

Workshop Handbook I: How to Plan and Document Your Workshop

Tutorpedia



www.tutorpedia.com

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Written by Alex Miley and David Taus

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	Tutoring Culture	Business Culture
Collaborative Relationships	<p>We value personal attention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-on-1 tutoring model • Student-centered approach • Regular communication with parents and teachers • Small group workshops designed around student interests • Open and honest feedback, dialogue, and evaluation 	<p>We coordinate efforts among all stakeholders to improve education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free access to original content and best practices • Free resource library of outside content and websites • Free education seminars and speaking engagements • Transparency in goals and business practice • Flat internal hierarchy
Innovative Expertise	<p>We ground pedagogy and philosophy in research-based best practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content aligns with state standards • Instruction aligns with latest cognitive research • Emphasis on alternative forms of assessment • Authentic, embedded learning experiences • The new R's - real, relevant, rigorous, relationships 	<p>We are highly credentialed and experienced educators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduated from top universities • Many years of tutoring and classroom experience • Background in teaching, not business • Investment in ongoing professional development • Pursuit of progressive models of education reform
Holistic Vision	<p>We prepare students to become productive members of society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill building • Critical thinking • Creative problem solving • Intrinsic value of learning • Shared experience through 21st century technology 	<p>We believe that education is a means to achieving equity and social justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedication to closing the achievement gap • Improving access to college • Supplemental Education Services • Tutorpedia Foundation, 501c3 • Modeling our beliefs at all levels of functioning

What Are Tutorpedia Workshops?

In the summer of 2009, Tutorpedia piloted an exciting new program: project-based workshops. This represented a significant step up for us; in addition to providing 1-on-1 tutoring to students around the Bay Area, we began to expand our repertoire of “products” to include small group project-based learning experiences.

Tutorpedia Workshops are:

- Project-based. At the end of every workshop, students will have made, done, performed, accomplished, or completed something that they can show to their family and friends.
- Authentic. Students will not just be learning about something; they will be actively constructing their understanding and skills in a real context.
- Personalized. Like Tutorpedia’s 1-on-1 tutoring, small group workshops take into account the needs and wants of every student that participates. Enrollment in workshops is kept small to ensure that nobody gets left behind or slips through the cracks. Workshops typically involve 6-10 students and last 12-20 hours (6-10 two hour sessions), but they can be as long or as short as the author wants.
- Rigorous, but fun. Workshop authors and teachers have chosen the topics that they are working with. Not only are they passionate about their workshops’ subject matter, they are experts in it.
- Enriching. Students cultivate essential skills and habits of mind in a fun extracurricular context, and have a chance to work collaboratively with peers who share their interests.

Tutorpedia Workshops, as envisioned, give enterprising educators the opportunity to publish their work on a reputable and recognized public forum, utilize innovative models of curriculum design and pedagogy, connect with students, and actually teach what they’ve always dreamt of teaching. These workshops really are win-win-win: Students have a positive educational experience, teachers have a forum within which they can experiment with curriculum and hone their practice (and earn some money), and Tutorpedia’s reputation as an innovative education company grows significantly.

Tutorpedia’s Directors are available if you have any questions or want to talk about this further. We have several very useful resources that can help you plan your workshop, making sure that it is authentic, engaging, and project-based. If you are interested, or have further questions, please get in touch with David Taus, Director of Operations and Education, at davidtaus@tutorpedia.com or (617) 218-7292.

Where do workshops take place?

Tutorpedia workshops are very flexible. Workshops can easily fit into schools’ after school or extracurricular programs, delivered to homeschooling circles or community centers, offered privately, or taught in the summers or over extended school vacations. There is no set location or time for workshops, as each workshop will have its own needs. Locations and times are handled on a case-by-case basis.

What can workshops be about? Where do I start?

Step 1: Think up and invent a workshop that you would like to teach! When you imagine a workshop, think of something that you have a passion or interest for, and something that you think students would want to sit through after school, during the summer, or on the weekend. Try to make your workshop completely irresistible to students!

As you plan your workshop, think about how it fits in with the Tao of Tutorpedia.

When you choose your workshop topic, you are looking for something that's relevant to your students and to the real world. Students will learn more and you'll be happier teaching when the topic is interesting, challenging and real. Also, think about how you will teach. How will you forge collaborative relationships between you and your students, and well as between students?

Your workshop should promote authentic, embedded learning. Your workshop should provide your students with an unforgettable learning experience. The final project of your workshop should not only have relevance to your students' lives, it should give your students the chance to think critically, build their skills and solve problems creatively. Students should learn something new from you, but also be able to use the skills they gain from your workshop in other areas of their lives. This is an important point to highlight as you plan your workshop!

You'll build leadership and confidence in your students by working collaboratively and giving them a sense of responsibility and ownership over the work they have done. This will allow them to take pride in their work and give them a reason to commit themselves to it.

In all of these ways, your workshop is fulfilling your mission of helping your students grow, building their confidence, and promoting a love of learning itself. Isn't that awesome?

When you plan your workshop, it will be helpful to think about your workshop falling into one of two categories:

- Enrichment Workshops: These are workshops that are fun, engaging, and based on a topic that you (and the students) are passionate about. Think of your favorite hobbies, interests, or pastimes. Think of something you've always wanted to teach. Then, think about actually doing it! There is no limit or restriction on what your workshop can be about, so dream big.
- Skills Workshops: These are more traditional workshops focused on giving students some of the basic skills that they need to be successful in school. Examples of topics include test preparation workshops, college application workshops, or content-based workshops.

In truth, all workshops will encompass aspects of both categories, but for purposes of marketing and planning, it's better to focus either on "enrichment" or "skill building."

Step 2: Write up your workshop, using the templates we've provided. We have developed a template that will help you map out your workshop, as well as templates for daily lesson plans. We also have examples of workshops for you to review. It is important to us that you use the templates we provide.

Step 3: Teach your workshop! Once your documented workshop is posted on our website, Tutorpedia will advertise it, and pitch it to our list of students and families. When enough students express interest in your workshop, we will find a time and place for it to actually be taught!

Do I get paid to write and teach a Workshop? Can I take my curriculum and teach it elsewhere?

The content that you develop for Tutorpedia Workshops is something that you will own (i.e. you will receive credit for it), but that we can post for free download on our website. You are free to take it wherever you want, but we hope that you'll continue to work with Tutorpedia in order to teach your workshop! Tutorpedia will pay you \$50 for every workshop you write and document for us.

If your workshop is taught, you have two options:

- You can teach your own workshop (and we hope you do!). Tutorpedia will pay you somewhere around \$40/hour to teach your workshop.

OR,

- We will find one of our tutors to teach your workshop. You, as author of the workshop, will receive 10% of the revenue generated from the workshop if you decide not to teach it. You can either keep this money for yourself, or specify a charitable organization that we will donate the money to. Tutorpedia has recently incorporated a 501(c)3 nonprofit – the Tutorpedia Foundation – (www.tutorpediafoundation.org) in order to more easily raise money to fund tutoring for low-income students who need it most, and we would welcome any donations.

What does the Workshop Writing Process Look Like?

So you have an idea for a workshop? Here is a general process by which your idea can become reality:

1. Initial Inquiry: Phone Interview. The first step is to speak with David about your ideas, your interest in writing and teaching with Tutorpedia, your experience both as a teacher and as an expert in the subject for which you'll be writing a workshop. Once both you and David have agreed upon a workshop topic, you can begin to write it up.
2. Workshop Proposal Form. This document will help you conceptualize your workshop. A later section of this handbook will walk you through how to fill out the proposal form.
3. Lesson Plans. When you've finished the proposal form, and Tutorpedia has approved your written proposal, you can begin to write lesson plans for each session using the template that Tutorpedia provides.
4. Gathering Additional Resources. Most workshops will have resources that teachers need to prepare for students. Resources include handouts, reading lists, media, manuals, and the like.

It will be important to create or assemble these outside resources as part of writing the workshop.

5. License Agreement. In order to post your workshop on www.tutorpedia.com, and in order to get paid, all authors must sign a license agreement. This legal document basically states that authors own their work, but agree to allow Tutorpedia to post their written curriculum on www.tutorpedia.com, and if interest in the workshop is generated from there, that they will teach the workshop through Tutorpedia.
6. Post on Tutorpedia's Website. Completed Workshops will be posted on www.tutorpedia.com for the world to see!

When a critical mass of students are interested in enrolling in the workshop (either by private advertising, partnerships with schools, or other means), workshop authors will need to be hired and oriented as a tutor for Tutorpedia. This involves a criminal background check and TB test, as well as filling out a 1099 tax form in order to become a contractor with Tutorpedia.

Nuts and Bolts: How to Fill Out the Proposal Form

The workshop proposal form is a tool you can use to refine your thinking about your workshop. It encourages you to think broadly about what you want to do, but also prompts you to consider how you're going to do it. The proposal is the first step on the path of getting your workshop up and running. Tutorpedia's Directors will work with you to ensure that your proposal is solid, both in concept and in feasibility.

Below, you'll find an explanation of each item on the proposal. Use these explanations to help you complete the proposal form.

Name: Your name!

Date: Today's date!

Workshop Title: Workshop title!

Workshop Summary/Publicity Blurb: The publicity blurb will be the first thing that people will read (besides the workshop title). You don't have to be so detailed here, just give people an idea of what it's all about. Remember that students and parents will see this, so this is a chance for you to pique their interest. You could consider it as a little advertisement for your workshop.

Enrichment Workshop: Check the box if your workshop is aimed at exposing students to something new or going beyond the usual academic curriculum that they normally see.

Skills Workshop: Check this box if your workshop specifically addresses an area of academic skill such as writing, algebra, test prep, etc.

Desired Audience: Explain whom your workshop is aimed at. How many students will you need to make your planned activities work, and how many is too many? What age range are you looking for? Do you want to present this workshop to a specific population of students? Are you expecting students to come into your workshop with any particular knowledge or abilities?

Desired Schedule: When you are thinking about your ideal schedule for the workshop, consider both your own needs and your audience's needs. For example, how much time will you need to complete the activities and achieve the goal of your workshop--how many classes, and how long is each class? If students will be doing activities outside of the workshop (homework), how long do you want to give them between sessions? If your students are in high school, during what time frame will they be available?

Additional Schedule Information: This will help us when we're setting up the logistics of the workshop, so include any relevant information. None of this information will be final, but it is important to know the times that you can and can't teach.

Proposed or Desired Location: The time and place of each workshop will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If you know of a specific space where you'd like to hold your workshop, and you are sure of its availability, great! If not, write down what you are looking for. Include your requirements and

preferences as far as how much space you need, indoor/outdoor, and any other information you think is important, and we'll work together to find an appropriate space.

Supplies Needed: Though improvising materials at the last minute might be an exciting challenge for your creativity, it's usually more relaxing and fun when you are fully prepared for your workshop. Think about what materials will be needed to run your workshop. Do you have these already? Are there any you'll need to get yourself, get from Tutorpedia, or expect students to provide? Which things are most necessary? What about quantities? It can be helpful to go through the activities you are thinking of doing to make sure you're not forgetting anything. For example, if you are doing a brainstorm with your group, do you need markers, a whiteboard, poster paper? If you're running a three-legged race, do you need something to tie legs together? If you want students to bring paper and pencils, it could be a good idea to have some extra just in case.

Once you come up with your list, write down the items here, and note the ones you already have and the ones you still need to get.

Abbreviated Instructional Syllabus: Break the workshop down into separate days. Include the names of the activities you plan to do on each day, or a very brief description of each. You don't need to give too many details here (like timing, materials, etc), but your outline should basically make it clear what you'll cover each day and what activities you'll do to help your students achieve the learning outcome you describe below. You will fill in the details for each session later, when you complete daily lesson templates.

Final Assessment or Project: Briefly explain the final project your students will do as part of your workshop. Your final assessment/project is something tangible that lets your students come away from the workshop saying, "I did that." Their work will demonstrate how well they have achieved the learning outcome you were aiming for. Project-based learning is an expansive topic, and will be discussed more in later sections of the handbook.

Learning Outcomes: Specifically state what you expect your students to learn from your workshop. Finish these sentences: "By the end of the workshop, my students will be able to..." "By the end of the workshop, my students will know..." Your learning outcomes should be kept in the forefront of your mind throughout the planning process. The workshop's final project, as well as daily activities, should follow directly from your learning outcomes.

Best Practices: This is your chance to share some knowledge! We're compiling a list of best practices on the Tutorpedia website, where tutors and teachers can collaborate and share what they have learned from their teaching experience. We'll post tips, techniques, tricks of the trade, creative ideas big and small, and anything that you've found has worked well for you and your students.

Resources: Another chance for sharing and collaborating! Please list any books, websites, people, or other sources of information that are relevant to your workshop. It's especially important to list any resources that you used directly in the making of your workshop.

Additional Information: Anything else?

Nuts and Bolts: How to Fill Out the Lesson Plan Template

The Lesson Plan Template is where you will provide detailed outlines of each session. You'll include the topic for the day, what materials you'll need, a rundown of the activities for the day, and how you will assess or check for student understanding. There is also a space at the bottom of each lesson plan for you to make notes and reflect on each session.

You can think of a lesson plan in the same way as you think of a recipe in a cook book. Professional chefs and bakers document how they combine food and ingredients so that you can repeat the process at home. Likewise, your goal in writing a lesson plan is to allow someone who you have never met pick up your lesson plan and deliver the same lesson. There will always be individual differences between two chefs or workshop teachers, but the point is to document what you did so well that such differences are due to personal style, not to misunderstanding what your objectives and procedures were.

Below, you'll find an explanation of each item on the Lesson Plan Template. Use these explanations to help you complete the template form. Please note that you will need a separate lesson plan for every session (if your workshop is scheduled to meet eight times, then you'll need eight lesson plans).

Class #: Indicate which session this lesson plan refers to here.

Date: Ideally, you'll put the date the session is actually held here. If you don't have this information, you can leave it blank.

Topic: What is your topic for the day? What is the main thing you and your students are going to accomplish during this session? This refers to the topic for the day, not the overarching topic for the entire workshop.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes: Specifically state what you expect your students to learn from the day's session. Finish these sentences: "Students will be able to..." or "Students will know..." Your learning outcomes should be kept in the forefront of your mind throughout the session. The day's assessment, as well as all activities, should follow directly from your objectives and learning outcomes.

Activities: This is perhaps the most important part of the lesson plan. Activities describe what you will actually be doing in the day's session. Be as specific as you can here- it's not enough to say that "we will work on our final project." What, exactly, will you be working on? Also, it's very important to assign a time to each activity you list here. You should be able to account for every minute of your session, and have a plan as to how you will spend your time. It's likely that these times will morph a bit when you actually teach your workshop, but it's important to go into your workshop with a plan for how that time is, ideally, to be used.

Here are some things that you'll want to keep in mind when you plan each session's activities:

- You'll want to start each day with a warm-up activity of some kind. Warm-ups (sometimes called "Launch," "Check-In," "Do-Now," or "Opener") are great ways for students to transition into the day's activities, and prime themselves both physically and mentally for the work at hand. Warm-ups don't have to be long, but they should be present in some way.

- Part of your activities will include you disseminating information to your students in some way. This is the defining characteristic of teaching and learning, after all! Try, though, to think of fun, engaging, and nontraditional ways to disseminate information. Lectures and PowerPoint presentations are traditional ways of imparting information, but try to keep straight lecture to a necessary minimum. There are many other effective ways of getting what you know out there so your students can know it too.
- The bulk of your activities should be active. That is, the students should be doing something for most of the time they spend with you! For more on this, please see “Essentials of Effective Lesson Planning” below.
- Remember to leave time for clean-up and putting away materials at the end of the lesson.

Materials Needed: This is a list of things you will need in order to teach your lesson. List anything that you would use. This might include a chalkboard, handouts, pens and pencils, computers, paper, and the like. It might also include materials or equipment more specialized to your workshop. Be sure to list everything – nothing is too small or unimportant!

Homework (if any): If there is something you would like students to do outside of session meetings, list it here. Keep in mind, though, that these workshops are extracurricular, and it is not always likely that students will actually do homework. As a general rule, do not assign homework. If you do, though, the homework should be something creative and active that is directly tied to the final project. You can also suggest things that the student could work on at home here.

Assessment: Assessments should enable you to check for student understanding. Traditionally, this has taken the form of tests and quizzes, but those forms of assessment have no place in project-based workshops. Think of other ways that you can tell if students have understood the material for the day. This could be performance-based (i.e. students do something to demonstrate their understanding), or a teach-back (i.e. students are able to teach the material to you or someone else). This could also be more informal. Here, list whatever way you have of knowing whether your students understand the day’s material.

Notes/Reflection: This is a chance for you to think critically about the lesson once the session is over, and make notes for yourself about what went well, what could be improved, and what you would change for next time. This is a great place to document things that came up during the session that you didn’t expect but want to remember. Reflection is an important part of teaching, and getting into the habit of reflecting on your own teaching can only help you grow as an educator.

Nuts and Bolts: How to Gather Additional Resources

Your proposal and lesson plans make up the bulk of your written workshop. The last step is to gather additional resources that you will be using in your workshop. Some resources you will be generating on your own, and others you will gather from outside sources; both are equally important.

Any additional resources that are in electronic format (i.e. anything that you could send as an email attachment or put on a website) should be included in your workshop write-up. Some additional resources can't be converted into electronic format. That's ok. In this case, it's best to write up a document that lists what those resources are, and where to find them.

Resources You Generate Yourself: You will need to generate all these resources ahead of time, so they are ready to go when you teach. Resources can include handouts, assignment sheets, rubrics, templates, games, manipulatives (things students can physically handle and play with), and the like. Tutorpedia's Directors can work with you if you need help developing these resources.

Resources Generated Elsewhere: If you find websites, video or audio clips, books, or anything else that you want to use in your workshop, these resources need to be gathered ahead of time as well. Ideally, they will be in electronic format so that they can be packaged neatly with your lesson plans and proposal. If not, a description of what the resource is and where people can find it will suffice. Always remember to give credit to the original author or creator when you are compiling and listing these outside resources.

Essentials of Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning, or PBL, is on the forefront of the educational reform movement right now. As such, there is an extensive library of resources on PBL. Instead of developing our own content on PBL, we think it much more effective to bring in authoritative voices on the topic here.

“For over 100 years, educators such as John Dewey have reported on the benefits of experiential, hands-on, student-directed learning. Most teachers, knowing the value of engaging, challenging projects for students, have planned field trips, laboratory investigations, and interdisciplinary activities that enrich and extend the curriculum. "Doing projects" is a long-standing tradition in American education.

“The roots of PBL lie in this tradition. But the emergence of a method of teaching and learning called Project Based Learning is the result of two important developments over the last 25 years. First, there has been a revolution in learning theory. Research in neuroscience and psychology has extended cognitive and behavioral models of learning—which support traditional direct instruction—to show that knowledge, thinking, doing, and the contexts for learning are inextricably tied. We now know that learning is partly a social activity; it takes place within the context of culture, community, and past experiences. This is apparent in research on problem-based learning in the medical field, an important forerunner of PBL.

“Research shows that learners not only respond by feeding back information, but they also actively use what they know to explore, negotiate, interpret, and create. They *construct* solutions, thus shifting the emphasis toward the process of learning. In addition, cognitive research has revealed much more about the nature of problem solving. Education has benefited from this research, as teachers have learned how to effectively scaffold content and activities to amplify and extend the skills and capabilities of students.

“Second, the world has changed. Nearly all teachers understand how the industrial culture has shaped the organization and methods of schools in the 19th and 20th centuries, and they recognize that schools must now adapt to a new century. It is clear that children need both knowledge *and* skills to succeed. This need is driven not only by workforce demands for high-performance employees who can plan, collaborate, and communicate, but also by the need to help all young people learn civic responsibility and master their new roles as global citizens.

“In a sense, the need for education to adapt to a changing world is the primary reason that PBL is increasingly popular. PBL is an attempt to create new instructional practices that reflect the environment in which children now live and learn. And, as the world continues to change, so does our definition of PBL. The most important recent shift in education has been the increased emphasis on standards, clear outcomes, and accountability. Thus, one purpose of this edition of the BIE Project Based Learning Handbook is to incorporate the latest thinking on standards and assessment—to outline a planning process for *standards-focused* projects. But this process will continue to evolve. Remember that PBL is a field that you, as a practitioner, will help create by your actions and leadership in the classroom.”

Characteristics of project- based learning

- Students make decisions within a prescribed framework.
- There's a problem or challenge without a predetermined solution.
- Students design the process for reaching a solution.
- Students are responsible for accessing and managing the information they gather.
- Evaluation takes place continuously.
- Students regularly reflect on what they're doing.
- A final product (not necessarily material) is produced and is evaluated for quality.
- The classroom has an atmosphere that tolerates error and change.

Generally speaking, students engaged in a project...

- ...have some choice in deciding what they will work on.
- ...plan their own project.
- ...participate in defining criteria and rubrics to assess their project.
- ...solve problems they encounter while working on their project.
- ...make some sort of presentation of their project.

The project-based learning approach creates a "constructivist" learning environment in which students construct their own knowledge. Whereas in the "old school" model the teacher was the task master -- in the "new school" model the teacher becomes the facilitator.

-Global SchoolNet , <http://www.gsn.org/Web/pbl/whatis.htm>

There are many, many resources online and in print that help teachers plan and implement projects effectively. Knowing the underlying philosophy of PBL (outlined above) is the first step in doing this. If you need some more concrete and practical tips on how to plan project-based learning experiences, please get in touch with Tutorpedia's Directors (each of whom have used PBL principles in their teaching), or check out some resources online. Here is a list of websites that are excellent resources on project-based learning:

The Buck Institute's Handbook on Project-Based Learning (this is an EXCELLENT resource!)

http://www.bie.org/index.php/site/PBL/overview_pbl/

Project-Based Learning Online

<http://www.pbl-online.org/>

Edutopia and the George Lucas Educational Foundation

<http://www.edutopia.org/>

The Road Ahead: Project-Based Learning for Information and Technology

http://www.iste.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Research/Reports/The_Road_Ahead_Background_Papers_1997/Project-Based_Learning.htm

Cengage: Project-Based Learning

<http://college.cengage.com/education/pbl/background.html>

An Introduction to Project-Based Learning:

<http://www.gsn.org/Web/pbl/pblintro.htm>

Essentials of Effective Lesson Planning

In teaching school, aspiring educators are often told that a successful lesson usually requires 3-4 hours of planning for one hour of class time. It certainly is not necessary to spend three or four hours planning for a one hour tutoring session, but it is worth pointing out that quality lessons do not happen magically or by chance. There is *a lot* of forward work that goes into a well-planned lesson, and as a tutor, you should take as a premise that a good tutoring session will take some amount of preparation and forethought.

More often than not, tutoring sessions will involve working on students' homework, or continuing a lesson that the students had in school that day or that week. Therefore, your number one resource for planning your tutoring sessions is your students' teachers. Teachers will generally be more than happy to give you a rundown of what your students have been working on in school, and how you can further support the learning that has been going on during school hours. More often than not, a quick check-in with your students' teachers will give you enough information, ideas, and resources to plan for an hour-long tutoring session.

Crafting an effective and productive lesson is an art as much as it is a science. Every teacher has his or her own preference and technique as to how to craft a lesson, but good teachers generally include several key principles in their planning. Here are some things for you as you keep in mind as you figure out how you're going to fill an hour of time with your students each week.

1. Start with your end goal in mind and plan backwards. Before each lesson begins, ask yourself: "what is one thing that I want my students to achieve or understand by the end of the lesson?" It is a great idea to go so far as to write down your end goal and share it with your students at the beginning of the lesson, or better yet, include your student in the goal-setting process. Ideally, you'll structure all your activities for the day to build towards the end goal, but simply keeping your end goal in mind as you progress throughout the session will help you stay on track. There are lots of resources available that can give you a more complete and thorough explanation of "backwards planning." The best is *Understanding By Design* (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). Other books and resources are available in the Tutorpedia office, and even more resources are identified in our Resource Library.
2. Think hard about how you are going to 'hook' your students at the beginning of the lesson. Lessons are like TV shows: something happens at the very beginning that hooks the audience in and keeps them wanting to know what happens next. Your students need to be interested in what is going on in your tutoring session, and unfortunately you cannot count on the intrinsic allure of multiplication tables or sentence diagramming to hold their interest. Therefore, part of your job is to 'hook' your students in at the start of the lesson. There are two great techniques that will help you do this:
 - Frame your topic for the day as a problem than needs to be solved. People love solving puzzles and problems. If the lesson for the day is conceptualized as a puzzle or problem, and learning is conceptualized as working towards a solution for that problem, students are much more likely to be engaged. The objectives become clear to them, and their work takes

on more meaning. Plus, there is a good deal of satisfaction and pride that comes with solving a problem. We, as educators, can use all this for our students' educational advantage.

- Connect content to your students' life experience as much as possible. Make it real for them! When students see schoolwork as something other than rote memorization and can relate to it on a personal level, they are much more likely to be engaged in the tutoring session.

3. Be sure that the students do something. Nobody likes to be talked at for an hour straight. It is intuitive (and research supports the idea) that people learn best when they are interacting with the material, literally doing something. This can look very different depending on the content and the lesson, but every tutoring session needs to involve some activity or action on the part of your students. You should not be the one solving arithmetic problems (although you can certainly do one or two to model how it's done), your students should. You should not be the one coming up with sentences or examples, you students should be. This may be met with resistance in the form of laziness, because surely it is much easier to have someone else do it for you, but allowing a few seconds of time for your students to think and respond to your requests or questions (what teachers call "wait time") and setting clear expectations will go a long way towards making sure your students is actively participating in the lesson. Be sure to make it clear from the first minute of your first tutoring session: students are expected to be actively involved in their own learning.

4. Remember your R's. We all know about the classic R's: reading, writing, and arithmetic. Including basic content in lessons is, of course, very important, but there are some other R's worth thinking about as you plan your tutoring sessions:

- Real – Be sure your lessons are authentic, concrete, and understandable
- Relevant – Be sure your lessons relate to your students' life experiences in some way
- Rigorous – Be sure your lessons are appropriately challenging
- Relationships – be sure that everything you do is grounded in a good working relationship with your students

These new R's outline what research has revealed to be best practice in developing effective curricula, and promoting students' engagement in those curricula.

5. Develop a way to check for understanding. It's important to know whether or not your students understand the lesson. The most simple and traditional way to check for understanding has been to give quizzes, but you should not be limited to this (and quizzes might be overkill in the context of tutoring sessions). Informal understanding checks – simply asking your students to explain concepts in their own words or complete problems on their own – are good, and there are many other ways that students can demonstrate their understanding. One of the best ways to check for understanding is to switch roles, and have your students teach the lesson back to you. Since you don't have to worry as much about formal assessments (grades, standardized

tests, and the like), the important thing is to have some evidence that gives you confidence that your students understand what is going on during your tutoring sessions.

There is a lot more that goes into planning effective lessons. There are plenty of resources available to you, including a lesson planning template for you to use. A lesson planning template (in .pdf format) is available online to assist you in planning your tutoring sessions. If you want more information or guidance, please don't hesitate to collaborate with other tutors, or contact your Lead Tutor or other Tutorpedia staff.

Important Contact Information

Tutorpedia, LLC.
PO Box 170236
San Francisco, CA, 94117

Tutorpedia's Office is at
1005 Anza Street (at Arguello)
San Francisco, CA, 94118

Phone: (415) 948-1585
Fax: (415) 571-8085
Website: www.tutorpedia.com

Blog: www.thethickenvelope.com

Seth Linden – Founding Director
seth@tutorpedia.com
(415) 948-1585

David Taus – Director of Operations and Education
davidtaus@tutorpedia.com
(617) 218- 7292

Lead Tutors:

David Koss
david.koss@tutorpedia.com
(646) 496-3257

Kipp Mueller
kipp@tutorpedia.com
(916) 743-5477

John Norris
john@tutorpedia.com
(678) 644-1658

Spencer Erickson
spencer@tutorpedia.com
(530) 519-2257

April Pagan
april@tutorpedia.com
(559) 799-2460

Adam MacLennan
adam@tutorpedia.com
(650) 291-6068

Alex Miley
alex@tutorpedia.com
(415) 285-2047