



## **SSIA VOLUNTEER TUTOR TRAINING AND RESOURCE GUIDE**

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# WELCOME!

*Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Successful Schools in Action! We are very excited and grateful to have you as a tutor. Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions, concerns, or feedback:*

Flo Minehan [flominehan@schoolsinaction.org](mailto:flominehan@schoolsinaction.org) (206) 284-7537

## Introduction to SSIA

**Our mission: We seek and share resources to support and strengthen public schools through innovative strategies and community partnerships to secure high levels of success for every student in every school.**

SSIA is a coalition of the 6 Public Schools in Queen Anne and Magnolia:

**Catharine Blaine K-8, The Center School, Coe Elementary,  
John Hay Elementary, Lawton Elementary,  
and McClure Middle School**

Our schools offer a variety of programs to serve the needs of a diverse community of students. Some of the programs represented include Special Ed., English Language Learners (ELL), and Advanced Learners.

## About Seattle Public Schools (SPS)

- ❖ The SPS District serves over 45,000 students within 90 schools.
- ❖ Students come to the SPS from over 70 countries and there are more than 100 languages spoken within the school district.
- ❖ SPS strongly emphasizes parent and community involvement in all schools.
- ❖ There are various types of schools: K-5, K-8, 6-8, 6-12, 9-12, and alternative programs.
- ❖ SPS has programs for bilingual students new to the United States called Bilingual Orientation Centers (BOC). These programs assist newcomer English Language Learners (ELL) to improve their English reading and writing skills in order to transition to mainstream schools.

## School Procedures for Volunteers

- 1. Sign in and out** in the main office.
- 2. Wear a name badge** so that people know who you are.
- 3. Introduce yourself** to the school secretaries and other staff so they know who you are.
- 4. Call on the days you cannot tutor. *Teachers count on you!*** Call the main office as soon as you know you will not be available. Leave a clear message with your name and the name of the teacher with whom you are working. Mention that you are a volunteer tutor, and tell them you cannot come in that day.

### **Main Office Numbers at each school:**

- **Catharine Blaine:** (206) 252-1920
- **Center:** (206) 252-9850
- **Coe:** (206) 252-2000
- **John Hay:** (206) 252-2100
- **Lawton:** (206) 252-2130
- **McClure:** (206) 252-1900

- 5. Communicate** with the teacher as needed (you can ask for their email and/or direct room phone number). Please remember to respect their time!

*Please see the last page for more detailed information about each school, including links to their web sites.*

## Guidelines for Tutor/Student Behavior

- **Touching:** Be careful about touching students.
  - Try to stick to patting students on the back, shoulders, or arms.
  - High fives are great!
  - If students initiate a hug with you, try to turn it into a side hug.
- **Discipline:** Be clear about the rules and expectations when you are working with students. For example, "Please,...":
  - Stay in your seat.
  - Pay attention.
  - Do your work.
  - Respect others around you.
- If a problem arises:
  - Remind the students of the rules.
  - If the problem continues, give them a more serious warning and remind them that you will tell the teacher.
  - If the problem still continues, tell the teacher.
- ***In general, try to take care of any problems yourself quietly. Refer more difficult situations to the teacher.***
- **Confidentiality:** Keep information you hear about students at the school.
  - If a student tells you something that you feel you need to report, tell the teacher.
  - Avoid sharing personal information such as your address, phone number, or email with students.

## Core Qualities of an Effective Tutor

- A genuine sense of dignity, respect and appreciation for all people and an unconditional acceptance for students representing a wide range of cultures and backgrounds.
- An enthusiastic, encouraging attitude (even when discouraged) and the desire to help *as well as learn from* your students.
- An ability to build positive relationships and promote self-confidence and intrinsic motivation in children.
- Common sense & a sense of humor
- Patience, with your student & yourself

## What is my role as a tutor?

Due to budget cuts, there is less staff in the schools. Many students struggle in core subject areas and need extra tutoring to meet grade level standards.

### **Possible roles you may have:**

What you do depends on the teacher with whom you're working. He/She may have you:

- In the classroom as an assistant.
- Leading a small group within the classroom, the hallway, or the library.
- Working one-on-one with a student inside the classroom, the hallway, or library.

### **Remember:**

- Be flexible! What you do may vary each time you tutor.
- You can check with the teacher about what he/she wants you to do, just make sure to not interrupt while they're teaching.
- Observe how the teacher runs his/her classroom and try to model your behavior after their style.
- Bring an enthusiastic, encouraging attitude (even when discouraged) and the desire to help, as well as learn from your students.

## Tips and Strategies for Effective Tutoring

### **As a tutor, what can you do?**

It's obvious that you cannot solve all the difficulties a student has. What you can do is help students during the tutoring session to focus on learning, to get their school needs met, and to feel good about their work and worth as human beings.

### **Motivating students to learn**

Students can find motivation in a variety of ways. Some work hard simply because they want to learn and succeed in school. Some students seem to need a lot of attention and praise to boost their confidence. Still others seem to need a reward system or special privileges. In order to motivate students you must help them learn to recognize and get meaning from their own accomplishments. You can do this by:

- **Setting goals** that give students a purpose for learning and help them in getting their school needs met. These goals will usually be determined with input from the teacher. They can range from short-term, what-needs-to-happen-in-the-next-half-hour goals to long-term, project-with-deadlines goals.
- **Providing individual attention**, guidance and support. One simple way to show attention to your student(s) is to learn their name(s) and use it/them often.
- **Giving students praise** & positive feedback for their efforts. (See section on Compliments and Feedback)

### Creating a Mutually Rewarding Experience

Tutoring can be a very rewarding experience for both you and the student. To achieve the most from your sessions, keep these tips in mind.

- Meet the student in a relaxed and friendly manner.
- Learn his or her name, pronounce it correctly and use it often.
- If there is time you may begin by letting the student know you are interested in him or her by asking about interests, friends, or problems.
- Give the student your full attention. Listen to what s/he says.
- If necessary, and time permits, clarify with the teacher what the goals and expectations are for the session, student, class, etc.
- Make sure the student understands the teacher's directions and material by asking questions, e.g. Do you understand? What are you supposed to do?
- Think about having a work plan. "*Today we are going to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_*". Give the student the opportunity to add to the plan. Write it down and let them check things off as they are completed.
- Let the student know you are human. Don't be afraid to make mistakes.
- Know the school and classroom rules and follow them.
- Keep the lesson moving. If the student loses interest, change how you are working with the student.
- Let the student know you expect them to do well. And offer specific praise when they do. (See section on Compliments and Feedback)
- Ask for help when you have a problem, or are unsure how to handle something.
- When appropriate give students limited and sensible choices. "*We need to work on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ today. Which do you want to start with?*"
- If you are seeing a particular student regularly respond to the student's interest. For example, bring a book about football or animals.
- Acknowledge when things aren't going well. "*This is hard—that's okay*". Involve the child in the problem-solving process.

Assume that when a student doesn't understand something you have to find a better way to explain it. If a student is really stuck—move on. Often the more you stay on one point the more anxious it makes the student. Children learn best in an environment they perceive to be safe.

When you know a student is pressing your buttons—be an actress or actor and don't let on. Once you are in a power struggle, you have lost—even though you might win.

Articulate the issues for the student. "I have noticed that it takes you awhile to settle down. Why don't we spend the first few minutes talking about your favorite book or something fun you have done recently."

## **Other Things to Consider**

Although all tutors have different tutoring methods, here are some general guidelines.

- **Ask open-ended questions.** Ask questions like “Would you explain to me how you got that answer?” and “Why do you think the boy hid under the bed?” (Also see section under Tutoring Reading Skills entitled **Comprehension Skills** for more open-ended question suggestions.)
- **Provide your student with the opportunity to ask questions.** Get them to ask you questions or quiz them to get interaction.
- **Body Language is important for effective communication.** Make eye contact, speak slowly, face the student squarely if possible. Above all, appear relaxed. If you are uncomfortable, your student will feel the same. (Also refer to the section Working with Students from Diverse Cultures, below.)
- **Tutor for the future.** Help your student overcome the immediate difficulties while teaching them to teach themselves. Help your tutee to get along without you by instilling good study skills and self-confidence. In general, the less work you do for the student, the better. Although it is quicker, easier, and less frustrating to do the work for him, it is of little permanent value.

## **Working with Students from Diverse Cultures**

Every child’s first classroom is the home. The structure and way in which a child learns at home has a major influence on the way they best learn at school. Culture is a set of beliefs, social norms, values, and customs of a racial, social, geographical, or religious group of people. There are many different ethnic groups represented in SPS, many different languages spoken and a diversity of beliefs, values and customs. Some ideas for working with students from diverse cultures include:

- Help students understand the culture (values, customs, rules) of their school.
- Talk about differences and similarities between home and school cultures.
- Learn about your students’ cultures.
- Be sensitive to the learning styles of students from diverse cultures. Many students come from cultures where learning is a shared, cooperative process, authority is not questioned and respect can be reflected in body language.
- Observe and learn from how students interact with others; their social habits.

## **Compliments and Feedback to Share with Your Student**

### **What they learned:**

- Wow! You learned three new words today!
- I liked the way you read your favorite page.
- You were able to finish 2 more problems than the last time we met.
- You know a lot about...
- You are getting really good at finding main ideas...

### **How they behaved - Their attitudes:**

- You never give up, even when it gets hard.
- I think you learn very quickly.
- You make *me* work hard to keep up with *you*.
- I like your nice, respectful, ... manners.
- It’s always fun to work/spend time with you!
- Thanks for asking for help instead of getting angry.
- I like your attitude,... sense of humor,... how cooperative you are,...
- You remembered to do your best.
- Thanks for working so hard today.
- I always look forward to seeing you.

### **Their ideas and creations:**

- You have such good, creative, ..., ideas.
- I like the way you answered that question.
- Thank you for sharing your story,... ideas,... feelings,...
- You do such nice work.
- I like your handwriting.
- I like the way you thought about that problem.
- What a fantastic picture,... model,... report,...

## Tips for Classroom Volunteers and Assistants

*Adapted from Paraeducator.com*

As an assistant to the teacher in the classroom, you will have various roles depending upon the needs of the students and the structure provided by the teacher. Here are a few ideas to help you be more effective in your work.

### **During Whole-Class Instruction**

At times you will be observing and providing limited assistance while the teacher is instructing the class.

**Preparation and Attention:** If possible know ahead of time what the teacher will be doing and model attentiveness to the students while instruction is going on.

**Behavior Management:** Because the attention of the students should be focused on the teacher, your primary role will be to assist with any students that are having a difficult time staying focused or exhibiting any behavioral problems. When a behavioral challenge begins to emerge, assist in a ***non-intrusive manner*** that allows the lesson momentum to continue. Some possible options include:

- Stand near the student/s exhibiting inappropriate behavior. Maintain your attention on the teacher.
- Gently touch the student's back, then step away, while maintaining your attention on the teacher.
- Communicate to the student using nonverbal signals such as eye contact, a nod or gesture.

**If necessary, give a quiet, private redirective to the student.** Tell the student the exact behavior that you desire. End the directive with "Thank you," and move your attention away from the student. One of the key elements when giving a redirect to a student either verbally or nonverbally is to allow the student time to comply. The intent is for the student to choose the appropriate behavior without being told, but in the event that misbehavior continues, it will become necessary for you to, as discretely as possible, remind a misbehaving student of the appropriate choice.

**Often, misbehavior can be kept at a minimum simply by moving quietly around the room while modeling attentive behavior.** Students are less likely to exhibit off-task behavior with an adult looking over their shoulders. Your attention to the teacher is a key element, demonstrating for students what is truly important in the classroom.

**Periodic Tasks:** At various times during whole-class instruction, the teacher may direct the students to complete a task at their desks or stations. At this time, you should assist the teacher with observing student work and assisting the students when appropriate.

**Refocus:** When the teacher begins instruction again, help the students refocus on the teacher.

### **Ideas about what to do while working with students:**

- Walk around the classroom and assist students as needed.
- Check for understanding of teacher directions and material by asking questions, e.g. Do you understand? What are you supposed to do?
- Check students' work as they are working. Point out to them areas that need another look or they may need to fix.
- Have students read back what they've written to you. Ask: "Does this make sense?" "Can you write more?" "What else could you add?"
- Encourage students to stay on task and listen to the teacher.
- Encourage them to look at the teacher or at you when you're talking.
- Learn the students' names, this will help a lot!
- Try to encourage students by praising them when they are behaving well and for good work. (See the section on Compliments and Feedback)

# TUTORING READING SKILLS

## ***Lesson Conventions***

**Fingerpointing** – The use of a finger to track letters, letter pairs and words while reading.

- Helps keep student focused on the material.
- Improves accuracy and fluency
- Example: “I need you to fingerpoint as you read so I know where you are.”

**Pacing** - The speed or flow of a lesson which keeps the student engaged and reduces gaps in instruction time.

- Challenge of finding the appropriate pace for each student
- Not too fast, but with enough momentum to maintain student interest

**Specific praise** – States exactly which part or aspect of a response or behavior was correct or successful.

- Helps students improve skills and motivates them
- Tells students exactly what they are doing right
- Establishes your expectations for future actions or behavior
  - I like the way you fingerpoint to keep your place.
  - I really like how you stop and pause at the periods and commas.
  - You did a really good job of sounding out that new vocabulary word.
  - I really like how you keep all of the sounds connected when you sound out a word.

## ***Reading’s Two Basic Skills: Decoding & Comprehension***

**DECODING SKILLS** – The ability to translate written words into speech.

- Allow students to identify and read words
- Will help assist students who are just learning to read or older students who are struggling with reading. These include:
  - **PHONICS:** Sounding out words by blending letter sounds together
  - **MEMORY of WHOLE WORDS:** recognizing and reading whole words
  - **WORD STRUCTURE:** Recognizing and reading word patterns and parts
  - **CONTEXT CLUES:** Using their own knowledge, story and/or picture clues to guess at words
  - **FLUENCY:** The effortless, automatic ability to read words in meaningful units, as whole phrases or sentences

**Comprehension Skills** – The complex cognitive process involving the intentional interaction between reader and text to convey meaning. More simply; allows students to get meaning from the words they are reading.

- Help students understand what they are reading using a variety of thinking skills. These thinking skills can be developed through the use of questions:
  - **Knowledge Questions:** Require students to find facts stated right in the text. **Name, list, who, what, where?** For example:
    - Where did the story take place?
    - When was Martin Luther King born?
    - What are the main products of Costa Rica?
  - **Understanding Questions:** Require a student to put together parts of the text to show they understand an idea and can put it into their own words. **Describe, explain, tell, put in order, summarize.** For example:
    - Tell what happens when a bill becomes a law.
    - What is the climate like in the Pacific Northwest?
    - Describe in correct order how food moves through your digestive system.
  - **Application Questions:** Require students to apply the experience, knowledge, wisdom and skills they have learned to a new situation. **What if...? Pretend... Use the skills you just learned...** For example:
    - Nikki has a stomachache. From our study of the digestive system what do you think could be causing it?
    - Pretend you were the first person to fly an airplane. Where would you go? What would you want to say to your friends who thought you were crazy?

- **Analysis Questions:** Require students to look at the structure of a story and organize its meaning in some way. Graphic organizers, including charts, graphs and pictures are used to help organize any analyze information. **Categorize, classify, relate, compare, contrast, pros and cons, why?**  
For example:
  - Divide your paper into two columns and give the pros and cons for reintroducing wolves back into the wild.
  - Make a family tree for the characters in the novel we just read.
- **Synthesis Questions:** Require the student to create something new by putting together all of their new knowledge together. Readers might create a story, model, skit, song, play, etc. **Make, compose, invent, do...**  
For example:
  - Design a pamphlet in support of...
  - Make a model of a volcano...
  - Write a new ending to the story.

## TUTORING MATH SKILLS

If you are tutoring math you will be given additional, specific, grade level resources and/or materials. In the meantime here are some basics.

### **Math has changed - Teaching kids to think:**

**Teaching math has changed.** Instead of all computation (i.e. plugging numbers into formulas, multiplying), math today is also about *learning how to think and apply mathematical concepts to real life*. Curriculum is being redesigned to have students make more discoveries on their own so that they can apply them to the real world. **AND**, there will always be a necessity for reinforcing basic computation skills. Often students who need extra academic support will require building and repetition in the basics of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and understanding fractions.

### **Ways to help students think about math problems:**

**Try to guide** the students to the answer by watching the steps they take to get there, asking them questions: *What do you do next?*

- **NEVER GIVE A STUDENT THE ANSWER TO A MATH PROBLEM** and avoid telling them how you would do the problem. Instead, have them think about how to solve it. Let them try to solve it their own way. There are often many ways to solve a problem. Remember that you are tutoring for the future and the important thing is that students are thinking. (See section [Creating a Mutually Rewarding Experience](#))
- **Ask specific, open-ended questions:**
  - What do you know?
  - What would you do for this problem?
  - Why do you do it that way?
  - What's hard for you here?
- **Go over vocabulary** words in the problem: What does this mean? What is this exactly? (e.g. Area)
- **After they have solved the problem**, you can ask them to create another similar problem; e.g. with a problem for finding the area of a figure, ask them to draw a figure of their own and find the area of it. This way you know they truly understand how to do the problem.
- **Focus on helping students with strategies** for math, because they will better know how to think about a problem. For example,  $7+3$ ,  $6+4$ ,  $5+5$ ,  $8+2$  all equal 10. When you see  $8+3$ , you know it is  $10+1$ .
- **Calculators can be used** as positive reinforcement to check answers.

## USEFUL & INTERESTING WEB SITES

**Successful Schools in Action (SSIA):** [www.schoolsinaction.org](http://www.schoolsinaction.org)

**Seattle School District:** [www.seattleschools.org](http://www.seattleschools.org)

**Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (WA State):** <http://www.k12.wa.us>

### **Sites for Games, Tips and other Resources for Kids and/or Adults:**

[www.bpl.org/central/adult/litresources.htm](http://www.bpl.org/central/adult/litresources.htm)

<http://teacher.scholastic.com>

[www.theteachersguide.com](http://www.theteachersguide.com)

[www.discoveryschool.com](http://www.discoveryschool.com)

[www.puzzlemaker.com](http://www.puzzlemaker.com)

[www.helpmeread.org](http://www.helpmeread.org)

[www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)

[www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com)

[www.reading.uoregon.edu](http://www.reading.uoregon.edu)

[www.childrenofthecode.org](http://www.childrenofthecode.org)

**Tutoring Newsletter:** [www.nwrel.org/learns/tutor/index](http://www.nwrel.org/learns/tutor/index)

### **Math:**

[www.mathforum.com](http://www.mathforum.com)

[www.seattleschools.org/area/math/index.xml](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/math/index.xml)

[www.seattleschools.org/area/math/CurriculumGuides/guides.htm](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/math/CurriculumGuides/guides.htm)

[www.phschool.com/cmp2/](http://www.phschool.com/cmp2/)

<http://connectedmath.msu.edu/parents/>

[www.phschool.com/cmp2/parent\\_guide.html](http://www.phschool.com/cmp2/parent_guide.html)

<http://everydaymath.uchicago.edu/>

<http://teacher.scholastic.com>

[www.discoveryschool.com](http://www.discoveryschool.com)

Michigan Adult Learning Center: [www.malt.cmich.edu/resources.htm](http://www.malt.cmich.edu/resources.htm)

### **ELL Info**

<http://www.kcts.org/learns/index.asp>

[www.academicinfo.net/esl.html](http://www.academicinfo.net/esl.html)

### **Local Organizations:**

Youth Tutoring Program: [www.ytpseattle.org](http://www.ytpseattle.org)

United Way of King County: [www.uwkc.org](http://www.uwkc.org)

### **National Organizations:**

Florida Center for Reading Research: [www.fcrr.org](http://www.fcrr.org)

U.S. Department of Education: [www.ed.gov/teachers/how/read/tutors](http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/read/tutors)

## 2009-2010 School Year - Important Dates

Date	Event
September 9, 2009	First Day of School
September 30	Professional Development Block Time (2 hour early dismissal)
<b>October 9</b>	<b>No School</b> - Professional Development Day
October 28	Professional Development Block Time (2 hour early dismissal)
November 6	End of First Quarter
<b>November 11</b>	<b>No School</b> - Veterans Day Holiday
<i>November 23-25</i>	<b>Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences</b> Dates/times vary according to school
November 25	(one hour early dismissal-Thanksgiving Holiday)
<b>November 26-27</b>	<b>No School</b> - Thanksgiving Holiday
December 18	(one hour early dismissal Winter Break.)
<b>December 21, 2009 - January 1, 2010</b>	<b>No School</b> - Winter Break
<b>January 18</b>	<b>No School</b> -Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday
January 28	Last Day of Semester
<b>January 29</b>	<b>No School</b> - Day between semesters
February 3	Professional Development Block Time (2 hour early dismissal)
<b>February 15</b>	<b>No School</b> - Presidents Day Holiday
<b>February 16-19</b>	<b>No School</b> - Mid-Winter Break
March 3	Professional Development Block Time (2 hour early dismissal)
March 16	WASL Testing - High School Reading
March 17 - 18	WASL Testing - High School Writing
<b>March 19</b>	<b>No School</b> -Professional Development Day
<b>March 29 - April 2</b>	<b>No School</b> - Spring Break
April 16	End of Third Quarter
May 19	Professional Development Block Time (2 hour early dismissal)
<b>May 31</b>	<b>No School</b> - Memorial Day Holiday
June 22	Last Student Day (1 hour early dismissal)

## INFORMATION ABOUT SSIA PARTNER SCHOOLS

### **Catharine Blaine K-8**

- Located in Magnolia at 2550 34<sup>th</sup> Ave. W.
- Phone number: 252-1920
- Website: <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/blaine/>
- Grades: K-8; Grades 5-8 switch classes
- Principal: Heather Swanson
- School Hours: 8:20-2:35

### **The Center School**

- Alternative high school located in Seattle Center's Center House on the Second Floor – 305 Harrison St.
- Phone Number: 252-9850
- Website: <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/thecenterschool/>
- Grades: 9-12; Population: about 300 students.
- Principal: Lisa Escobar
- School Schedule: 8:30 – 3:00
- Special Programs: Highly academic with an integrated arts component. Also serves special ed. students

### **Coe Elementary**

- Located in West QA at 2424 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. W.
- Phone number: 252-2000
- Website: <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/coe/index.html>
- Grades: K-5
- Principal: David Elliott
- School Hours: 9:15-3:20
- Special Programs: ELL

### **John Hay Elementary**

- Located in East Queen Anne at 210 Garfield St.
- Phone Number: 252-2100
- Website: <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/johnhay/>
- Grades: K-5
- Principal: Dan Warren
- School Hours: 9:25-3:30
- Special Programs: Autism inclusion program

### **Lawton Elementary**

- Located in Magnolia at 4000 27th Ave. W.
- Phone Number: 252-2130
- Website: <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/lawton/>
- Grades: K-5
- Principal: Beverly Raines
- School Hours: 9:05-3:10
- Special Programs: Designated Spectrum Site

### **McClure Middle School**

- Located in the center of Queen Anne at 1915 1st Ave. W.
- Phone Number: 252-1900
- Website: <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/mcclure/>
- Grades: 6-8
- Principal: Sarah Pritchett
- School Hours: 8:05-2:35; After-School Program: 2:45-4:30 (M-Th)
- Special Programs: Spectrum, ELL and Special Ed. Programs