

# Tutoring Best Practices

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# Ice Breaker

- ▶ Name
- ▶ School
- ▶ Academic Status
- ▶ If you could have any superpower what would it be?



# What is tutoring?

- ▶ The purpose of tutoring is to guide students to a point at which they become independent learners and no longer need a tutor.

Some noticeable characteristics of a good tutor are:

- ▶ Positive outlook
- ▶ Desire to help others
- ▶ Empathy
- ▶ Open mindedness
- ▶ Initiative
- ▶ Enthusiasm
- ▶ Innovation
- ▶ Non Judgmental
- ▶ Learners
- ▶ Humility

# What a tutor is not?

- ▶ Teacher
- ▶ Disciplinarian
- ▶ “Bud”
- ▶ Editors



# Skill #1: Active Listening

- ▶ It is quintessential that tutors utilize “Active Listening.”
- ▶ Active listening goes beyond just “listening,” taking the next steps to fully understand and to react.
- ▶ Active listening comprises of you doing the following:
  - ▶ Paying Attention
  - ▶ Showing that you are listening by body gestures, sounds, etc.
  - ▶ **Paraphrasing** what the other person has said and checking to see if you understood correctly.
  - ▶ Asking questions. Responding appropriately with feedbacks.
  - ▶ Avoiding judgments. Respectfully sharing opinions.
- ▶ Active listening **EMPOWERS**, encourages **COLLABORATION**, brings **TRUST** and **RESPECT**, promotes **UNDERSTANDING**, and finds **BETTER SOLUTIONS**.

# Skill #2: General Communication Skills in Mediation

- ▶ *Humility* is key in communication.
  - ▶ “We can never fully understand or know who our students are or what they are going through.” - Ask a lot of questions.
  - ▶ “We all have unique individual stories and that uniqueness makes each and every one of us powerful.” - When conveying an opinion, use experiential dialogue.
  - ▶ Again, “tutors are not teachers, but instead mediators and also learners.” - Always ask, ask, and ask for your students’ feedback, ideas, opinions, etc.
  - ▶ Obvious: don’t be condescending or patronizing.
- ▶ Fight cynicism, encourage *optimism* and *positivity*.

# Mindset: Asset-Based Approach

- ▶ Asset-Based Approach, also known as strengths perspective, is a particular mindset that focuses not on the problems or the deficits of an individual, but instead on their strengths: in their abilities, talents, personalities, opinions/thoughts, resources, *uniqueness*, and many others.
- ▶ “In cynicism, we are inclined to blame ourselves or others and not be able to take a step forward. In optimism, hope, we plan on what that next step will be.”
- ▶ Asset-Based Approach is NOT just iterating an individual’s strengths.
  - ▶ By recognizing one’s strengths, it’s about taking the NEXT STEPS to ask oneself how they will UTILIZE such strengths to overcome their challenges.

# Asset-Based Approach in Tutoring



## Zone of Proximal Development

Skills too difficult for a child to master on his/her own, but that can be done with guidance and encouragement from a knowledgeable person.

What is Known

What is not Known

Learning

► To incorporate asset-based approach in tutoring, the steps are as follows:

1. **Assess** - During a tutoring session, observe what your students are doing well in and what they are struggling with.
2. **Recognize** - Specifically pinpoint their competencies (strengths) and their challenges.
3. **\*Inform** - Encourage and motivate your students by pointing out what they are *legitimately* good at.
4. **\*Scaffold** (Wood et al., 1976) - Provide guidance and support to help students go beyond what they are currently good at, to master a skill or knowledge they currently cannot achieve on their own.

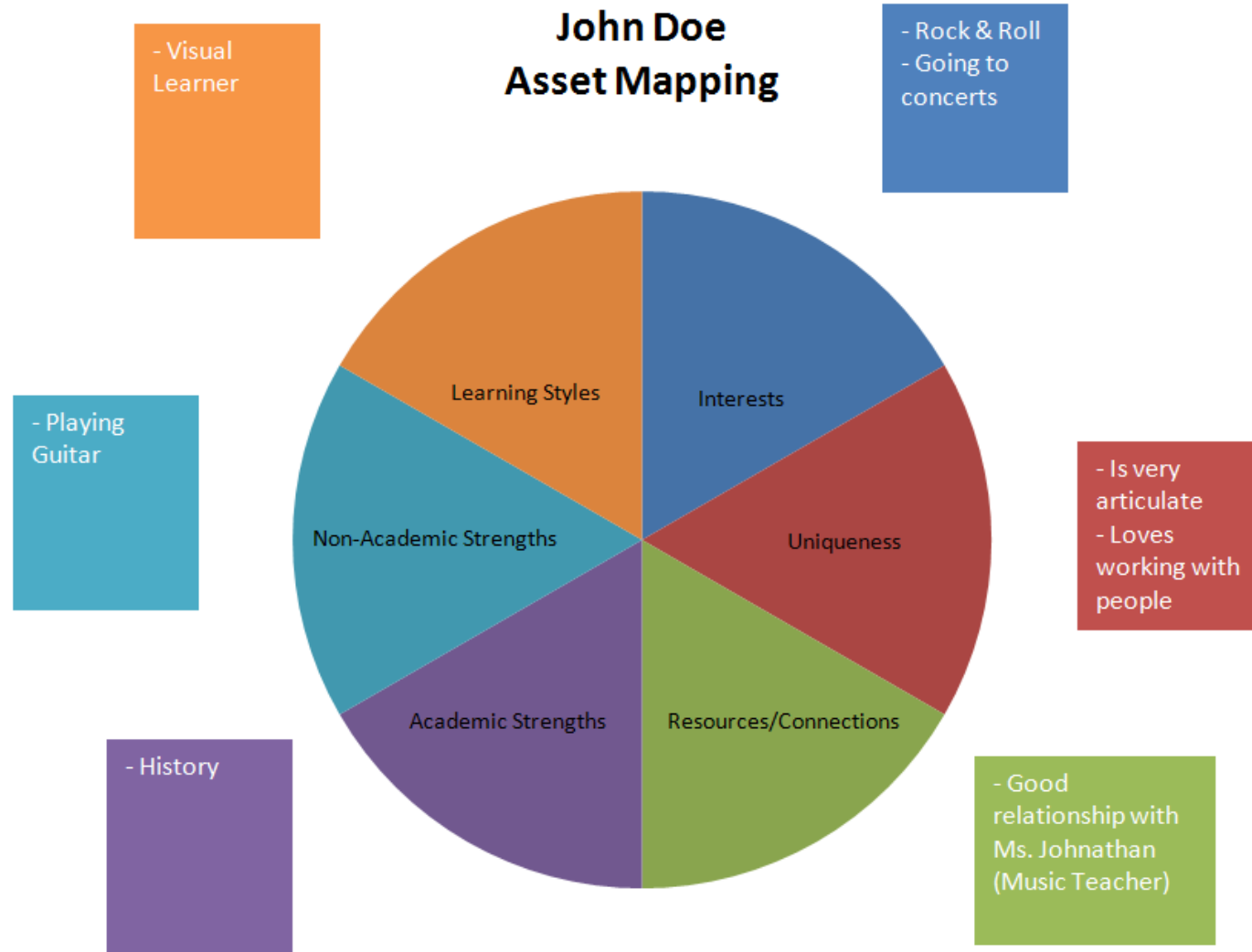


# Example

▶  $3x + 2x = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

- ▶ If your students are experiencing difficulties with this question, first up: *Do Not Judge*.
- ▶ Second, ask them *Questions*:
  - ▶ What makes sense and what does not make sense about the problem?
- ▶ *Actively Listen* into their process of explaining what they understand and what they do not understand about the problem.
  - ▶ Being able to recognize and explain their successes and challenges is a STRENGTH.
  - ▶ E.G. “I understand  $3 + 2 = 5$ , but I don’t get what the X(s) mean.”
- ▶ Provide *constructive* feedback on their track/thinking process of solving the problem.
  - ▶ Solving a problem successfully is not the only strength, but also deem the process in high regards.
  - ▶ Point out what you perceived were legitimate strengths in order to encourage and motivate.
  - ▶ For any challenges that students face, provide tutoring guidance-support.
- ▶ **\*Lastly, provide opportunity for the students to re-explain, on their own, how to solve the problem.**

# Asset Mapping



# Setting Tutoring Boundaries

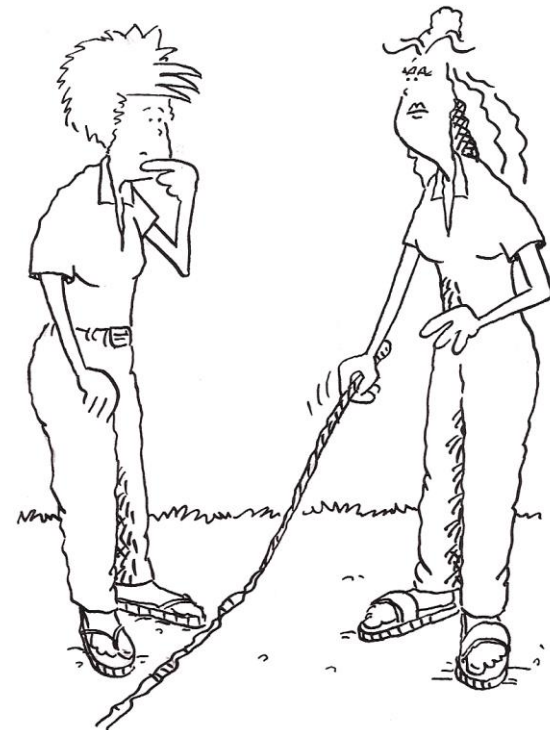
Contact - Keep contact professional:

- ▶ Do not add them on Facebook or other social media.
- ▶ Do not share cell phone information.
- ▶ Do not give rides to students, or take them off school grounds.
- ▶ Do not give and accept money, gifts, etc.

In classroom:

- ▶ Do not make promises you cannot keep.
- ▶ Be mindful of tutor-teacher boundaries.

Use common sense!



# Tips for handling challenging tutoring sessions

- ▶ Be patient
- ▶ Actively listen
- ▶ Be humble
- ▶ Don't be afraid to ask for help
- ▶ Be cautious of the advice you are giving
- ▶ Do not judge
- ▶ Any other ideas?

# Peer Tutor Scenarios

How would you approach the scenario?

1. You are introduced to Eddie. Eddie is a 9<sup>th</sup> grader and is having trouble understanding an Algebra 1 problem. He tells you he is not good at math and therefore won't even try. In addition, you find yourself unfamiliar with solving the problem. How would you approach the situation?
2. You are partnered to work with Maggie a 9<sup>th</sup> grader who confesses she doesn't know how to begin to solve a math problem. In reality, Maggie is asking questions in order for the tutor to solve the problem for them. How would you approach this situation?
3. Carla is pulled out of her social science course in order to go over her English assignment paper. She is not in the mood to work on her English paper since she was more interested in what she was learning in her social science class. She gives you attitude and is hard to get her to focus on her English paper. How would you approach this situation?