

Exploring Implicit Bias Rubric

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

- Identify implicit, or unconscious, bias.
- Apply strategies to counter the effects of your own implicit biases.

Research Recommended Approach:

Research Recommends

While it is important to maintain high expectations, assuming that the student is naturally good at math demonstrates implicit bias due to their race, or perhaps other reasons. Instead, the tutor should demonstrate their belief that even though the student is struggling, they can work hard and succeed— just like any other student. Therefore, the most-desired response or correct answer is:

“Just remember, grades aren’t everything. It’s what you learn that matters. How about you tell me what you’ve tried so far?”

Tutors must be aware of any unconscious biases they may have in order to ensure all students reach their potential. Often referred to as implicit biases, unconscious assumptions are beliefs or attitudes we may hold about certain groups without being aware of them. Just about everyone has some implicit bias. It can influence your expectations based on race, gender, age, ability, religion, and more. There is little evidence that implicit bias can be eliminated in the long term. However, being aware of your bias is the first step to letting it not control your actions. You can overcome implicit bias by first discovering your blind spots and then actively working to combat any stereotypes or attitudes that may affect your interactions with students. There are four steps coaches can apply to reduce or counter the effects of their own implicit bias.

- *Apply introspection-* To reduce or counteract the effects of bias, you must be able to explore and identify your own bias. There are resources available on PLUS to help you explore your bias.
- *Maintain high expectations-* Ensure you are actively maintaining high standards.
- *Learn to slow down -* Be sure to pause and reflect before talking to the student. Make sure you are not making any broad assumptions. Implicit bias occurs subconsciously in the brain, so taking a moment to use your active mind can help you catch biased statements.
- *Use a student's perspective -* Put yourself in the shoes of a student and consider experiences from their point of view. Evaluate the student based on their personal characteristics rather than expectations of a group.

(Devine et al., 2013)

Research Recommendations

Research says implicit bias occurs when a person makes an assumption without any evidence based on stereotypes. Using the four strategies previously discussed, the correct answers are:

Tutor's response	Recommended Strategy
"I remember struggling with math problems like these when I was your age. Let's give it a try."	Use a student's perspective.
[The tutor reflects on their own biases and then responds.] "It appears you are having some trouble. Let's find out what you know."	Apply introspection.
[The tutor pauses for a few seconds before texting the student.] "Let's work through your homework together. You can do it!"	Learn to slow down.
"I know you can do this. You just have to work hard and keep going. Show me your first problem."	Maintain high expectations.

Studies show that putting yourself in the shoes of a student and considering experiences from their point of view, is an effective strategy to prevent bias. This way you are evaluating the student and their abilities based on their personal characteristics rather than expectations of a group. Therefore, the correct answer to (8) is D. below:

"I remember struggling with math problems like these when I was your age. Let's give it a try together and see how we do."

In tutoring it is important to always maintain high expectations and encourage students to work hard to achieve their goals. It is important that tutors express that even though the student is struggling, they can work hard and succeed— just like any other student. Therefore, A is the most-desired, or correct response:

"I understand why you want an A on the assignment. You can do it if you work hard. Let's try to solve these problems together."

PREDICT RESPONSES

Questions -

If you were Malcolm's tutor, what exactly would you say to him in response to his need to get an A on the assignment?

How does the tutor's response to Xinyu reflect unconscious bias, otherwise known as implicit bias?

Answers -

"I understand why you want an A on the assignment. You can do it if you work hard.
Let's try to solve these problems together."

"Just remember, grades aren't everything. It's what you learn that matters. How about you tell me what you've tried so far?"

Tutor responses need to: Tutors should not have any bias and their responses should use a student's perspective or introspect while maintaining high expectations

Correct (1): The tutor does not demonstrate implicit bias. The tutor holds students to high expectations and focuses on student learning. The tutor understands students' perspectives or introspects.

Incorrect (0): The tutor demonstrates implicit bias. Tutor tutor does not hold the student to high expectations and/or does not hold the students to high expectations or focus on learning. The tutor does not understand students' perspectives or does not apply introspection.

Tutor response:	Rationale
As Malcolm's tutor, I would say: "I understand how important this assignment is for your goal of becoming an engineer. Let's focus on understanding the concepts and working through the problems together. We'll take it one step at a time to ensure you're prepared. What part of the assignment is giving you the most trouble?"	1, the response focuses on student learning and applies introspection ensuring they're prepared.
The grades aren't important, your learning is.	1. The response focuses on students learning.
Let's focus on learning the material	0, the response does not hold students to high expectations.
I believe in you, let's see what's the problem.	0, idk
Given Malcolm's goal of obtaining an A on the assignment and his aspiration to become an engineer, an appropriate response could be: "I understand your goal to get an A on the assignment, especially considering your ambition to become an engineer. Let's work together to tackle these problems, and I'm confident that with effort and focus, you can achieve the grade you're aiming for."	1
I understand that an A on this assignment is important to you. I know you can do this so let's start these problems together.	1, introspection

EXPLAIN RESPONSES:

Answers -

By emphasizing the student's learning, and not assuming they know how to solve all math problems, the tutor can support them and give them confidence to move forward. By telling the student they are capable of getting an A, the tutor is setting high expectations.

Tutor responses need to: tutors should explain the tutor's rationale for their predict response

Correct (1): The tutors response demonstrates that the tutor should strive to avoid bias and support the students by holding them to high expectations and applying introspection.

Incorrect (0): The tutor responses do not recognize that the tutors understand that they should strive to avoid bias. The tutor does not understand the value of holding students to high expectations and/or the importance of applying introspection.

Explain:

Tutor response:	Rationale
This response does not draw any attention to him failing the class, instead just offering help and support. The other responses imply that the tutor does not believe in Malcolm because he failed last semester.	0
It encourages the student and avoids making the implicitly biased assumption that the student would not be able to get an A on the assignment.	1
It doesn't assume that he isn't capable of getting an A	1
It acknowledges Malcolm's goal of achieving an A without putting him down or implying that he can't do it. Instead it keeps an objective view that focuses on hard work and moving forward.	1
It encourages the student to work hard	0