POTENTIAL SCENARIOS

RESOURCES

Tutor trainings are mandatory in order to volunteer at one of our tutoring programs. Register online to attend one at your earliest convenience. 

1. ATTEND A TUTOR TRAINING

2. COMPLETE BACKGROUND CHECKS

3. SIGN UP FOR SHIFTS

STUDENT CONDUCT

When interacting with students, there should be no cursing, and no talking about students in front of other students.

TUTOR CONDUCT

During tutoring sessions, keep cell phones stowed away. If you need to use your phone, please step away from the tutoring space first.

TRIVIA!

Two things about the roles of volunteers in situations like these:

1. We are mandated reporters and are trained to handle sensitive situations.
2. Please report sensitive information you may hear to 826 Boston staff.

TROUBLES WITH PEERS, ADULTS, SUPERVISORS, MENTORS

When interacting with students, there should be no cursing, and no talking about students in front of other students.

TROUBLESHOOTING

From time to time, our sites will practice what to do in the event of an emergency so that everyone is prepared. Look for 826 Boston staff to lead informal de briefs at the end of a session to discuss best practices and learn new strategies, highlight our Top Researcher of the Month, share student work, and communicate with our ever-growing web of volunteers.

IN TANDEM

Our volunteer newsletter, “In Tandem,” is emailed out on a monthly basis. In it we’ll discuss the most pertinent cryptid identification strategies, share student work, and communicate with our ever-growing web of volunteers.

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTERS

Our volunteer newsletter, “In Tandem,” is emailed out on a monthly basis. In it we’ll discuss the most pertinent cryptid identification strategies, share student work, and communicate with our ever-growing web of volunteers.

VOLUNTEER CALENDARS

Our Volunteer Calendars are located on our website. Once you’ve completed THE BASICS, you’ll be able to sign up for shifts on our calendars. Use your mouse to hover over a shift and see how many hours we expect everyone to dress in a professional manner consistent with their responsibilities.

PHOTO ESSAY

When you’re in the field, it’s not uncommon for you to be surrounded by nature’s creatures. Whether you’re encountering a bigfoot on the trail or spotting a moose in the woods, it’s important to be aware of your surroundings and respect the creatures you encounter. Our Volunteer Handbook is designed to help you navigate these experiences and ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable adventure.

THE MISSION

826 Boston is a nonprofit youth writing and publishing organization that empowers underserved students ages 6-18 to find their voices, tell their stories, and gain communication skills to succeed in school and life.

THE WATERING HOLE

826boston.org/wateringhole

DIRECT ANY VOLUNTEER QUESTIONS TO

617.442.5400

volunteer@826boston.org

826 Boston Volunteer Handbook

ON CREATIVE WRITING & INDIVIDUALIZED STUDENT INTERACTION

W.A.T.E.R.I.N.G. H.O.L.E.

WATERING HOLE

Our experience has taught us the value of coaching students in the critical skills of “writing” and “tutoring.” We call it W.A.T.E.R.I.N.G. H.O.L.E.

STUDENT INTERACTION

Our biggest discovery at the Institute is that creative writing and individualized student interaction dramatically increase students’ social-emotional skills, writing skills, and their likelihood of finding bigfoot. You probably always had a hunch that student interaction dramatically increase students’ social-emotional skills, writing skills, and their likelihood of finding bigfoot. You probably always had a hunch that

826 Boston volunteer,

If you’re reading this, you’ve found your way to the writing and tutoring center located behind the Greater Boston Bigfoot Research Institute. We call it 826 Boston.

Our biggest discovery at the Institute is that creative writing and individualized student interaction dramatically increase students’ social-emotional skills, writing skills, and their likelihood of finding bigfoot. You probably always had a hunch that reading and writing would unlock the secrets of the unknown. That hunch was correct.

826 Boston volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization. We make this work possible. Every year, more than 800 volunteers like you contribute thousands of hours to providing underserved students in Boston with free, high-quality, creative, and fun programming. We could not do this without you. Please take the time to read through this information, as well as the trail guide on the back, to get oriented with the adventure ahead. Our team will always be happy to answer any questions that aren’t covered here.

Welcome aboard, and thank you for all that you do for 826 Boston.

Sincerely,

The 826 Boston Volunteer Team
**Writing Trail Guide**

**Ideas**

**Do:** Identify/define the focus.
- Highlight big ideas that develop the focus.
- Highlight details that support the central focus.
- Circle ideas that don’t support the focus.

**Ask:**
- What are you writing about?
- What’s the main idea?
- How does this idea/sentence connect to the topic?
- What does this mean? Why does this matter?

**Organization**

**Do:**
- Identify the organizational pattern.
- Highlight any transitional words or sentences.
- Provide options for organizing if there isn’t any organization.

**Ask:**
- Talk to me about what is happening in each paragraph.
- How do you want to start/end this piece of writing?
- How are these paragraphs related? How can we connect them?

**Voice**

**Do:**
- Transcribe.
- Identify the perspective, point-of-view, or style.

**Ask:**
- How do you feel about the topic? How do you let the reader know what you feel?
- Who is your audience?
- How can you make this interesting for them?

**Sentence Fluency**

**Do:**
- Read out loud.
- The sentences all sound the same.
- How can you add some variety?
- How does that sound?
- How are these sentences related? How can we connect them?

**Ask:**
- Are there any words missing?
- The sentences all sound the same. How can you add some variety?
- How does that sound?
- How are these sentences related? How can we connect them?

**Say:**
- I don’t know. It doesn’t matter.

**Word Choice**

**Do:**
- Identify specific nouns and active verbs.
- Identify overused words and linking verbs (is/am/are/was/were).
- Highlight moments when more detail or imagery would help.
- Take me there: What am I hearing? Seeing? Smelling? Feeling?

**Ask:**
- What’s another/more specific word you can use?
- Take me there: what am I hearing? seeing? smelling? feeling?
- Would you be able to draw this scene?

**Conventions**

**Do:**
- Read out loud and see what the student automatically self-corrects and picks up.
- Look for one or two patterns or constellations of errors and show the student how to correct those patterns of errors.

**Ask:**
- Do you see anything that is missing? What do we need to change? Does that sound right? Which one sounds better?

**Say:**
- Let me show you how to... now let’s try one together... and then you can try one on your own.

**I don’t need help!**

**Tip:** Be curious about their assignment and ask specific questions about what they’re doing.

**I don’t know. It doesn’t matter.**

**Tip:** Ask about what matters to them and help them find other ways to engage, e.g., drawing, taking it out, etc.

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**What’s this all about?**

**What’s the overall structure of the piece?**

**Is there a distinct tone or flavor?**

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**What are merfolk? There are only mermen and mermaids.**

**Tip:** Listen actively and ask them where they’re coming from before judging or correcting.

**Sentence Fluency**

**What’s the rhythm and flow to the language?**

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826 Boston

826boston.org

826 Boston

Designer: Janine Touch / Illustrator: Ritchie Wheelock