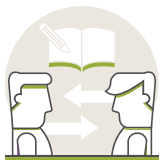


Academic Tutoring Client Experience



Standardized tests are standardized, so it makes sense that most students have highly similar experiences. Students seeking academic tutoring, however, do so for a variety of reasons and can have widely disparate goals. Our tutors pride themselves on both their diagnostic ability and their versatility: they can not only determine where students are in most need of help but can also deliver the necessary instruction in the most engaging and helpful way for each individual.

Common Academic Tutoring Goals



Skill remediation: Students can struggle academically for a variety of reasons ranging from poor class placement to an incompatible student-teacher pairing to completely unrelated stressors, and any can make the learning process difficult. Our tutors are able to review material at the student's pace and level in order to ensure that they have the foundational knowledge they need to be successful.



Homework help: In many cases, not only completing but understanding homework on a consistent basis is the key to success. Too many students instead rush to complete their homework or put in the least work possible just to get it done. Our focus is completion and comprehension.



Essay coaching: Writing a good paper requires a variety of skills. In addition to the more obvious rhetorical skills needed to make well-supported and reasoned arguments, the writing process demands planning, research, revision, and citation. We support students throughout the whole process and help them refine it in ways that allow them to find their own voices and become confident writers.



Test review: We help students determine and refine the study methods that work best for them, so that they learn how to assemble study guides, how to outline, or take notes on, a textbook chapter, how to identify key and frequently tested topics, and know where to access more resources.



Enrichment: Many of our academic tutoring students are already getting As but are curious and want to learn more. Many of our tutors just love to talk in more depth about their passions, whether it's history, science, language, or math. It's a match made in academic heaven!

In practice, most tutoring sessions blend all these elements together, but, no matter the goal, we always keep in mind our core principles:

We Encourage Metacognition

High school students are only beginning to engage in metacognition, that is, thinking about their thinking. We help them take that leap by using the Socratic method. Our tutors ask students lots of questions in order to both nudge students' thinking in the correct direction and also model for them the questions they'll ultimately need to ask themselves. We help students identify assumptions they've made, both about the material they've learned and, sometimes, about themselves. We help them learn what it means to craft an argument and justify it with evidence. In short, we help them become better learners.

We Foster Problem Solving

True problem-solving is hard. It takes work. And that work is quite often uncomfortable for students because they "don't know what to do." Much of our work is devoted to teaching students what to do when they "don't know what to do"! Too often, students are given a false sense of security through rote homework assignments, only to report that they were surprised on exam day by questions that "weren't fair" because the teacher never covered in class how to answer them. We challenge our students every week with difficult questions and help them expand their problem-solving toolkits, so that they learn valuable lessons from every failure and gain confidence with each and every success.

We Understand Learning

We are professional tutors. As such, we stay abreast of the current educational literature and strive to use research-based best practices in our daily work with students. We understand learning theory and tailor our sessions to help students more efficiently encode, consolidate, and retrieve information. We leverage techniques, such as spaced repetition and interleaving, and explain their value to students who are struggling under the weight of massed practice – and we are always trying to learn more!

We Get to Know You

We could understand everything in the world about learning theory, and it would all be for naught if we were not able to talk to kids or did not enjoy talking to them. Academic tutoring engagements can often last for months or even years, which allow us to understand our students, not just academically but as young people with families and social lives, hobbies and passions, and goals and dreams.

We Already Know Your Classes

We've been part of the Bethesda community for 20+ years. As a result, all tutors should know the content taught in your student's classes and they often have experience with the exact class and perhaps even the teacher that your student currently enjoys! We understand what it means to be in Math 2 at Sidwell or Humanities at Landon. We know how much homework NCS gives and how to work around STA boys' sports schedules. And, if you're really lucky, we might even know exactly who's teaching your class, how they teach it, and how they test on it!

