

TIPS FOR TUTORING MATH AND SCIENCE



- Check for understanding by asking tutee to explain a concept back to you instead of simply asking if s/he “understands.” (For example: *Can you tell me again how to get $2x$ there? Or how to find the slope of this line again?*)
- Different people learn differently; some are visual learners while others learn better by listening. Try to incorporate both strategies while you are tutoring (i.e. verbally explain and write-out/draw problems). Try to provide practical examples that will make the material more attainable.
- If a tutee does not understand a concept, explain it again using different words or examples. Repeating an explanation the same way a second time probably will not help your tutee understand. This also applies in general to students who are not native English speakers.
- When explaining a difficult or new concept, go slow. Try to remember what it was like when you first learned the information. Give your tutee time to process the new information and try to explain concepts at a level of learning the student will understand.
- Give your tutee plenty of time to respond to a question or problem. What may feel like an awkward silence to you may be valuable thinking time for the student. By waiting, you will also be less likely to just give the student the answer.
- Except as a last resort, don’t supply the answer to a problem; after all, you will not be there when it comes time to take the test. Instead, try to ask questions that will lead your tutees towards the answer.
- Give specific positive feedback. Let them know what they are doing well and help them to identify specific weaknesses that they may need to work on.
- Help the tutee to identify consistent errors that they make, so that they can be more aware and learn to correct themselves.
- Emphasize the PROCESS over the ANSWER. It is more important that students learn and understand how to get to an answer on their own.
- Continuously refer students back to the text or their notes. This way, they will know where to look for help again in the future. You will also be modeling good study techniques.
- If you do not know the answer, do not pretend you do. Ask for help from the instructor on duty or from another tutor.

