

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there a TutorMate video overview? Yes! We urge you to view it here: <http://tiny.cc/tutormate>

How do I get started as a tutor? You can register at: <https://www.tutormate.org/register>. Please be sure to select the correct Tutor Group in the indicated drop down box at that webpage. If you are unsure of which Tutor Group to sign up with, please reach out to your organization's Tutor Coordinator. To complete registration, you will be asked to watch a 5-minute introductory video and to complete a required background check. Once we pair your tutor team with a classroom, we will send you your login information, and also your student's name, reading level, teacher's name, school name, and other pertinent information. If you have any questions about this process, please contact us via email here: help@tutormate.org

Do I need experience with reading, tutoring, or computers?

No experience is necessary. Our interactive tutoring software easily guides you through every step of tutoring during each session. We strongly encourage all tutors to sign up for our 30-minute training webinar prior to tutoring. Webinars are on-demand and during the registration process, can be scheduled at your own convenience.

Who will my student be?

Your student will likely be in first grade although some second grade students do participate. Teachers will select students who need extra help and capable of solid growth during the year.

How do I connect with my student?

You will call the classroom using a landline or cell phone. This will ring-in on the room's dedicated TutorMate computer. When your student comes to the phone, you launch our online tutoring interface from your computer. At that point, you and your student share a common screen that includes our TutorMate pre-loaded stories, flashcards and also various fun reading and word recognition games.

What is my tutoring commitment?

As a volunteer, you will initiate one 30-minute session per week with your student. You will schedule your weekly sessions using the calendar provided in the tutor portal. In the event that you are unable to have a session at your regularly scheduled time, you can easily schedule a make-up session for a different day/time and then resume your regular schedule in later weeks. If you have vacation or a business trip and are unable to schedule a make-up session, that's certainly OK on occasion. Please notify your student's teacher and resume your sessions when you return.

What if I'm not sure I have time to tutor?

If you're not sure about the time commitment, we urge you try it out and see how it works. Just about every tutor who has tried tutoring has decided to continue, realizing that the time commitment is minimal and the scheduling flexibility is great.



It all starts with literacy.

What if I can't make my scheduled tutoring timeslot? Not a problem. It is easy to change your usual tutoring time slot. The classroom tutoring schedule is accessible online so you can select an alternate tutoring session for a particular week, which we call a "makeup session".

What if my student is inattentive or disinterested? Feel free to start with a game. Typically, after students play a game or two, they are ready and eager to begin reading. If the classroom is noisy and seems distracting, encourage your student to raise the "Quiet Sign" that is housed near the computer. If you suspect that your student is bored or overwhelmed, feel free to go up or down a reading level to see if another level seems more appropriate. If you think you'd like to switch your student's level on an ongoing basis, please use the TutorMate web app to send a message to your student's teacher after the session to let him or her know of the change.

What if my student is absent? Most tutors simply try to call back in the next day or two by scheduling a make-up session. That's the best bet if your schedule permits. But if not possible, you can ask the greeter if the teacher would like you to tutor a different student. Many teachers may ask an unassigned student who might also benefit from the tutoring to sit down at the classroom TutorMate computer. Since you will not know the student's reading level, and you are only tutoring for a short time, we recommend that you choose a story from the C or D level. Please remember, however, that you are under no obligation to tutor another student.

Are there opportunities to meet my student in person? Yes! These meetups are a TutorMate program highlight! Most schools participate in the annual year-end celebration. This is a wonderful time to meet your student and celebrate all the great joint work done together throughout the school year. Other opportunities for meeting your student may be available and can sometimes be organized with permission of the school administration.

How can I contact my student's teacher? You can message your teacher at any time from the TutorMate portal. If you are unable to connect with your teacher after a few days, let us know at help@tutormate.org and we will reach out to the teacher for you.

How do I reach IFL for technical assistance? You can chat with IFL's technical support team by clicking on CHAT ASSISTANCE, which is accessible from every page of the tutoring program. You also can access tech support by calling (800) 975-3452, ext 8. Use the Chat Assistance button if the classroom phone is busy or unanswered OR if you or your student cannot access the tutoring program.

What are the benefits of tutoring? Teachers report that students who are regularly tutored develop strong vocabularies and exhibit improved reading confidence, fluency, oral skills, and self-esteem. Tutors find it highly rewarding to experience the growth in their students' abilities during the school year. In addition, students and their tutors enjoy building warm and meaningful relationships.



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