

Back to School : Working with Tutors Preparing for Using the Tutoring Industry

Whether you are expecting a child's academic problem or proactively attempting to prevent one before it occurs, at some point hiring a tutor may be essential to your child's success in school.

To help in smoothly engaging a tutor, consider the following steps in preparation:

- ❑ Determine the family weekly budget for tutoring. Decide whether an adult or student tutor is appropriate to your student needs.
- ❑ Learn your child's language competencies, deficiencies and class standing from his/her main teacher, if possible.
- ❑ Compose a simple draft of tutoring goals about your child's weakness areas. (Many people often will ask to write these goals with the tutor after an initial assessment of student needs.)
- ❑ Set realistic goals and timelines with your child. For example, it is unrealistic to expect a tutor will move your child from an F to an A in two weeks time of four to five hours of tutoring. It may be more reasonable to believe that a grade could be raised one or two grade levels under a tutor's direction and your student's committed effort.
- ❑ Provide your tutor with a written list of your family's goals. Include class homework, quiz and exam dates. The tutor needs complete information to plan the tutoring session time appropriately.

❑ Good tutors will have age appropriate expectations for your student. Parents should frankly discuss with the student that when tutors make "study suggestions" these are based on the academic goals that have been provided. Therefore, the student would be wise to follow the suggestions, if improvement is truly desired in a challenging area of study.

- ❑ Establish a system where your student is responsible for ensuring your tutor is always paid on time.
- ❑ Understand that payment is typically due monthly in advance or at the end of each lesson, unless otherwise contracted.



A little planning can help you and your child get the most from the educational investment.

Parent Study: The Easy Way to Encourage Language Learning in Teens

For many generations, many parents have sat through a child's kindergarten choral concert listening to the tune of "It's a Small World After All". Today with technology bridging the oceans and physical gaps between nations around the world, never has this little song run more true. The global world is here. We're using computer software to help us interpret for international business to sell products and services around the globe. Sadly, as parents, most of us can barely remember the language we were required to take in junior high, high school or possibly college. That summer abroad is a distant memory in our current busy life. Our children will not have this luxury of forgetting a 2nd language. Quality companies are doing business worldwide so future employees are expected to bilingual and multi-cultural.

Many teens learn they are required to take a foreign language in junior high. They choose one based on their perception of either its simplicity or "koolness", while others are expected to endure the barbaric practice of being forced take a language by their parents. Parents want to either plan their children's careers or simplify homework life by pushing a child into a language they took in school. Many a foreign language teacher will confirm that parents will often defeat their child's language success with simple statements of "Foreign Language is not as important as other core subjects." or worse "the language is too hard." And a few parents will foolishly state that one language will be simpler than another.

For parents who truly support the fact that the Department of Education has actually made foreign language as important in their

child's academic curriculum as reading, writing and arithmetic, many are faced with feeling the need to help their child with homework. Yet, at a loss of how to do so. **The simplest way to encourage your child in the language of his/her choice is to register yourself for that language in a local community college.** Parents can register for a 6-8 week introductory course for around \$100. It will be the best investment you make in your child's education.

First of all, it shows the child that you unconditionally support their choice in language. Second, being older and wiser, you will grasp the language concepts more quickly, making you better able to better help with homework and be wise Obi-wan Dad. Third, and what most parents discover is the best reason for doing so is that it gives them an automatic connection with their teen during the natural period in a child's development growth that they begin to pull away from their parents. When managed correctly, foreign language becomes a way to connect—a way to joke and laugh as well as challenge your child.

In our community, the Continuing Studies Program from IUPUI is very popular among parents who want to surprise their children by quietly taking a quick crash course in foreign language. Just Visit www.cln.iupui.edu, clicking the Course Catalog to find courses in European and Asian Languages. Continuing Studies are offered at the main campus as well as off-campus locations. **The Community Life and Learning Center across from the high school on Main Street in Carmel offers language studies.** The course catalogs reveal the Carmel location is offering Spanish from IvyTech teachers and Chinese and Japanese from IUPUI instructors. Other languages like French can be found nearby at the IUPUI Glendale campus, while German is offered at their Ben Davis location.



LET'S GO!

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TO:

Inside this IBLCI Newsletter

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Next Issue: Common Mistakes Parents Make

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Need other language tutors?

Spanish? French? We'll help you connect!

Dialog: A-san asks B-san

A-san: *My student needs a tutor, but I've discovered that the only one available is a teacher who once worked in the local school. We had them in the classroom, but my student didn't like her.*

B-san: You have a reasonable question on your mind, "how can my student learn if s/he has a self-imposed emotional block to the message because of the messenger?" Probably the best response to this question may in fact be a series of questions or root cause analysis. How old was your student, when they didn't like the teacher? Were they at age of rational problem-solving? Were their expectations or concerns realistic? How seasoned was the teacher in instructing that age demographic? If they were a new teacher, it may have just been early teaching quirks, which all teachers have. What was your response to the child's dislike? Did you empathize only or did you empathize, but communicate real world truths that the child is not going to get to hand-pick every person they will need to deal with? *Parents sometimes accidentally do their children a real dis-service by fighting their children's battles for them at school;* Did you approach the teacher at that time about your concerns in order to work towards a positive outcome for everyone? Or did you take the problem to someone else to solve (ie guidance counselor or principal)? If you didn't speak directly to the instructor in a respectful and balanced manner, you non-verbally communicated the message to your child that s/he does not have to learn if s/he does not like a teacher. Realizing that response may be somewhat upsetting to some parents who want to "protect their precious darlings", the truth about your child's interpretation of your response to their feelings lies in the child's grade. If the grade was an F, then the child did not assume the role of the student! And painful as it may sound to some parents, if student is under age 16, the student was enabled by your response. . . *But now the question is do you engage the tutor?*

There are many factors that play into a child's success or failure in school or their ability to relate to classmates/coworkers and teachers/superiors. Sometimes it's the student's maturity. Sometimes its class dynamics. But all causes are subjective and changeable. Additionally, quite frankly, one-on-one people typically interact very differently, as the circumstances are very different. So I'd say give it a month try, but require your child to take advantage of the knowledge-master and ask your child to discover something new and respectable each week about the tutor. Attitude about others is everything!