



Caring for the Individual

Tutor Guide

Welcome! Thank you for your interest in becoming a part of the Just Grace Education tutoring programme.

This guide is designed to make you more familiar with our vision as well as the structure of a typical tutoring session.

Please feel free to ask the programme coordinator or other tutors should you require any additional information.

1. More than just a tutor

The Just Grace classrooms are designed to facilitate quality learning and meaningful relationships. We aim to have at least one tutor for every five learners in each session.

Tutors have the potential to be so much more than just a portal of knowledge to our learners. Many of our learners come from complex and, at times, difficult family backgrounds and so they value the individual attention and focused time a tutor can offer them.

All tutors are potential role models to the learners, tutors have the ability to motivate and encourage learners to take their future seriously.

We have found that learners will only succeed in their school work if they feel accepted and feel like someone believes in them, so the tutor plays a much bigger role in a learner's life than just one of academic guidance.

Tutors have the opportunity to uncover serious emotional problems and other issues in the learners' lives, which enables us to refer the learner to get the appropriate assistance when necessary.

Tips to embracing your mentorship role while tutoring:

a) Know the learner

- Always know the names of the learners you are working with. We have name tags at the front of the class so encourage the learners to wear them. Ask the programme coordinator to give you a name tag, if you do not have one. Write their names down so that you do not forget them the following week.
- Feel free to chat to the learners for 5 minutes before the session about how they are doing. Find out their hobbies, what tests they wrote the previous week, what their weekend plans are. Discover his or her strengths and challenges in learning, under what circumstances does he or she learn best/poorly? Do not assume that everyone's learning styles and techniques are the same or similar to yours.

b) Build a relationship and trust

- Consistency in tutor attendance helps learners to trust you as a tutor.
- When it is possible, try to go back to the same group of learners each week so that they can get to know you well.
- Do not be afraid to acknowledge that the chemistry between you and the learner isn't right, and that another tutor might be more effective. The goal is to help, not endure.

c) Celebrate accomplishment

- Give positive feedback, recognise hard work and use encouraging vocabulary to celebrate even minor accomplishments.
- Do not embarrass learners or use sarcastic language. We do not tutor to impress, but to help.

2. The JG style

1. Tutoring vs teaching

Just Grace's tutors are not teachers. Our role is to revise what teachers have already covered in class. Although learners may lack some basics which will need to be explained to them, it is important that as tutors we do not always provide learners with the answers or 'spoon-feed' them. Our tutoring sessions model problem-solving behaviour where tutors help the learners to find the answers for themselves.

When explaining concepts, tutors should try draw on the knowledge of other learners in the group as well. The best gift you can give the learner is the ability to think rationally and problem solve for themselves. We need learners to practice reading notes, understanding, writing, calculating and speaking for themselves.

Tutors are not expected to know everything or to be able to respond to every question. It's important that we acknowledge when we don't know something as this is something we're teaching our learners to do as well. The tutoring environment is informal and collaborative, and you can simply ask for the assistance of another tutor if required. Or you can take the opportunity to learn/problem-solve and demonstrate that you are in a learning process as well.

Make sure the learner knows it is safe to not succeed at first. Learning is a process that often involves unsuccessful attempts, this is not failure as options are eliminated toward the correct solution.

2. Be involved

Many learners struggle to identify what they do not understand. Other learners are shy or embarrassed to ask questions so they simply copy their friends work. For these reasons, it is important that tutors do not wait for learners to ask questions before they get involved. Instead, tutors should ask learners to explain their answers, give learners the same problem with different numbers to test their understanding, or ask them questions about their work. It may be helpful to summarize and review what was learnt by your group during that session.

3. Expectations of tutors

- Commit to a 6 month period of attending all the sessions for which you sign up.
- Communicate with the programme coordinator and let them know at least 48h in advance should you not be able to make a session.
- Be punctual. If transport is an issue then please speak to a JG coordinator and they will try to find a lift for you with another tutor.
- Treat all other tutors and learners with respect.
- Behave appropriately with learners. Do not pursue romantic relationships with learners.
- Try your best to speak English with the learners. While we understand that sometimes it helps to use isiXhosa to explain a concept, please remember that the learners will be tested and examined in English, and that English will probably be the language of instruction when they get to university.
- Write in a manner that is clear and in an easy-to-follow layout (make sure that they are not just writing down the solution but that they are answering the question) and include units where units are not provided.
- Identify gaps in their learning and ask questions.
- Turn your mobile phone on silent during tutoring time and ask the learners to do the same.
- Report any behavioural problems or other concerns to the programme coordinator.
- Sign and abide by our learner protection policy.

4. Expectations of learners

- Abide by the Just Grace Classroom Rules;
 - **be on time** for all sessions and events,
 - **be honest**, specifically with regards to your level of understanding,
 - **ask questions** when you don't fully understand, and
 - **strive for excellence**, always trying to achieve the best results you can.
- Take notes of important concepts/ rules learned.
- Speak English throughout the session in preparation for exams and tertiary education or employment after school.
- Keep desks neat and free from any bags.
- Work diligently and do not waste time.
- Do not write in the JG textbooks and return all textbooks and stationery at the end of each session.
- Only use calculators when necessary, for example, trigonometry or financial mathematics.

5. Own it

We want all tutors to have ownership in the programme. We need fresh ideas and new voices in the classroom.

a) Good Cop

Tutors are welcome to shake things up by starting the session with a game or taking their group for a walk around the school for a short break. Be creative and take initiative.

b) Bad Cop

Tutors are critical to ensure a quiet and fun working environment. Tutors need to be in control of the classroom and report any serious issues to the programme coordinator. Tutors need to respectfully keep learners quiet and enforce the rules.

Below are a few more formal ways to take more initiative;

Become a grade head– This involves heading up either grade 10, 11 or 12. You will have to arrive at the school at 08:45 and will be responsible for coordinating the tutors that are assigned to that grade. This will include making sure that the books are handed out, that the session runs timeously and that the learners are appropriately behaved. Generally speaking, you are responsible for ensuring that the session of your grade runs smoothly.

Volunteer as part of the career guidance or computer training programmes – These programmes form an integral part of the Just Grace curriculum and, as always, they are volunteer run. If you have a passion for either of these aspects then please discuss your possible involvement with one of the Just Grace Directors.

Volunteer as a mentor – Mentorship is key to the success of our education programme. Mentors are allocated a mentee (or a few mentees), who they mentor for a period of not less than a year. This includes acting as a role model, helping your learner develop goals, and sharing your knowledge and skills with the learner.

Volunteer to organise cultural/sporting/social activities – We love to supplement our programme with fun activities where learners are able to learn new skills and bond amongst themselves. This includes sports matches, drama classes, learning to play musical instruments, going to the aquarium etc.

Get involved with organisational management – There is a lot of ‘behind the scenes’ work that takes place to ensure that Just Grace continues to run effectively and efficiently. If administration, web design, marketing or organisational management is your thing, then speak to a Just Grace Director to get involved.

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