

*The
Augsburg
College
Manual
for Writing
Tutors*

by Michelle B. Hanson

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*'One thing that is
always with the
writer — no matter
how long he has
written or how good
he is — is the
continuous process
of learning to write.'*

**— Flannery
O'Connor
Mystery
and Manners**

The Writing Lab's Philosophy

The Augsburg College Writing Lab offers a free tutoring service to all Augsburg students. The Lab is staffed with student tutors who serve as peer editors and conduct one-on-one tutoring sessions with student clients.

The Lab's primary goal is to help facilitate improvement in individual students' writing skills. This process is accentuated not by simply addressing the paper which the client has brought to the Lab, but rather by using this paper as an example of the client's writing ability. In this sense, it is the duty of the tutor to help clients understand how they write. Clients' understanding is promoted through the tutor's emphasis of both their strengths and weaknesses in writing.

It is also the responsibility of the student tutor to help student clients understand writing as a process. It is important that clients realize that a paper is not simply written out and then taken to the Lab for a quick check. Rather, a writer must construct a paper with several elements in mind, including content, organization, focus and mechanics. Additionally, revision must be a part of the writing process as it is key to ensuring that all elements have been attended to and that the paper is clear and meaningful to its audience.

A tutor's role, therefore, is to help clients discover in what areas of the writing process they need to improve. This discovery is facilitated when tutors point out strengths in a client's paper and explain why certain techniques work and when tutors point out weaknesses and explain why they are troublesome. By reinforcing strengths and noting weaknesses, and by giving advice on how to search out and fix problem areas, tutors help clients become more aware of their writing style. This awareness is the key to revision and will ultimately help clients to become better self-editors.

*'I go out one day
and see the mason
and carpenter busy
in building a house,
and I discover with
joy parallelism
between their work
and my construc-
tion, and come
home glad to know
that I too am a
housebuilder.'*

— Ralph Waldo
Emerson
*Journal excerpt,
June 1845*

Getting Started . . . The Basics

"Welcome to the Writing Lab . . ."

Tutors should always do their best to create a welcoming environment in the Lab. It is often intimidating for clients to come to the Lab for the first time as they may be unsure how the Lab works or hesitant about sharing their paper with a stranger (especially one who supposedly knows a lot about writing).

Often clients will arrive and stand at the door, unsure of what they should do. As a tutor, you should invite clients in and offer them a seat at one of the tutor stations. If all the tutor stations are occupied, tell clients that they may take a seat and wait for the next available tutor.

When a client arrives at your tutor station, take the time to introduce yourself; clients will feel more comfortable if you try to make the session personal. Also, some clients will want to return to work with you again and knowing each other on a name-to-name basis will help to establish a working relationship between you and your client.

"Let's sign in . . ."

Before beginning a tutoring session, be sure to sign in your client. Tutors are responsible for printing the information on the Sign-In Form to ensure that writing is readable and all information is filled in.

The English Department secretary compiles the list of clients at the end of the week and this list is distributed to all English faculty and faculty from other departments who request the lists. Often professors will require students to visit the Lab and will check the weekly list for students' names; therefore it is important that a client's full name is printed correctly as well as the course and professor's name.

For your benefit, it is necessary to record which clients you have worked with during your shift. This part of the Sign-In Form serves as a record that you were present during your shift and that the share of tutorials have been, for the most part, spread evenly among the tutors.

It is equally important to be concise when recording what issues were focused on during the tutoring session. Unfortunately there have been instances when clients, unhappy with a grade they have received on a paper, have pointed to the Writing Lab as being neglectful of the issues for which they were penalized. It is impossible for a tutor to focus on every issue; therefore it is important the tutor and client agree on what issues are to be worked on and that these issues are documented.

"What do you want to work on today?"

Before tutors even begin to look at a client's paper, they should conduct a brief interview with the client. During this time the tutor should ask 3 basic questions:

1. What is the assignment for the paper?
2. When is the paper due?
3. What kind of draft is this (first, final, or something in between)?

After tutors understand the assignment, time constraints, and amount of work that the client has put into the paper so far, they should continue with questions which explore the client's personal attachment to the paper as well as the client's perceptions about the paper's strengths and weaknesses:

1. How did you get the idea for this paper?
2. Where did you research this topic (or) what position did you take in your paper (or) how did this experience affect you?
3. Are you happy with what you have written so far?
4. What is something you really like about your paper?
What are its strengths?
5. What is something you think really needs some work?
What is something about your paper that you are unsure about?
6. What do you want to work on today?

The above questions help in the tutoring session first by giving ownership of the paper to the client. If the tutor makes it obvious that how clients constructed their paper and how they feel about it is important, the client will hopefully feel more inclined to take an active part in the tutoring session; if they feel their input is valuable from the beginning, they are apt to offer more of it later.

The above questions will also help make it clear that much of the responsibility for deciding what will happen during the session belongs to the client. For a tutoring session to be successful there must be a commitment on not only the tutor's part but also on the part of the client. By asking clients what they want to work on, the tutor can help to ensure that clients are committed to being part of the writing process.

The tutor should always remember, however, that even though clients believe they need to work on a certain area, there may be other areas that need to be addressed beforehand. For example, a client may suggest that (s)he needs to work on mechanics, but after reading the paper, the tutor realizes that the paper's paragraphs do not follow a logical order and are confusing to the reader (see page 7). Although the tutor should always take into consideration the suggestions of the client, it is important for the tutor to emphasize writing as a process and to point out areas which need to be attended to earlier in the process.

The last question that the tutor should ask clients before beginning to read their paper is:

1. Where is the thesis of your paper?

This question makes it clear to clients that a concise thesis, and one that can be easily identified by the writer, is essential to a paper. If clients cannot confidently point out their thesis or are even unsure of what a thesis is, the tutor will immediately realize that this will be one of the main focuses of the tutoring session.

After tutors feel as though they have been adequately introduced to clients and their papers, they may begin a preliminary read-through of the paper.

'Why do writers write? To inform, to persuade, to entertain, to explain, but most of all to discover what they have to say.'

— Donald M.
Murray
*The Explorers of
Inner Space*

5 Basic Steps to Reading a Paper

1. During the first reading, tutors should not mark the paper, but should rather focus in on the issues that will need to be addressed during the session. This may include focusing on the issues the client has suggested or identifying other work which will need to preclude the client's suggestions. This first reading will require some quick thinking as you begin to assess the client's strengths and weaknesses.

2. After the first reading, the very next step is to say something positive about the paper. This may include re-affirming what clients have suggested to be their strengths or by discovering other areas where clients excel.

Sometimes it may seem difficult to make any positive remarks about certain papers, but it is important to remember that there is always at least one asset in every paper. An asset to a paper may be something simple, like a nice transition, a well constructed phrase, or even a single word choice.

The importance of beginning with a positive remark cannot be emphasized enough. As mentioned earlier, many clients are easily intimidated by the process of writing and by tutors themselves. Many believe that writing is a skill people are either lucky to have or are unfortunate to be without; they are often surprised to find out that tutors struggle with the same issues that they do and must go through revision after revision as well.

By hearing from tutors that they have certain strengths in their own writing, clients often become more motivated to work on their papers and more confident about later writing assignments.

3. Next the tutor must present the areas in the paper that need work. This includes walking through the paper with the client and pointing out specific paragraphs, sentences, and phrases which are troublesome.

It is important that the tutor does not make value judgments about clients' papers, but rather points out areas that are confusing or unclear to the tutor as a reader. In this sense the tutor plays the role of audience and is giving a response to what the client has written, not a judgment.

The client should always be reminded that suggestions made by the tutor are just that, suggestions. Clients should not feel pres-

sured to change any part of their paper; instead tutors should give clients clear reasons for why certain areas of their paper are difficult to understand so that they can make a choice about how to fix it if they choose.

4. Tutors are not only present to point out problem areas; they also are there to offer advice on how to deal with these areas and to provide resources for the client. The most important job of the tutor, however, is to help clients understand their weaknesses. If the tutor offers a suggestion for change without the client understanding why, the suggestion will not be useful to the client.

Tutors should always look for ways to offer resources to their clients. This may include giving clients hand-outs (see page 9) or referring them to one of the Lab's reference books, or by giving them tips that they have found useful in their own writing experience. For example, if a client is having problems with organization, tutors may want to show the client an outline form that works especially well for them.

5. Most importantly, tutoring sessions should be client-centered. This means that clients should be responsible for writing suggestions on their own papers. A tutor may show the client how to correct for mechanical errors on a few sentences within a paper, but for the most part tutors should not write on clients' papers. Once again, by giving clients the responsibility for making changes on their own papers, tutors will be emphasizing the responsibility that clients have in revising their own papers.

Lastly, tutors should express an interest in continuing work on clients' papers. Tutors should invite clients back to the Lab so that they may see clients' progress. By inviting clients back to the Lab for the same paper, tutors will once again emphasize writing as a process and by showing interest in clients' improvement, tutors may motivate them to work on revisions.

*'Words, when well
chosen, have so
great a force in
them that a
description often
gives us more lively
ideas than the sight
of things them-
selves.'*

— Joseph Addison
The Spectator

Hierarchy of Comments

During a tutoring session, in order to emphasize the writing process, tutors should address issues in a client's writing based on this hierarchy so that the general structure and meaning of the paper are established as a foundation before more detailed and focused changes are made. Therefore, issues should be addressed in the following order:

1. Content: Does the paper relate to the assignment? Does the paper have a workable main idea? Is the topic specific enough for the paper's assigned length?

2. Organization: Does the paper have a stated thesis? Do the paragraphs follow a logical order? Does the paper have an introduction, body and conclusion? Does the paper have a sense of unity?

3. Substantiation: Do the paragraphs give support for the thesis with clear evidence? Do the sentences within the paragraphs give support for the focus of the paragraph?

4. Clarity and Coherence: Does the writer show and not tell? Do the examples used fit with the ideas proposed in the thesis? Are the sentences within each paragraph concise and related to each other? Is the position taken consistent throughout the paper?

5. Grammar: Is verb tense used appropriate and consistent? Does each sentence have subject/verb agreement? Are correct forms of words used (i.e., nouns, adjective, adverbs)?

6. Mechanics: Are words spelled correctly? Are sentences punctuated correctly? Are quotations placed properly? Are citations made correctly? Are there fragments or comma splices?

'When students complete a first draft, they consider the job of writing done — and their teachers too often agree. When professional writers complete the first draft, they usually feel they are at the start of the writing process. When a draft is completed, the job of writing can begin.'

— Donald M.
Murray
*The Maker's Eye:
Revising Your
Own Manuscripts*

'It's Due Tomorrow!' and Other Last Minute Wonders . . .

Although the Writing Lab tries to promote writing as a process, often clients will bring in papers that are due the very next day. Most of the time these clients want to have their paper quickly checked to make sure it is acceptable to submit.

In these situations, clients' papers may be in the final form and it will be appropriate to work on a proofreading with them in order to polish the paper; but in other instances, tutors may discover that clients' papers are far from a final draft. How should a tutor deal with a paper when (s)he feels it is not ready for a final proofread? The following are some suggestions for this type of situation:

1. **Be honest.** If you feel there are issues that should be dealt with in a paper, tell the client. Do not ignore an organizational problem just because the client says the paper is ready to be proofread and wants to turn it in.
2. **Offer options.** After presenting the issues that need to be worked on, give the client some options. Is there time to re-organize some of the paragraphs? Could a portion of the paper be re-written? Or is it best to polish the paper as best as possible and hand it in?
3. **Give responsibility to the client.** After presenting possible options to the client, ask the client what (s)he wants to do. Ultimately clients must decide how much work they want to put into their paper. (Remember to document on the Sign-In Form what issues the client and you decide to focus on).
4. **Be realistic.** If you feel there are many issues that need to be worked on in a certain paper, decide which are the most important and most realistic to work on. Listing a multitude of weaknesses may overwhelm clients and discourage them from working on their paper altogether.

Present issues that seem to be workable within the given time constraint and ones that are pertinent to the level of the assignment. (Remember, sometimes it is easy for tutors to get carried away with suggestions because of their own personal ideas of what would work in a paper; it is important to remember that the tutor's responsibility is to guide clients, through discussion and resources, to discover their own solutions).

Writing Lab Hand-Outs

Anytime a tutor can pinpoint specific problems that clients are having with their writing, it is important that these issues are pointed out and explained to the client. This will help clients become more aware of their writing and will give them the opportunity to work on improving in these areas.

The Writing Lab offers hand-outs which clients may take with them and use for review. These hand-outs are located in the top drawer of the file cabinet. Tutors should become familiar with all hand-outs available so that they may provide the most useful resources for clients. Examples of each hand-out are found in a green notebook located in the Lab.

*'By writing you
learn to write.'
(Scribendo disces
scibere.)*

— Latin proverb

Hand-outs which focus on the following areas are available:

Abbreviations
APA Documentation
Apostrophes
Capitals
Commas
Comparisons
Coordination
8 Ways to Cure Writer's Block
End Marks
Fragments
Hyphens, Dashes, Parentheses
-ING Openers
Integrating Borrowed Material
Intransitive/Transitive Verbs
MLA Documentation
Numbers
Plurals
Possession

Pronouns
More About Pronouns
Proofreading
Punctuation Pattern
Quotes
Run-ons
Semicolons, Colons
Spelling
Spelling cont.
Spelling Nightmares
Stumpers
More Stumpers
Subordination
Tenses
Titles
Transitions
Who/Whom

The Tutor as a Writing Lab Representative

There are two instances when tutors may serve as representatives of the Writing Lab outside of the Lab itself: Tutors may be asked to make class visits or to take part in peer-editing groups. These visits are a great way to introduce students to the services the Lab offers and tutors are paid for their time.

Class Visits

At the beginning of each new day school semester and Weekend College trimester, tutors make visits to writing classes and lower division literature classes. These visits ensure that new students are made aware of the Lab's services and to inform students of the Lab's hours. During this time, tutors give a brief description of the Lab, answer any questions students may have and hand out flyers with the Lab's location and hours.

Class visits are informal and tutors are not expected to give any rehearsed speech. However, some important points to stress while making a visit are as follows:

1. The Lab is a free service for all Augsburg students.
2. The Lab welcomes papers from any discipline at any stage of the writing process; it is NOT just for English papers.
3. The Lab is not remedial. Students at all levels of writing use the Lab, even the tutors themselves.
4. Students using the Lab are expected to work with the tutor; tutors do not simply fix papers, but rather give suggestions and resources to students so that they learn how to better revise their own papers.
5. The Lab's services are most effective when students come for repeat visits, thus working with a tutor through all stages of the writing process.
6. The Lab does not guarantee grades on papers.
7. The Lab is most helpful when tutors understand what the assignment is; therefore, students should bring in their written assignment or do their best to explain an oral assignment.

'... good writers do more than simply express their meaning; they pinpoint the critical differences between themselves and their reader and design their writing to reduce those differences.'

— Linda Flower
Writing for an Audience

Peer-editing Groups

Tutor assistance in peer-editing groups is offered each semester to Effective Writing professors at Augsburg. This service brings 3-4 tutors into the classroom, each of whom spends time with a small peer-editing group made up of the students in the class.

The tutor's role in the peer-editing group is to serve as a model and as a facilitator. Part of the problem of peer-editing groups is that students often are unsure of what kind of remarks to make to their peers about their papers. Often the time spent in peer-editing groups is unproductive and not helpful to students.

Peer-editing groups are run in different ways, depending on the professor. The groups should almost always try to have an oral component to it, so that all students can benefit from not only the tutor's comments but other students' comments as well.

The following are some suggestions on how to make a peer-editing group productive:

1. All members of the peer-editing group should listen to a student read his or her paper or, if the student has made copies, read the paper silently to themselves.
2. After the paper is read, the tutor should simply observe the behavior of the group. If the group starts to act on its own, the tutor should be observant of what things are working and are not working in the group so that they may be discussed later.
3. If students are unsure of what to do, the tutor should start to ask each individual member questions so that students begin to understand what kind of input they should give. Reminding students that the key to commenting on a paper is to start with its strengths, the tutor may ask, "Tim, what was one thing you really liked about Sarah's paper?" or "Katie, what was one interesting point in Tyler's paper that you felt really stood out?"
4. The next questions that the tutor asks as a facilitator should try to elicit *why* students felt certain parts of a paper were its strengths. The tutor will want to emphasize that as a peer editor, in order to give the most help to another student, it is important to both point out strengths and weaknesses and then explain how it is that they help or harm a paper.

The tutor may ask, "Tim, why did you like that particular phrase: what made it effective?"

Students may have some difficulty answering these questions. They may say, "I don't know; I just know I liked it." At this point it is important that the tutor try to bring out the elements of writing that may have made this phrase interesting.

The tutor may ask, "Did it appeal to your senses? Did you think it was clever? Did it sound nice when she read it?" Without saying so directly, the tutor may introduce the ideas of imagery, writing style, and alliteration or assonance and show how they enhance a piece of writing.

5. The next step is to ask the same questions about the paper's weaknesses. This will often be very difficult for students as they do not want to offend their classmates. It will be important that the tutor try to draw out comments and then try to get the students to explain why they feel a certain area is a weakness in a paper.

It is important to emphasize that students should not place value judgments on a paper. These judgments are not helpful when discussing either strengths or weaknesses. By saying a paper is "good," the peer-editor has not given the writer any feedback on what is good and how it is good. By saying a paper is "bad" the peer editor cuts off the line of communication with the writer.

Rather, tutors should emphasize comments made from the reader's point of view: "I was fascinated when I read this paragraph because your example was an experience that actually happened to you."

When peer editors tell the writer what stood out to them when they read the paper and why, the focus is on the reader and therefore some of the pressure is taken off the writer; this often leaves a more comfortable space for discussion. Maybe the reader did not grasp the meaning that the writer was aiming for and by giving a reader's reaction, the peer editor can let the writer know where the paper is and is not working.

The tutor may ask, "Julie, is there any place in Jon's paper where you felt lost or confused?" or "Jason, were there any points in Carrie's paper that were unclear to you?"

The next step is to find out why. "Julie, did you need a clearer transition to make the step to Jon's next paragraph?" or "Jason, did you need an example to understand Carrie's point better?"

By hearing what the reader *needs* in order to understand, the writer will begin to understand writing for an audience.

6. Lastly, tutors should give their input about the paper. The tutor's comments should come last so that they do not intimidate the students. The tutor should be modeling the very best comments to make and if students feel they have to top what the tutor has offered, they may be inhibited. After the tutor has made his or her comments, it is time to move on to the next paper.

Policies and Expectations for Tutors in the Writing Lab

*'I am convinced
more and more
every day that fine
writing is, next to
fine doing, the top
thing in the world.'*

— John Keats

1. **Be on time.** Clients should not have to wait for tutors to arrive.
2. You are expected to arrange for another tutor to work your shift if you cannot be there; it is best to arrange for a substitute as far ahead as possible. **Once a substitute is found, you must call the student coordinator to let him or her know the name of your substitute and the date (s)he will be working for you.**
3. Sign in all clients and make sure all writing is legible. **At the end of each Thursday afternoon shift, one tutor must take the Sign-In Forms to the faculty supervisor's office in the English Department and post them on his or her door.** New Sign-In Forms are located in the bottom drawer of the file cabinet.
4. **When the lab is busy, try to be as efficient as possible.** Jump between two clients if possible, ask clients to work on some of the issues covered and come back a bit later, or even be satisfied with not having quite enough time to cover absolutely everything with a client. Be complete and clear, but if others are waiting do not read more than two short papers or one long paper. Also, when it is not busy, you are still not required to spend an entire shift with one client. No more than three short papers from a client need to be read by a tutor during a shift.
5. All tutors must remain in the Lab (except for visits to the bathroom) during their shift until 15 minutes before closing time. If the Lab is empty at this time, two tutors may leave, **but one tutor must remain in the Lab until closing time.** Clients should never come to the Lab during its scheduled hours and find it empty. **However, if a client comes in near closing time, the tutor is not expected to stay past closing time.** Tutors should inform clients that they will work with them until close, but that next time it would be more prudent to arrive earlier.
6. You **must** attend all bi-monthly Lab meetings. If your schedule does not permit you to attend these meetings or if you miss more than two meetings, **you will not be able to work in the Lab.** If you have to miss a meeting for any reason, you must inform the faculty supervisor **before** the meeting.
7. Tutors are expected to work **four shifts** throughout the year. This will ensure more consistency within the Lab.

8. Keep clients' visits confidential. The relationship between a client and tutor is private and tutor sessions should not be discussed. Comments about a client made to other tutors or students may get back to him or her and cause problems.

If a question arises during a session, tutors should ask their clients if it is okay for them to confer with another tutor about the issue. If a problem arises during a session (such as clients who have purposely plagiarized or are abusive), the tutor should try to alleviate the situation as best as possible and then contact the faculty supervisor as soon as possible.

Places to Refer Students

Computer Skills

If the Lab is not busy, tutors may want to help clients by giving them helpful hints for revising their papers on the computer. Clients are sometimes unfamiliar with word processing and could benefit greatly from a short lesson in computer skills. Lab tutors may be able to detect by looking at a paper that a tutor is unfamiliar with spell check, cutting and pasting, or even tabs and spacing. By showing clients a few techniques on the computers, tutors may save clients from wasted time and frustration.

If other computer issues arise that tutors are unfamiliar with or if the Lab is too busy to give adequate computer help, tutors should refer clients to the Help Desk in the Academic Computing Lab in the basement of the Foss Center.

'Knowledge is the foundation and source of all good writing.'

— Horace
Ars Poetica

Resumes

Clients may ask for tutors to help them proofread their resumes before they send them. However, if clients need help in how to write or format a resume, tutors should refer them to the Career Services Office. This office specializes in helping students prepare their resumes and has free pamphlets on resumes that they have compiled (the Lab has a few of these pamphlets for reference only; they should not be given to clients).

Timed Writings for Education

Sometimes people will arrive at the Lab asking to do the timed writing for the Education Department. The Writing Lab does NOT conduct these writings. Refer these students to the Tutor Center in the basement of the Foss Center.

*'What a writer asks
of his reader is not
so much to like as
to listen.'*

— Henry
Wadsworth
Longfellow

Difficult Situations

Sometimes there may be situations in which the tutor is put in a difficult situation. There are always situations which will arrive that cannot be anticipated, but based on past experiences these situations should be considered:

1. A client has obviously plagiarized. If a tutor detects plagiarism, it is important to address this issue with tact. A tutor must remember that some people plagiarize on purpose and realize that it wrong and others plagiarize and are unaware of what plagiarizing is and that it is a serious academic offense.

Tutors will want to question clients about parts of their paper that they think may be plagiarized. They may ask, "Have you given proper credit for ideas you may have taken from outside sources?" or "Is everything in your paper which is not in quotes written in your own words?"

Some students, especially those studying English as a Second Language (ESL), may not be aware that borrowing ideas and words from others without giving them credit is wrong and will lead to serious academic discipline. It is the duty of the tutor to detect plagiarism and explain to clients what plagiarism is, why it is unacceptable and what consequences (i.e., failure or expulsion) could follow.

If a tutor confronts a client on plagiarized text, and the client makes it clear that they are not concerned with correcting the issue, the tutor should report this situation to the supervisor.

2. A client expects you to write for them. Tutors should emphasize that at no time may they write any portion of a client's paper for him or her. Tutors may tell clients, "If I were to write any portion of this paper, you would have to put my name on it as a co-author. If you didn't, that would be plagiarism and plagiarism is a serious academic offense that would, at the very least, give you a failing grade in your course. Tutors at the Writing Lab are here to offer help and resources so that you can better write your own paper, but we will not do the work for you."

If clients do not understand this policy or continue to insist that the tutor help write a portion of their paper, the tutor may refer them to the faculty supervisor.

3. A client becomes confrontational. Tutors must not stand for any form of abuse from a client. If a client becomes confrontational for any reason, tutors should try their best to alleviate the situation (i.e., by asking the client to discuss, calmly, the situation or by asking the client to work with another tutor).

If the client refuses to cooperate, tutors should ask the client to leave and take matters up later with the faculty supervisor. All tutors working together on a shift should act as a support system for any single tutor that may be having a difficult time with a client. In extreme situations, if a client refuses to leave, one tutor should leave and call security. Any difficult or uncomfortable situations should be reported as soon as possible to the faculty supervisor to prevent them from happening again.

4. A client complains about a professor, class or grade. Tutors should never discuss professors and/or their classes with a client; this behavior is both inappropriate and unprofessional. Equally important, tutors must never make comments about a grade that professors have given clients on their papers; tutors are neither trained nor at liberty to make these types of judgments.

ESL (English as a Second Language) Students

Based on Lab statistics, about 25% of the Lab's clientele are ESL students. This population deserves special attention as they often are dealing with writing issues that differ from native speakers.

The following are some issues to remember when working with ESL students:

*'Nothing goes by
luck in composition.
It allows of no
tricks. The best you
can write will be the
best you are.'*

— Henry David
Thoreau

1. Be Courteous. Although tutors should be courteous to every client, tutors should make a special effort to be aware of their behavior around people from other cultures. ESL clients may be offended by behavior that tutors or even other clients may not even notice, such as tutors eating during a tutorial.

2. Remember that ESL clients may be overly polite. Tutors should remember that ESL clients may not always understand what you are saying or trying to explain to them. Often they will nod or tell you they understand as a form of politeness. If you think they don't understand, try to explain it a different way or ask them to explain back to you the issues you have just presented. It is important that tutors take the time to ensure that ESL clients are getting the information they need to improve their writing.

3. Know your grammar rules. ESL clients are learning English in the classroom and therefore probably know more of the stated rules about grammar than native speakers do. It is important that tutors have a firm grasp on grammar rules so that they can properly explain errors that ESL clients are making. It is not helpful to simply circle a grammatical error and point it out; tutors must help ESL clients to understand why errors are wrong and how to fix them. Tutors should review grammar rules that they are unfamiliar with using the Lab Hand-outs and the resource books on the Lab shelves.

4. Be aware of typical problems. ESL clients often have difficulty in similar areas as a result of how their language compares to English. Tutors should be especially familiar with how to explain the use of articles, prepositions and, most importantly, verb tenses.

5. Suggest that clients read aloud. One of the best techniques for working with ESL clients is by having them read their paper aloud. Most ESL students can speak English better than they can

write it. Therefore, when clients read aloud they often catch their own mistakes and can fix them on their own. Tutors should remind all clients that reading one's paper aloud is an effective way for one to proofread his or her own paper.