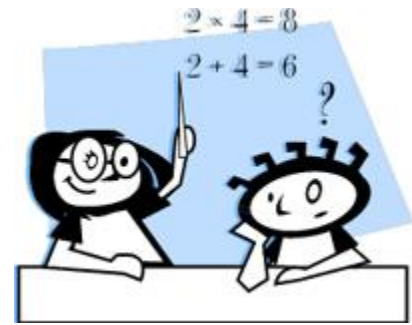

QUALITIES OF A GOOD MATH TUTOR

These are desirable qualifications of professional-level math tutors, whether they be paid or volunteers. (A parent, volunteer, or peer tutor can be very successful without having this full set of qualifications.)

Here are nine qualification areas:

1. **Math content knowledge.** Be competent over a wide range of math content below, at, and higher than the content being tutored. Have good math problem solving knowledge and skills over the range of his or her math content knowledge.



2. **Math maturity.** Have considerably greater math understanding and math maturity than the tutee.

3. **Math pedagogical knowledge.** Know the theory and practice of teaching and learning math below, at, and somewhat above the level at which one is tutoring. This includes an understanding of cognitive development and various learning theories, especially some that are quite relevant to teaching and learning math.

4. **Standards.** Know the school, district, and state math standards below, at, and somewhat above the level at which one is tutoring.

5. **Communication.** This includes areas such as: a) being able to “reach out and make appropriate contact with” a tutee; and b) being able to develop a personal, mutually trusting, human-to-human relationship with a tutee.

6. **Empathy.** Knowledge of “the human condition” of being a human student with life in and outside of school, facing the trials and tribulations of living in his or her culture, the school and community cultures, and in our society.

7. **Learning.** A math tutor needs to be a learner in a variety of areas relevant to math education. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is such an area. An introductory knowledge of brain science (cognitive neuroscience) and the effects of stress on learning are both important to being a well-qualified tutor (Moursund and Sylwester, October 2010; Moursund and Sylwester, April-June 2011).

8. **Diversity.** A math tutor needs to be comfortable in working with students of different backgrounds, cultures, race, creed, and so on. In addition, a math tutor needs to be able to work with students with dual or multiple learning related exceptionalities, such as ADHD students who are cognitively gifted.

9. **Uniqueness (Signature Traits).** A math tutor is a unique human being with tutoring-related characteristics that distinguish him or her from other math tutors. As an example, Bob Albrecht (one of the authors of this book) is known for his wide interest in games, use of math manipulatives, use of calculators, and broad range of life experiences. He integrates all of these into his work with a student.

Read through the list of nine tutor-qualification areas. If you like, make additions to the list. In the original or expanded list what are your greatest strengths? What are your relative weaknesses? What are you doing to improve yourself in your areas of relative weakness?

Source: *Becoming a Better Math Tutor* by David Moursund & Robert Albrecht <http://i-a-e.org/downloads/free-ebooks-by-dave-moursund/208-becoming-a-better-math-tutor/file.html>