

Hints and Tips for Effective Tutoring Sessions

1. **Preparation:** Running a successful session requires careful planning. Never go into a session intending to “play it by ear” or “answer questions.” Review materials in advance before the start of your session. This is especially important if you transferred here or have not seen the material in a long time. Be ready for the first session so you are already familiar with the material and can bring the student in as well.
 - a. **Syllabus:** Review and refer to the course syllabus regularly. Check that students understand the requirements and dates of reading assignments, projects, and test dates. If you do not have a copy of the syllabus, ask the student for his/her syllabus so you can know the assignments, projects and exams the student has for the quarter.
2. **Feedback and Expectations:** There are many different types of learning styles (visual auditory, hands on) and your student might have a particular style that works best for him/her. Ask for feedback from the student on your tutorial methods and what he/she feels helps them the most.

Ask your student what he/she is expecting from the tutorial session. Once you have a sense of what your student expects from you, explain or describe to your students how to best prepare for a tutorial session with you and how to make the most out of your sessions.

- a. Assist your tutees to develop effective study strategies.
- b. Discuss time management, academic reading skills, lecture note taking, exam preparation, research skills, and problem-solving strategies.
- c. Encourage your students to ask you questions.

Much like your students have expectations for you as a tutor, what expectations and limits do you have for your students? What preparation should they have done before coming to your session?

3. **Rapport:** Establish a comfortable personal space within which you can facilitate learning. Begin with telling your students a little about yourself-perhaps why you are in the major you chose. You can also build rapport with students by personally inviting students to the sessions.
 - a. Questions you might ask:
 - i. What do you find difficult about the class?
 - ii. What was (if any) your experience with the subject before this course? (i.e. in high school)
 - iii. What do you like about the subject?
4. **Interactive Learning Strategies:** Create an interactive learning environment so your students can feel comfortable expressing themselves, and develop their own ideas. It is more effective to “model” how successful students learn a particular subject than it is to “tell” students how to do it.
 - a. Avoid interrupting student answers. Your sessions should provide a comfortable environment for students to ask questions or attempt answers. Protect students from interruptions, laughter, or from those with louder voices.
 - b. Encourage students to summarize major concepts of the lectures. Let other student fine-tune the responses. If information is incorrect, ask students to find specific references in the text or notes.

- c. Ask questions, ask students to bring in questions, use small group discussion techniques, encourage students to answer one another's questions, encourage students to explain concepts to one another, encourage students to search for information in books and notes, and so on. Don't be a source of information. Become a learning facilitator.
 - d. Waiting for students to volunteer a well-developed answer takes time. If you are uncomfortable waiting for 30 seconds, join students in looking through notes or text. If students are unable to answer the question, ask for the source of information. For example, ask for the date of the lecture that contained the information and search for the answer together. Avoid taking on the responsibility of providing the answer.
 - e. If you have a large group in your session, divide them into subgroups. Provide discussion topics that the group can explore. Move from group to group, participating from time to time, reassuring the group that you are still there for them.
5. **Evaluations:** Be continually self-evaluative. You should set goals for the tutoring session and spend a few minutes analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the session when it is over. After evaluating your session, figure out how to best prepare for the next session.
- a. **Student Progress/Evaluation:** You should be familiar with how your student is progressing within the course he/she is taking. Ask your student to see the papers or exams after the Professor has graded them so you can see how the student did, problem areas and expectations from the Professor.
 - b. Informally assess your students' academic strengths and weaknesses.

At the end of the quarter, it is also important to give out evaluations to each of your students to fill out about your services.

6. **Professionalism:** Please uphold the same expectations you have of your students that you expect from them. Be on time, call at least 24 hours in advance when you have an emergency and need to cancel an appointment, be courteous and professional at all times. You are representing LSS and UCSC.
7. **OTHERS:**
- a. **Referrals:** If you notice that your student may need Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS), Disability Resource Center (DRC) or other advising services, please do not hesitate to ask a staff person to help you, help your student.

Enjoy your tutoring experience. Be proud of your contribution to the UCSC educational environment.

PROBING TECHNIQUES

As tutors, one of your main challenges will be asking questions – not giving answers. Effective tutoring often means helping students discover answers for themselves. The following techniques may help you become an expert as well as a sensitive questioner.

There are many reasons to question students rather than give information. Reason to question:

- Find out what the student know (don't make assumptions)
- Adjust the goals of the day accordingly
- Learn how they learn
- Understanding question as a final follow-up

In General:

Don't :

- 1) Ask "yes/no" questions or one-word questions
- 2) Ask patronizing or "phony" questions
- 3) Answer your own questions
- 4) Do all the explaining
- 5) Come across overly strong or aggressive

Do:

- 1) Respect your student's privacy
- 2) Use the following techniques:

To Prompt: Silence; echo; "Can you tell me more?"; "Anything else?"

To Clarify: "Could you give me an example?"; "Why do you say that?"; "What do you mean by...?"; "How about summarizing what's been said so far?"

To Dig Deeper: "What are you assuming?"; "Why would that be so?"; "What do you need to find out (learn) to improve this?"; "What would you say is missing?"

To Get a Fresh Point of View: "What would (another person or group) say about this?"; "What would happen if...?"; "How does this relate to...?"; "Pretend you are ____, then what would be your point of view?"; "How is your point of view different from ...?"

What type of verb you use to achieve your goal...different questions can encourage the student to demonstrate:

Knowledge: "Does anyone know the answer to that?"

Comprehension: "How is that related to ...?"

Application: "Give an example of that."

Analysis: "What do we need to know in order to solve this problem?"

Synthesis: "How could we phrase that into a question that might be asked on an exam?"

Evaluation: "How does ...compare with ..."

Useful Verbs in your Tutorial Session:

define	list	restate	explain	identify	translate
repeat	recall	describe	express	review	illustrate
discuss	compare	clarify	apply	diagram	interpret
assess	select	estimate	judge	evaluate	demonstrate
solve	relate	contrast	analyze	calculate	differentiate

Think of three questions that you expect this week. Then write a response that you might have that could redirect their question.

Students question (1) :

Your redirected question (1) :

Students question (2) :

Your redirected question (2) :

Students question (3) :

Your redirected question (3) :

Starting a session:

- Seating arrangement, informal deemphasize teacher-student
- Sign-in sheet, what if you don't have one?
- Names: how do you know their name, how do they know yours , and do they know each other?
- Incorporating each students goal into the time period
- Getting the students to work and talk with each other

During a Session:

- Look through the textbooks to teach students how to find answers
- Review the students lecture notes
- Know your boundaries before starting any tutorial session (i.e., times and days are you available, where you are flexible, where you are not, the latest times a student can call...)
- Carefully read specific assignments/problems with which you are assisting students
- Maintain eye contact
- Make use of the language of the particular discipline, course, and instructor

Ending a session:

- Informal quiz: One last question for student to demonstrate knowledge
- Predicting Test questions
- Identify the big idea, what is the take home or point
- Predict the next lecture topic
- Make a cheat sheet of important topic and formulas for the day
- What are the students next steps and goals
- Create a study group to finish work

Facilitation Guidelines

Collaborative Learning Groups

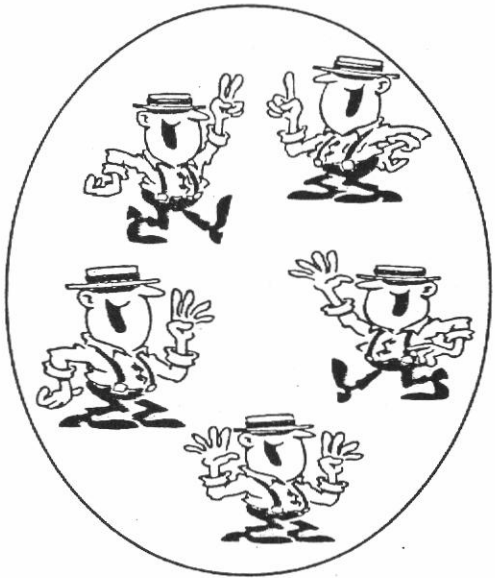
1. **Role** of facilitator:

Goal is for students to think for themselves by getting them as involved in their own work as possible. This role is different from the usual teacher used in the more traditional passive learning model.

2. **Expect** and demand students to perform at their highest level of excellence. Assignments need to be completed on time and done well. Students should be expected to stay current or work ahead of the class.
3. **Encourage** students to work together on problems/projects rather than relying on the facilitator. Students should all know each other's names and how to contact each other outside of the classroom.
4. **Questions** should be reflected back onto the students themselves, by asking other questions reframing how the student approaches the problem, referring back to the group, or getting another student to help.
5. **Teach** students how to be teachers by encouraging them to teach to others in their groups and solving problems at the board.
6. **Foster** a sense of learning for the common good as opposed to the more traditional competitive learning approach, by having more advanced students work with the lower students.
7. **Equalize** participation by encouraging non-participators and toning down the more dominant students.
8. **Rehearse** testing situations. Many students panic during tests. Practice exams can help students learn to maximize their test taking skills.
9. Have **FUN!!** Your students will enjoy the experience of learning better!

Collaborative Learning Techniques

Group Discussion



Description

A group discussion is a general unstructured discussion of an issue or topic by the group. Individual members are free to contribute or not contribute.

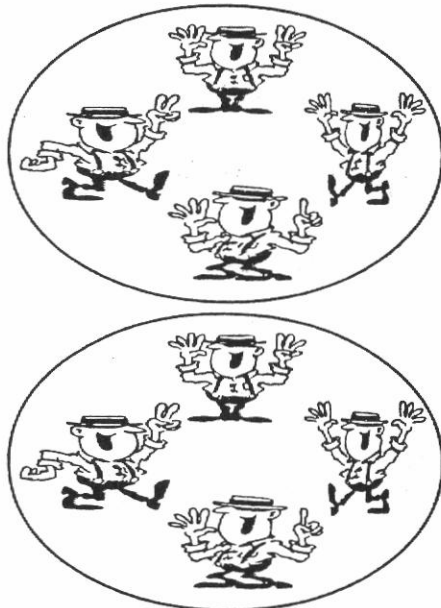
Hints

This is the most common form of collaborative learning. It is also the form that requires the most skill to use successfully.

Ideally, everyone is actively involved in the discussion and the discussion topic is of equal interest to all group members.

When group discussion is successful, it is difficult to determine if there is a discussion leader.

Clusters



Description

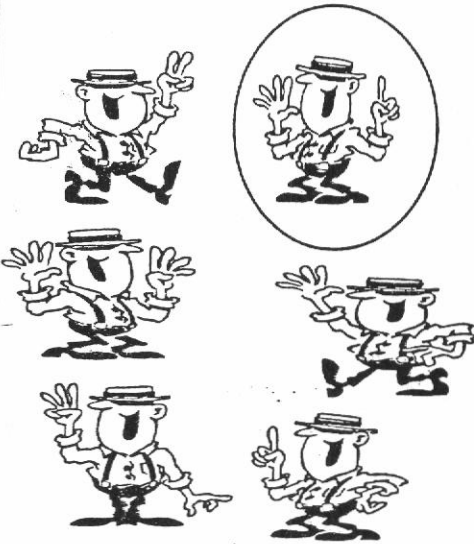
In *clusters*, group participants are divided into smaller groups for discussion. They may also be allowed to self-select the small group they want to be in. After discussing the assigned topic the cluster may report their finding to the large group.

Hints

Make sure that each group is provided flip chart paper or assigned a space on the blackboard.

Allow time for each group to report back to the large group. You have to assign someone from each group to report back.

Guest Discussion Leader



Description

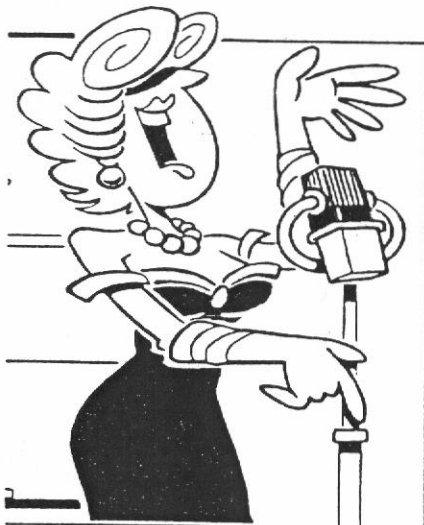
One person in the group is assigned to present on a topic or review material for the group and then lead the discussion for the group. This person should not be the regular group leader.

Hints

When assigning a discussion topic to individual members of the group, you may need to allow time for the person leading the discussion to prepare for the discussion.

This technique works best when everyone or nearly everyone in the group is given an assignment to be the "expert" on.

Individual Presentation



Description

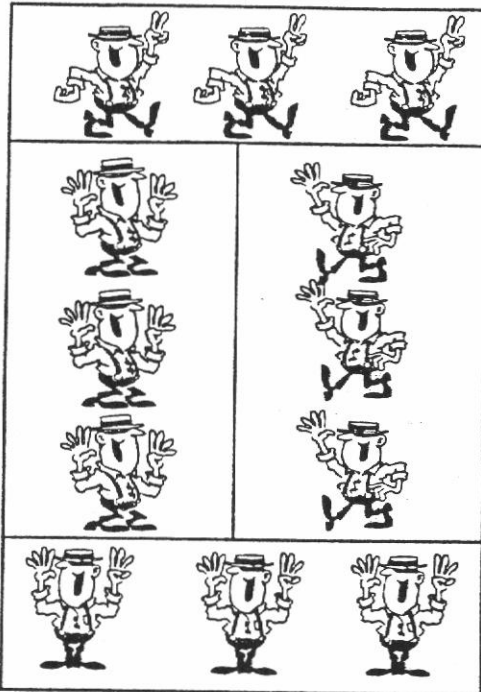
Group members present or practice presenting on a topic, question, or issue to the group. Unlike a "Guest Discussion Leader" this is formal presentation delivered to a captive audience.

Hints

An individual presentation is an uninterrupted presentation by one person to the group.

Typically this might be used in SI for rehearsing a presentation.

Jigsaw



Description

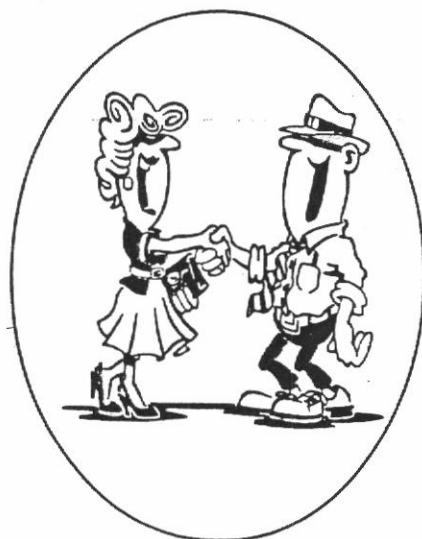
Group members are broken into smaller groups. Each small group works on some aspect of the same problem, question, or issue. They then share their part of the puzzle with the large group.

Hints

Jigsaws, when used properly, make the group as a whole dependent upon all the of subgroups. Each group has a piece of the puzzle.

When using a *Jigsaw*, make sure you carefully define the limits of what each group will contribute to the topic that is being explored.

Turn To Your Partner and . . . (TTPA)



Description

Group members work with a partner on an assignment or discussion topic.

Hints

TTPA's work best with group participants who have already been provided with enough background on a subject that they can immediately move to a discussion with their partner without previewing or reviewing concepts.

There is a variation on TTPA called "Think/Pair/Share." In a Think/Pair/Share individuals work alone (think) before they turn to their partner (pair) and discuss the question or topic (share.)

Think/Pair/Share

1.



2.



3.



Description

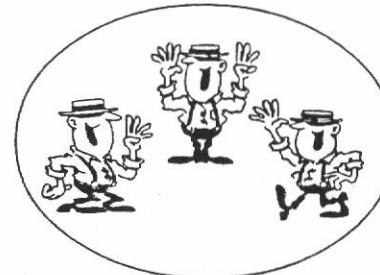
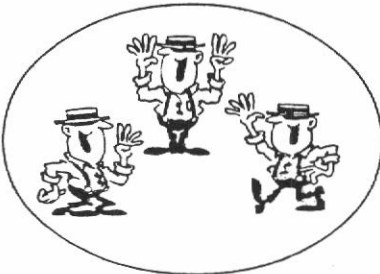
Group members work on an assignment or project individually and then share their results with a partner.

Hints

The goal of a Think/Pair/Share is allow participants time to think **BEFORE** they discuss. Research shows that when people are given time to contemplate an answer to a question, their answers differ from those they would give if they responded immediately.

When doing a Think/Pair Share, give participants a specific amount of time (30 seconds, five minutes, etc.) for the "think" portion.

Learning Groups



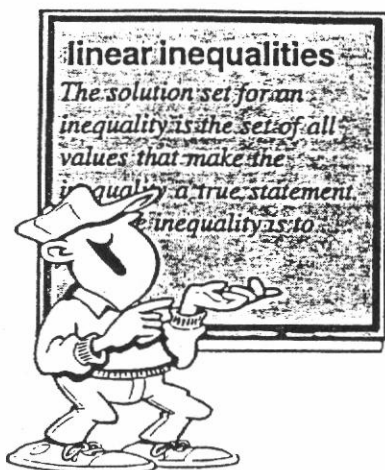
Description

A learning group is composed of three people who form a discussion group. Often persons are assigned roles within the discussion group. These groups may or may not report back to the large group.

Hints

Psychologically, a group with three members has much different dynamics than groups with two or with four. Learning groups of three can also be useful when you want to encourage discussion but cannot arrange chairs in a circle--three people sitting side by side can more easily carry on a discussion than four or more.

Poster Groups



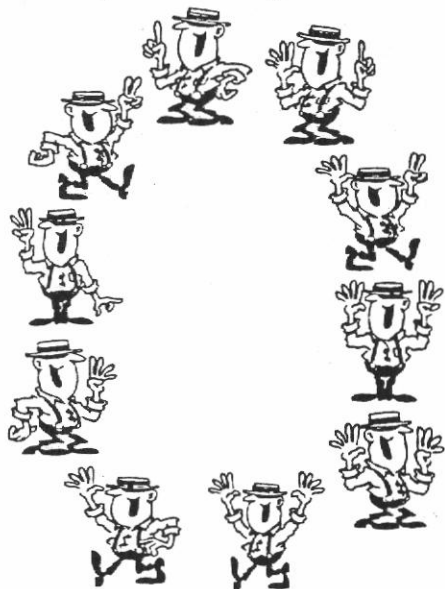
Description

An issue, topic, question, or problem is placed on poster paper and taped to the wall. Participants are allowed to visit each "wall space" and write what they know about each topic.

Hints

This is a great exercise to use when the group has been sitting too long. If it is not convenient to pack around poster paper, you can also divide the chalk board into sections. Make certain to allow the group time to copy what they have written on the board or paper into their notes.

Group Survey



Description

Each group member is asked to work on an assignment, question, or project. They are then asked to briefly share their views with the group. This process insures that everyone in the group will get to talk.

Hints

When assigning questions to individual group members, you don't always have to go in the order in which the group is seated. For instance, allow group members to select a question to answer or even ask them to select a question about which they are unsure.