

LEARNING CENTER ENGLISH TUTORING LAB HANDOUT

TUTORING AS EMPOWERMENT

Developing a student's power

Characteristics of effective tutoring

Motivates

- Encourages and supports students' initiative in seeking success
- Points out successes, progress
- Recognizes that we can guide students to discover their own abilities
- Praises and provides feedback to students; displays enthusiasm for subject; makes it fun; shows how far they have come—shows progress over time

Involves student in active learning:

- Encourages student participation
- Engages in two-way communication, not top-down directives.
- This two-way communication is a subtle and important issue because in most other learning environments students are passive.
- Encourages students to do the writing and thinking; tutor structures activities so students do the work
- Directs student toward independence. The more the student does, the more he believes he can do.

Fosters independence

- Enables students to learn or master a skill so that eventually they can work without a tutor.
- Tutors himself out of a job! Students get to a point at which they no longer need a tutor.
- Brings students to recognize the value of being independent and taking responsibility for their own learning as the outcome of the tutoring process
- Guides students to become better, to teach themselves, to be confident
- Provides methods, fosters self-sufficiency

Models

The helpless model

- tutor is viewed as an all-knowing authority on the subject
- student is viewed as the helpless figure, totally dependent on the tutor
- one way flow of knowledge/information from tutor to student

Empowering Model

- student takes as much responsibility as possible for own learning
- tutor provides the tools, perhaps guidance, for learning
- tutor uses the collaborative approach with two way exchange of ideas
- student is participant in collaboration, optimistic about learning, open, takes responsibility for expressing his/her own ideas
- student takes responsibility for own learning
- tutor is viewed role model and peer, demonstrating obtainable goals

Summary Notes

- Do not take away empowerment; do not let student leave responsibility for
- Learning; learning should be student's responsibility
- Tutor there to provide tools for learning
- Tutor provides a supportive environment

Comparison of helpless vs. empowerment model

Helpless model

Student is helpless

Tutor is all knowing authority on the subject

Student depends on tutor to diagnose problems - one way flow of knowledge

Tutor does work or displays his/her work; student not encouraged to think on own

Student remains dependent and dependency is reinforced

No connection between sessions; endless cycle of student returning for session, no progress

Student continues to doubt can do work independently

Empowering model

Tutor patiently waits as student is encouraged to think on his/her own

Collaborative effort: tutor does not assume to know everything

Two way exchange of information

Tutor points out student's own ideas and gives student credit for own thoughts

Emphasis on methods & approaches rather than correcting single errors

Student increases skills from session, upward spiral of progress

Student sees how to proceed on her own