Ask why the book was given its title.
- Give praise! It’s a big accomplishment to read a whole book!
- Take an AR quiz.



Skills of Successful Readers

Phonics – The ability to connect sounds to written letters.

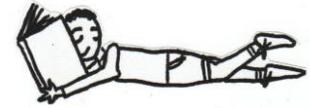
Tip: Try chunking – cover up parts of a word and have the student sound it out piece by piece. It isn't necessary to stop at every word the student has difficulty with, but be sure to watch for challenging combinations.

Fluency – The ability to read smoothly and at an appropriate pace, with proper expression. Stopping at periods and pausing at commas is an indication of fluency.

Tip: Don't stop too often – wait until the end of a paragraph or sentence to go back and discuss the story.

Vocabulary – The ability to recognize words quickly.

Tip: Pay attention to words your student has difficulty with, and note them for future reference.



Comprehension – The ability to understand what was read.

Tip: See "Your Tutoring Hour: Reading" for idea.

Source: Cindy Impola (Some material adapted from Northwest Regional Educational Labs Winter 2002 Tutor Newsletter)

Tips for Reading with Children

If a Student Struggles with a Word

When students have difficulties with words, **silently count to seven before prompting**, and encourage them to:

- Break it apart or into chunks.
- Look at the part of the word they know.
- Back up and try again.
- Skip the word and come back.
- Put in something that makes sense.
- Continue reading to see if they can tell what it means from the rest of the sentence (context clues).
- Give information and discuss it with the student.
- Don't give away the answers!**

** Adapted from materials written by Susan Woodruff.*

How to Help Struggling Readers (Typical Stumbling Blocks)

Doesn't like to read:

Don't panic! We often dislike the things that give us the most trouble. Your job is to help your student see that reading can be fun – be your warm, caring, good humored self. **Read aloud to your student from a book you love.** Sharing your love of reading will help them see why it could be fun. Work on the skills that will make your student become more a fluent reader, so that s/he has a chance to enjoy reading. Above all, be patient; through your support and example, your student will feel better about reading.

Thinks reading is boring:

Children's literature keeps getting better.



- Ask the tutoring center staff for suggestions on books your student might enjoy.
- Find materials that match your student's interests. For example, read about sports, new video games, famous celebrities, and TV shows if that is what your student is into.
- Expose your student to a variety of literature. Some students love Greek mythology, others like mysteries.
- Read comic books, magazines, cookbooks, or materials that have practical application such as the school lunch menu or the directions to a card game.
- Ask lots of questions and talk about what they are reading.

Doesn't like to read out loud during the tutoring session:

Your student may feel very self-conscious about reading to you. Break the ice by letting him/her get to know you, then read to him/her from something you like to read. **When s/he does read aloud, help him/her to think of it as reading *with* you and not to or for you.** Talk about the story or ideas and keep the focus on reading for pleasure and knowledge. Try these reading strategies with your student:

- **Shared reading** – the student reads one sentence (paragraph or page) and the tutor reads the next.
- **Echo Reading** – the tutor reads one line and the student repeats it.
- **Choral reading** – the tutor and the student read out-loud at the exact same time.

Struggles with unknown words:

Good readers automatically understand most of the words they encounter. Children who struggle do not – they have to spend precious attention and energy on figuring out many words. This makes the process of reading sometimes very slow and very hard. Remember that figuring out words is problem solving. Try the following strategies:

- Skip the difficult word. Read on to the end of the sentence or paragraph, then go back to the beginning of the sentence and try again.
- Read on. Reread inserting the beginning sound of the unknown word.
- Substitute a word that makes sense.
- Look for a known chunk or small word. Read the word without the vowels.
- Link to prior knowledge.
- Predict and anticipate what could come next.
- Cross check.
 "Does it sound right? Does it make sense?" "Does it look right?"
- Write words you can't figure out and need to know on Post-Its, scrap paper or a bookmark.
- Reread passage several times for fluency and meaning.

Reads so slowly that she/he forgets what was read:

This is the key challenge for struggling readers. When a student has to pay too much attention to figuring out unknown words, s/he is unable to concentrate on the meaning of the passage. Make sure the book is at the student's level, and then focus on comprehension questions above vocabulary to practice this skill.

** Adapted from "Getting Started as a Tutor" by Katherine L. Schlick Noe, Ph.D. Seattle University and Winter 2000 issue of the Tutor "Motivating Reluctant Adolescent Readers".*

***Strategies for unknown words from Invitations 1994 by Reggie Routman.*



WRITING

Writing and reading go hand in hand. Becoming a good writer will help a child become a better reader and vice versa. To help your students become good writers you must first help him/her understand the function of writing and encourage him/her to look for the ways we use writing every day. Try using some of these techniques when writing comes up as part of homework or skill-building.

Writing Side by Side*:

Talk to your student about what you want to write about. After the discussion, sit side by side, each with your own journal and write for three to five minutes. Then share what you wrote and take time to discuss the patterns you see (for example, words that start with “sh” or words that end in “ing”).

Shared Writing:

Work with your student to create a story or other piece of writing together. Take turns writing sentences and offer each other suggestions about how to make the language more interesting.

Dialogue Journals:

Have a conversation through writing. Using a notebook or a piece of paper begin a conversation with your student. Your student will read your writing and respond with his/her own written thoughts. Be sure to write comments about what the student wrote before asking more questions or furthering the conversation.

Poetry:

Students of all ages love reading and writing poetry. Read some examples with your students, talk about how poetry differs from prose, and then have him/her work on his/her own poetry.

Comic Strips: Save the Sunday comics, white-out the dialogue, make a copy, and have your student fill in his/her own words. Talk about how pictures help us understand writing and have fun creating your own hilarious comics.

Story Dictation/Personal Writing: Have your student dictate a story. After you have written his/her words, have the student make some illustrations and read the book to you. This activity is great for struggling and beginning writers!

Letter Writing:

Help your student learn to write and send letters. Have him/her write to family members, to you, to his/her favorite musician or author. After writing the letters, make sure to send them and try to wait patiently for a reply.

List Making:

Work with your student to create lists of things s/he wants to accomplish, his/her favorite foods, or his/her favorite places to go. Try this after reading a good story – have your student assume the identity of one of the characters and make lists from his/her point of view. For example, after reading Where the Wild Things Are make a list of all the reasons why Max liked being a wild thing and a list of all the reasons why he wanted to go home.

**Writing side by side from The Reading Team: A Handbook for Volunteer Tutors K-3, Lesley Mandel Morrow & Barbara J. Walker.*



MATH

For many tutors, math may bring back negative feelings from personal educational experiences. If you think of math as something that other people are good at or that has no practical use, your attitude may undermine your ability to coach your student. Regardless of your relationship with math, or any other subject for that matter, your level of expertise does not matter as much as the attitude you take to approaching it. As you work with a student, approach subjects and assignments with a good attitude, and work to explain how it can apply to everyday things. If you don't understand something, use it as an opportunity to model good practices of finding resources to help explain concepts or using different tools to help see a problem in a different way.

Cover Your Bases

- Begin each math session by asking your student to explain what they are supposed to do. By their response, you'll know if she can do the assignment alone or if she needs help.
- Ask your student how the teacher explained it in class; do they have notes or do they go over any sample problems?
- Use text books available in class or online videos to help explain concepts (to both you and your student!).

Working Through Problems

- Always have scratch paper available, one piece for each of you!
- Have students read problems out loud, underlining key words, numbers, or symbols they will have to refer back to when figuring out the problem.
- Encourage students to explain his problem-solving process so you can understand his reasoning.
- Ask questions to guide students through the process, such as "Where do you begin?" "What do you need to find out?" "Can you show me in a drawing how you got the answer?"
- Remember, it's OK to say that you don't understand a problem. It gives you an opportunity to review the lesson together to see if you've missed an important piece of information.
- Make a chart of key information to refer to during each problem.

Checking The Answer

- Have students work backwards from the answer to come up with the question they began with.
- Remind students to label their answers.
- Have students say the answer in a complete sentence if it is a word problem.