

# COMMON SCENARIOS

## AT THE BURKE WRITERS' ROOM

Rm. 226, 8AM - 4PM



**A student has their head down on a desk because they worked a late shift at their job last night.**

**» How do you get them focused?**

Approach the situation with incentives. Say: "I understand you're tired, but give me two solid minutes of work on this assignment right now, and I'll give you two minutes of rest."

Treat it more as a reward-based system. You are more than welcome to use (small amounts of) candy, as well.

**A student constantly checks their phone during your session.**

**» What can you do to get them to focus on the task at hand?**

Approach the situation with a joke, rather than scolding the student. One tutor swears that saying, "Checking some super-urgent, time-sensitive emails there?" works magic in gently guiding the student to put their phone away.

If they aren't receptive, take a minute to entertain their social media drama or ask questions- they are likely to feel shy and put it away just to avoid filling you in.

**A student is ready to work, but they don't know what to write about or how to start.**

**» How do you guide them?**

If they have a computer out, ask them to shut it and just talk with you. Bounce ideas off one another. As the student speaks, take notes. Then, ask them to circle what stands out to them.

Identify three body paragraphs and a thesis. Find the "Essay Tips" sheet from the Volunteer Binder and complete a 5 paragraph essay outline together!

**A group of students is having a discussion in a language you don't understand. You need to help them with their writing skills in english.**

**» What do you do?**

Try asking one of the students how to say "writing" or "book" (or some other writing-related word) in their language. This way, they will redirect their attention to teaching you something. The writing-related vocabulary word will also be a smooth segue into getting everyone on-track.

If the students still have difficulty with English, then try to identify a student whose English is strongest in the group, and have that student help you lead the group (and translate when necessary) while moving the group forward on their assignment.