



TutorND Observation Tool

University of Notre Dame

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Scholarly reference:

TutorND Steering Committee (Year, Month). *TutorND Observation Tool*. University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ZW0-Yln2t4gzN7u7t70upVvvOSk9o0XBOqYQukyVho/edit#slide=id.g1a0f6e3a189_0_0

Interpretation and Use Statement

This is the TutorND general observation rubric that TutorND tutors and coaches learn about in their initial orientation and training. It was created by a team of Notre Dame faculty, staff, and students based on available evidence about what works well for classroom observation, and it was designed to align with TutorND's five guiding principles: *relationships*, *high expectations*, *routine*, *promoting cognitive activity*, and *normalizing errors*. Coaches and tutors are encouraged to use this tool to provide one another with formative feedback on tutoring sessions. Equally important—the tool also helps observers develop a lens for improving their own tutoring practice. Thus, all tutors are encouraged to use the observation tool to watch at least one other tutor's session each semester. This TutorND general observation rubric may be used by the steering committee, coaches, tutors, and researchers interested in improving their own tutoring skills, providing formative feedback to tutors, or studying sessions to learn more about how to optimize tutoring. Scores from a single observation should never be used in an evaluative purpose with high-stakes implications. Please note that TutorND tutors and coaches may be asked to use additional rubrics matched to specific content in the early literacy, literacy, and math tutoring domains.

Purpose and Instructions

The purpose of this tool is to observe and provide feedback on a tutoring session. Observation allows observers to help other tutors, and it also helps observers develop a lens for improving their own tutoring practice.

Tutor Name:	Date:
Observer Name:	Location:
Subject:	Grade Level:

Completed After Observation (Optional)

Summative Feedback

What were some areas of strength for this tutor?

What were some areas where this tutor could grow?

*Please record your responses in our [electronic version of this observation tool](#)

Observer instructions: For each instructional behavior, please indicate the level observed on a 1-4 scale (1 = not demonstrated, 2 = basic, 3 = proficient, and 4 = distinguished).

Domain 1: Building Relationships	
<i>Developing relationships and connecting to the lives of youth</i>	
	1.1: The tutor uses the student's name and pronounces it correctly (at a minimum uses it at the beginning and end of the session).
	1.2: The tutor connects with the student's personality, goals, and interests.
	1.3: The tutor plans and carries out a warm-up activity/icebreaker. (note: once tutors and students know each other well, warm-up can be "just" having a brief but meaningful conversation to catch up on what's been going on outside of tutoring)
Comments (Optional)	
Domain 2: Setting High Expectations	
<i>Setting high expectations that all children engage deeply with content</i>	
	2.1: The tutor moves the student beyond the warm-up to academic content where specific and precise academic language is used.
	2.2: The tutor presents material that is challenging and supports the student in meeting that challenge.
	2.3: The tutor challenges the student to stretch and extend their thinking (e.g., can you think of another way to get the same answer?; what would happen if...?; what evidence can you use to support your idea?; can you apply that strategy to this novel problem?)
Comments (Optional)	
Domain 3: Maintaining Routines	
<i>Developing routines to create a consistent and intellectually safe learning environment</i>	
	3.1: The tutor establishes an environment for engagement and efficient transitions (e.g., minimal distractions, organized tasks and resources, clear language to signal movement to the next activity, etc.).
	3.2: The tutor outlines the session at the beginning and identifies the goals for the session.
	3.3: The tutor closes the session in a way that helps the student reflect on the big ideas and/or progress made.
Comments (Optional)	

Observer instructions: For each instructional behavior, please indicate the level observed on a 1-4 scale (1 = not demonstrated, 2 = basic, 3 = proficient, and 4 = distinguished).

Domain 4: Promoting Cognitive Activity

Learning is a constructive and interactive process that requires cognitive activity and interest from students

	4.1: The tutor demonstrates enthusiasm for learning (e.g., positive attitude, shares own learning experiences).
	4.2: The tutor helps the student make connections between concepts learned in sessions, school, and/or the student's life.
	4.3: The tutor uses language that invites students to share and explain their thinking (e.g., what are you thinking?; how did you get that answer?).
	4.4: The tutor gives sufficient think-time (e.g., allows stretches of silence, activates prior knowledge and/or provides hints before jumping in to tell the answer, uses probing questions to help the student uncover connections in the material).
Comments (Optional)	

Domain 5: Normalizing Errors and Using Them As Learning Opportunities

Student thinking is a key asset in learning, errors are normal and helpful to learning, and students' initial ideas are considered the building blocks for future growth

	5.1: The tutor uses language that acknowledges a mistake or error exclusive of judgment.
	5.2: When an error is made, the tutor inquires into the student's thought process to help the student examine their thinking.
	5.3: The tutor provides the student opportunities to try again or use another approach.
Comments (Optional)	

In the rare instance when a student makes no errors during an entire session, type N/A instead of a number from 1-4.