



Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy

## Best Practices for Remote Tutoring

*Based on recommendations from GBJCL Team Leader Appreciation Panel 9-30-20:  
Mady Holzer, Fern Kaplan, Kim Meyers, Andy Koppel, Judi Locke, Irene Rubin*

**Note:** This is an evolving document given the stage at which our program is at regarding remote tutoring. As we learn more, we will update this document online. Each situation is different so some ideas below may work for some situations and not others. Feel free to take suggestions that resonate with you and work within your school context.

### Key Online Platforms

#### Communication Platforms

The following is a list of key communication platforms that enable tutors to connect with students online. The platform you use will be determined by the school and arrangements made by the school. In some settings, teachers can provide training on how to use the platform. GBJCL is working on creating workshops to help volunteers use these platforms effectively.

**Google Classroom** – [Here](#) is a link to a video about this platform that is designed for teachers to provide instruction to students.

**Google Meet** – [Here](#) is a link to the main page for Google Meet which provides video calls.

**Zoom** – Here is a link to a manual created by JCRC staff on how to use Zoom for meetings.

#### Literacy Reading Platforms

These are programs that allow you to read books with students online together. You will need to have the teacher arrange access for you. In some cases, that means the teacher should add you as a “student” on the platform to enable you to login.

[Raz-kids](#)

[Epic](#)

[Unite for Literacy](#)

## Relationship Building

How did you communicate with the teacher and with the parents for remote tutoring?

### Teacher Communication Steps – from Mady Holzer

- Email the teacher to inquire if they would like help
- Teacher will contact parents for permission to participate
- Tutor acquire any written assessments available via Google docs (or via email)
- Teacher will assist tutor to get on school's communication and literacy learning platform
- Tutor types up notes and feedback and shared via Google Docs every week
- Tutor emails any questions to the teachers
- Tutor meets with teacher/parents via online communication tool to check in

### Parent Communication Steps – from Judi Locke and Irene Rubin

- **Relationship Building:** It is important to establish a relationship with your students' parents. Given the home environment, tutors will have the opportunity to connect with parents/guardians on occasion while their child is participating. It is best to take a few minutes to check in with the parent if they speak English at the start of the tutoring and then every few weeks.
- **Parent Support:** This builds trust and ensures that parents understand the relationship that is being established. It helps make the parents feel more secure about the program. They are then better able to support their child in participating if there are technical problems. This connection can also be by phone or email.

### Student Relationship Building

What activities did you implement to build your relationship remotely?

- **Background:** Look around their background and ask questions about themselves (*from Fern Kaplan*)
- **Pets and Family:** Take advantage of the kids being at home in a comfortable space and have their family and pets around (*from Fern Kaplan*)
- **Asking Questions:** Ask personal questions, like how they are doing and were they able to go outside (*from Mady Holzer*)
- **Book Selection:** Both student and tutor picked out books – a great way to learn more about your students' interests (*from Mady Holzer*)
- **Culture:** Tutors can learn if students' families speak English at home. Learn more about the student and their culture (*from Irene Rubin*)
- **Icebreakers:** Ask silly ice breaker questions, i.e. if you had a superpower what would it be (*from Judi Locke*)

## **Literacy Engagement and Relationship Building – from Marcia Shimshak**

Below is a list of engagement games and activities from tutor Marcia Shimshak based on her work with her grandchildren of kindergarten age. While the relationship is different with a student than a grandchild, much can be transferrable and hopefully this list will spark new ideas for the tutoring environment. Please send along any other ideas you may have from your prior experiences with family members.

### ***Relationship Building Activities***

**Brainstorming:** Pick a topic and come up with a list with your student.

**Interview:** each other. Jot down the information. Read aloud to share.

**Stop and Jot:** Ask a question and have the students write down an answer. Share.

**Scavenger Hunt:** Find objects that-

-begin with the letter \_\_\_\_

-have a long vowel sound

-are round, square, etc.

**Exercise:** Get up and do 5 jumping jacks, etc. to get the kids to move in between activities.

**Reading:** Jokes, Riddles

**Spot It:** Play this matching card game by showing the cards in the screen and asking the student to select the matches

### ***Literacy Activities***

**Rhyming Words:** Say a word and ask the student to come up with words that rhyme.

**Opposites:** Say a word and ask the student to think of the opposite of that word.

**YouTube** videos include a variety of science (bees, animals, etc.), numbers, books and stories, letters and other videos.

### ***Simple Math Activities***

**Combinations of Numbers:** Ask what two numbers make (“A one and a two make twelve”)

**Display by:** A number line, drawings with two dice, equations, sticks (8= five sticks with one line through it and three single sticks)

**Bingo:** The board and chips need to be with the child learning two digit numbers. The numbers will be called out by the tutor. The child puts the chip on their bingo card and when s/he get bingo, the numbers are called out by the child.

**War Card Game:** learning values of numbers and which is higher and lower.

[cardgames.io](http://cardgames.io)