

ILM Activity: Tutor & Learner Mini Case Studies

CONCEPT

After reading the guidelines together, use the mini case studies provided below as a way to discuss and think about common student and tutor issues. This activity allows tutors to utilize their problem-solving skills in a real world fashion, and it has been a helpful activity to reinforce these important relationship-building concepts.

BEFORE TRAINING

Review the mini case studies included in this document. Think about adding a few more case studies based on common, easy-to-resolve tutoring issues within your literacy program. Once you have meaningful examples, print this document.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACTIVITY

Step 1 – Introduce guidelines by having volunteers read aloud each guideline in a round-robin fashion.

Step 2 – After reading the guidelines together, ask for people to get together into teams with three people.

Step 3 – Give each team one mini case study below. As a group, they should talk about the situation, reflect on the guidelines, discuss possible strategies and implications, and think about resources. Someone in each group may want to take notes.

Step 4 – After talking about each scenario for 8-10 minutes, try to agree upon a course of action. What guideline(s) are represented or reflected?

Step 5 – Share situation and outcome with group and share any additional insights.

Here is one sample case study to work through together.

EXAMPLE TO DISCUSS WITH GROUP

Bill wants to go to culinary school, and he has asked for your help to fill out the application form. As his tutor, you are worried that his reading skills and time management practices are not really developed for this to be successful. While he has great family support, he is not as mature as others in his peer group. How do you respond?

Steve keeps missing lessons due to his work schedule. He is good about calling you beforehand, but it is difficult to make progress with only 2-3 hours of instruction per month. You are becoming frustrated. How do you respond?

While shopping in your local grocery store, you see your student with her family. What do you do?

Denise is working on her high school diploma. During a tutoring lesson, she brings a news article to read about Cuba. When you are discussing the article together, she states that there are 52 states in the United States. How do you respond?

Your student, Minh, is really frustrated because she is having a hard time with verbs. After many lessons, she still struggles to use past, present and future tenses correctly. She is really overwhelmed because she wants her sentences to be perfect each time. Her attitude towards herself is really negative, and she puts herself down a lot.

After meeting with Linda for several sessions, you realize that you aren't a good fit for each other. The lessons are clumsy, and you can't seem to relate to each other.

Your student, Tony, isn't fully attentive. He is distracted by family and work issues, and he uses the first 15 minutes of each lesson to complain about his home life. The lessons are unfocused, and you don't feel as though progress is being made.

Each week, your student, Carl, arrives with new and different goals. One week, he wanted to work on GED materials. The next week he wanted to work on getting his license to drive truck. The following week Carl needs help with paperwork for his divorce. Then, the student expresses interest in learning more about constellations and motorcycles. How do you support him?
