



After-School Tutoring

at The Greater Boston Research Institute



Dear 826 Boston Volunteer,

The following Tutor Guide includes some basic information that you may find useful as an After-School Tutor. For extra tips and tricks, review your tutor starter deck. Any questions you have can be directed to some of our incredible veteran tutors (you'll know who they are) or to any 826 Boston team members. All of us here want to get to know you and problem solve together, so don't be shy!

Thank you,

The 826 Boston Team

Table of Contents

- 2 [After-School Tutoring Overview](#)
- 4 [The Chapbook Process](#)
- 5 [Best Practices When Tutoring Writing](#)
- 6 [Rules for Students \(and Tutors too!\)](#)
- 8 [Additional Resources](#)

After-School Tutoring Overview

826 Boston's After-School Tutoring supports K-12 students with their daily homework, developing their reading and writing skills, and publishing their creative writing in a semiannual Chapbook. Tutors may work with 1-3 students at a time during their shift.

When you arrive, check in with the "point person" at the front desk to sign-in and let us know if you're comfortable tutoring in more specialized subjects (chemistry, biology, Spanish, etc). Then the point person will assign you to a table. As students arrive, the point person will check-in with them about their homework tasks and partner them with the best suited tutor for the session.

826 Boston team members, including Karen, our Out-of-School Time (OOST) Program Director, will circulate the room during tutoring sessions to offer additional support to tutors and students. Feel free to approach any of our team members if you need assistance with a student or their homework, even if you have to leave your table to do so.

What will I do in a tutoring session?

A general outline of a tutoring session:

- **WELCOME – 5 minutes**

Arrive, sign-in at the front, and head to your designated table.

- **MEET YOUR STUDENT – 5 minutes**

Once a student has been assigned to your group, take a few minutes to get to know them by filling in the homework log together and talking about your respective days. Take some time here to review their last session and share something about yourself.

- **HOMEWORK – 40 minutes**

Jump into the homework! We always recommend starting with the hardest assignment.

- **READING – As time allows**



If your student wraps up homework early, they should read until break. If you don't have another student you're working with at the table, feel free to go with them to the reading area; if not, they'll head to the reading area on their own. Students may already have a book on reserve, so check-in with the student about any potential books they may already have on reserve before going to the shelves.

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BREAK – 10 minutes**

During announcements, an OOST team member will share updates, introduce new tutors and/or students, celebrate birthdays, and other updates. Students may also share announcements! Popular topics include their dog's cousin's half-birthday, and what their neighbor scored on his math quiz last Tuesday—which we love. During break, students can work on whatever they want, visit friends, and talk with tutors.

- **WRITING – 20 minutes**

Help your student respond to one of the provided creative prompts, any of the Daily Writing Menu options, or anything else they want to write about for 15 minutes.

- **DAILY REFLECTION – 5 minutes**

Before students leave, go back to the homework log and reflect on the session and today's goal with your student. It is often helpful to do this after writing or homework time, since sometimes students head to the reading area and don't come back in time to check in.

- **CLEAN UP – 5 minutes**

Students should clean up, pack their bags, and push in their chairs.

Debriefs and Wrap-Up Slips

Stick around for about 15–20 minutes at the end of tutoring to recap the day. The tutor debrief is a time to talk through personal successes, challenges, and questions. We are always open to feedback, and this is a great time to ask for help in areas where you need more support.

If you have to leave before the debrief meeting, you can fill out the Tutor Exit form instead. Check-in with the point person to grab that on your way out.

The Chapbook Process

Each semester, students in the after-school tutoring program write stories, poems, and comics that we publish into small chapbooks. During daily writing time, students can work on their pieces for the upcoming chapbook, or they can write about anything they want..

There is a timeline above the water fountain which shows where we are in the chapbook process. Here is a quick rundown:

- Students brainstorm ideas for what they want the chapbook theme to be. Past themes include: heroes and villains, the apocalypse, mysteries, and horror.
- Students vote on the suggested themes and the theme with the most votes wins.
- Students begin writing their drafts of stories that fit within their selected theme. We aren't strict about what "fitting within the theme" means either, it can be a loose interpretation!
- Students select a prompt from the writing menus provided to get their creative juices flowing. Writing menus can be found in the middle of each table.
- Students brainstorm, write, revise, and edit their drafts for clarity, organization, and fluency with the support of tutors.
- A special team of editors review the students' stories and give feedback on what absolutely needs to be addressed before the story can be published (we call these burning questions).
- Students write author bios and draw illustrations to accompany their published stories.



Best Practices When Tutoring Writing

1. Spend time checking in.

Sharing any piece of writing with a stranger is a leap of faith. Getting to know the student's interests, background, and what they want to write about is time well spent.

2. Set an achievable goal.

The Editorial Board and OOST team will provide guidance, suggested benchmarks, and questions for revisions to help students navigate the writing process. Be sure to also collaborate with the student to set achievable goals for what they want to accomplish.

3. Start with strengths.

Read through their piece and highlight what you like best about the student's writing. Be specific and authentic!

4. Use the socratic method.

Encourage students to draw out more details by asking them open-ended questions to talk through their ideas. Try to avoid yes or no questions. Be curious and enthusiastic about their ideas and ask follow-up questions.

5. Write down what they're saying.

Take vigorous notes as the student talks through their ideas. Students are often better able to communicate their work verbally and will say things aloud that they should type up verbatim. Use this opportunity as a strategy to brainstorm content for their papers or presentations.

6. Always leave them with next steps.

As the end of your tutoring session approaches, be sure to outline next steps in their student guide. This allows them to continue their work towards a final draft independently.

Courtesies for Cryptids (and for students and their tutors too)

1. No gum.

It gets in the carpets! And your hair!

2. No outside food or drink in the tutoring space.

It's not fair for one person to have a snack that someone else doesn't have, might not be able to buy, or might be allergic to. Therefore, we all have the same snacks and we use the water fountain. If students or tutors come in with a snack/drink they want to have, they can step out into the front lobby area to eat/drink it before tutoring or store it in the fridge until after the session.

3. No phones during tutoring.

Phones are distracting. Students may not use phones during tutoring unless they have permission from a staff member to do so. Students may take out their phones once announcements have been made and break time is announced. If students need to contact a parent, they can use the 826 Boston phone at the front desk.

4. Calculator and laptop use must be cleared by Karen or the point person.

Tutor-Specific Courtesies

1. Tutors should be present with their students for the full session.

Breaks are an opportunity for students to switch gears, but tutors are still “on”. Take the moment to learn more about the students. Ask them about their day, their favorite video game, or the best story they ever wrote.

2. Tutors and staff should not use phones in the center at any time during tutoring.

If you need to make a phone call or check your messages, please wait until break time and step out into the store. If it is urgent, please let an 826 Boston staff member know that you need to make a call and step out into the store.

3. Tutors may not work on their own homework or read their own books in the space when they are paired with a student.

You can work on personal homework or reading while you wait for your first student to arrive, but we ask that you put them away once paired with a student to remain present. If they are working independently, stay engaged by looking at their work.

4. Tutors may not take pictures of students or post student pictures on social media.

We love that you want to share your experience, but please respect students' privacy. Student writing that is on our website or published in a book has students' and families' permission to be shared.

5. Tutors can come find a staff member at any time with questions.

We understand that you will not know the answers to everything, and that's okay! Get support from an 826 Boston staff member if any questions come up.

Tutoring Resources

826 Boston Resources

- [Tutoring Trail Guide](#)
- [Reading Comprehension Tip Sheet](#)
- [Math Tutoring Tip Sheet](#)
- [Working with Middle School Students Tip Sheet](#)

Additional Resources

- [Cn u rd ths? A guide to invented spelling](#)
- [Math and Science Tips for Tutors](#)
- [Khan Academy](#)

THANK YOU for signing up to become an After-School Tutor. You are a rock star and we cannot wait to work with you!