Ravenswood Reads Tutoring Manual

Connie Juel, Heather Hebard, Meredith Moran, Julie Wilson, Rachel Dowling

Stanford University

Section 1: Tutoring Goals

Section 2: Assessment
Section 3: Emergent Reader Plan
Section 4: Alphabetic Reader Plan
Section 5: Early Reader Plan
Section 6: Appendix

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Tutoring Goals

The magic of tutoring is created through combination of a trusting, caring relationship, assessment-based planning, and skillful teaching. Our goal is to support you so that you and your student can have a comfortable, successful experience with tutoring. At first, as you read through the manual and plan your lessons, you might feel overwhelmed by the many decisions that must be made. If you need help, please don’t hesitate to ask a TC or TA. It also may help to think about the larger goals of the program.

Ravenswood Reads Goals

During the year-long program, we work to help students develop:

- a love of reading
- confidence
- communication and vocabulary
- a repertoire of strategies and skills

A Love of Reading

Underlying the work you are doing with your student is the goal that he will become an active, lifelong reader. If the majority of your student’s experiences with reading are ones of struggling to read texts in which he has little interest, his
motivation is likely to be undermined. However, if your student knows that books of great interest to him exist then that may lift his motivation to work on any activities that help him learn to read and eventually have access to those books. We recommend finding out about your student’s burning interests, checking out a book (non-fiction or fiction) or magazine from the library on that interest, and spending a few minutes during the reading time exploring the book together. For earlier-stage readers, books should have pictures that the student can explore while you read the accompanying text. For later-stage readers, preview the book or magazine for your student; let him decide where in the text he is interested in starting and read to him as he reads along.

Confidence
Confidence is developed as students apply their growing skills and strategies successfully. It’s important to make sure to create opportunities for your students to show what they know, and to reflect back to them their success (e.g., “Wow. You just read the word ‘and’! You learned it in your word bank and you just read it here in this book! That’s what good readers do.”). Moreover, it’s important to help your student see himself as someone who can figure things out. Notice times that the student self-corrects her reading or applies a learned principle to a new situation. If students see themselves as capable problem-solvers, they will be more likely to persevere. Encourage your student to articulate how she figured something out. For example, if she corrects a word while reading, revisit the section when she is finished with the book. You can say something like, “I noticed that you corrected yourself here. You’re right! The word is stared, not
"started. How did you figure that out?" Younger children may not be able to explain how they came to a solution, so you may need to share how you think the child saw it, (e.g., Did you notice that the word started with p, so it couldn’t be dog?)

**Communication and Vocabulary**

As you talk through stories with your student you have the opportunity to repeatedly model language and new vocabulary connected to pictures and within the context of a story. This is important for all students and especially for English Language Learners (ELLs). It is also an opportunity for the student to try to use the new language and vocabulary. During reading conversations, pay attention to how your student talks; look for growth and ways to encourage him to use new language while talking about the reading.

**A Repertoire of Strategies and Skills**

As you work with your student, you will be helping her learn skills. You’ll find lots of suggestions for building skills and strategies in the planning sections of the manual. It’s important to remember that skills take practice to internalize, and you should plan accordingly. Though the lesson is divided into different sections, the instruction in and reinforcement of skills and strategies should be fluid across these sections.
For example, the skills you build in word study can be reinforced during the reading time. Imagine that you have been teaching the letter \( m \) during word study and the student has learned its name, sound, and letter formation. Before reading a book, you and your student can locate words that start with \( m \). You can teach them a strategy for using their skill: “\textit{When you point to this word I want you to look at the first letter and hear its sound when you say the word.}”

\textbf{Sensitivity to Diversity}

Because of the class and racial/ethnic composition of East Palo Alto, most of the tutees in Ravenswood Reads are students of color. Many are from lower socioeconomic categories. Some are first- or second-generation immigrants. As in many schools, diverse religions are represented. One part of being a successful tutor is to be sensitive to the possibility that your tutee’s background may be vastly different than yours on some of these dimensions. How will your words and actions impact your relationship with your tutee? It is great to ask tutees about their lives, their family, their siblings, what they do at home, if they have pets, etc., but you must recognize that you may have assumptions based on your own lived experiences. Your tutee’s reality may be very different from yours in some ways – not worse, just different. Be mindful of the assumptions you make about their families, their homes, and the places they have been. Your tutees and their families are ethnically and culturally diverse and celebrate their heritage and/or faith in many ways. Remember this when a holiday occurs. The key is to interact with your tutee from a place of authentic respect for their humanity. Share yourself, ask questions, and listen with genuine interest and acceptance, letting...
tutees practice oral communication and enjoy someone’s interest in them. Your tutee has as much to teach you as you have to teach them.

We are confident that you will build a delightful relationship with your student, and we are here to support you with skillful planning and teaching. We have designed this manual to support your lesson planning and hope you find it useful. As you get to know the special needs of your student, it’s likely that you will have questions that aren’t answered here. The Ravenswood Reads support team is here to help you as you grow in your knowledge of tutoring and literacy development. We hope you find participation in Ravenswood Reads rewarding. Happy tutoring!