

Helping a student to study

HAVING A STUDY BUDDY CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE TO A STUDENT'S ACHIEVEMENT.

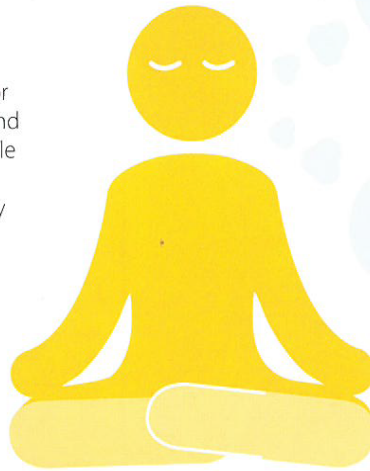
To successfully assist a student, the helper should adopt a positive attitude, an open mind to new methods, and be prepared to roll up his or her sleeves and join in with the tasks.

Attitude

It can be particularly challenging to work with a friend or a student in your family, so it is important for a helper to begin with the right attitude. Stay calm and positive, and try to keep a neutral tone—it is advisable not to share negative learning experiences. Build a positive attitude by starting with short, focused study periods. Helpers should make it clear that they value education and should maintain an active interest in the student's learning.

▷ The right mind-set

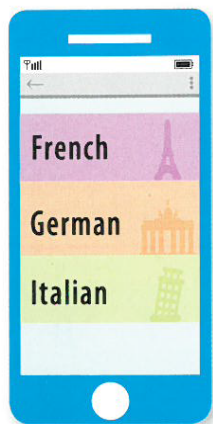
A helper needs to remain calm and supportive, and encourage a positive attitude toward learning.



Keep calm

Stay positive

SEE ALSO	
Getting motivated	24–25 >
The right mind-set	46–47 >
Engaging with learning	62–63 >
Working with others	66–67 >
Equipment	106–107 >
Virtual learning environments	120–121 >
Review groups	164–165 >



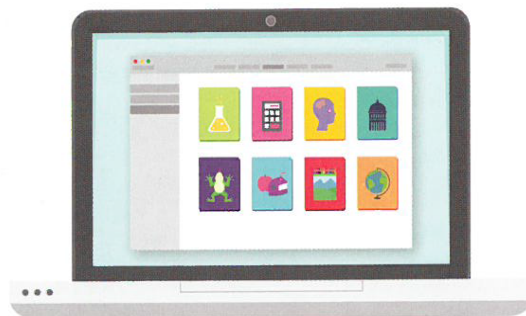
△ Learning apps

These apps allow students to study on the go. For example, language apps are available on smartphones for practising vocabulary and grammar.



◁ E-learning

E-learning enables students to access the curriculum remotely. Often, they can communicate with teachers and other students online.



Teaching methods

Helpers who have been out of education for a long time will find that teaching methods have changed significantly. Subjects may be taught differently and methods of assessment have changed. A variety of new technologies are used—for example, learning apps can be downloaded onto smartphones, students use tablets in class, and many research materials are available from online libraries.

◁ Online library

A wide range of course materials can be found online. Students should sign up to a library induction at their institution, so that they can learn how to navigate the system.

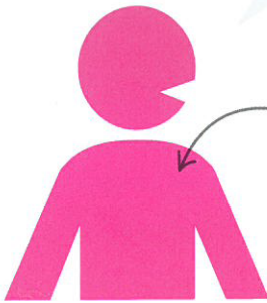
Learning together

Learning with another person can be both productive and enjoyable, and it stimulates thinking. When a person shares their knowledge with someone else, it helps to clarify his or her own thoughts and to embed the concepts and methods involved. Explaining an idea can spark off further ideas, too. Students gain from their helper's experience, knowledge, and different points of view, while also learning to cope with challenges and criticisms.

▽ Student as teacher

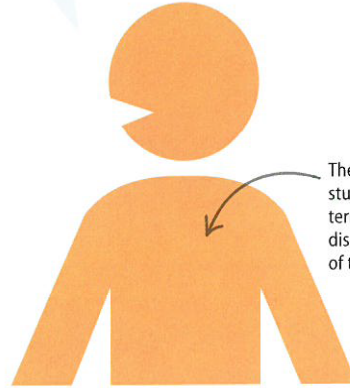
This student is learning how to structure essays. He or she needs to explain to the helper that the "topic sentence" is the phrase or statement that begins the opening paragraph.

The teacher says I need to write clear topic sentences.



The student understands the term and will need to explain it to the helper.

What on earth is a topic sentence?



The helper needs the student to explain the term so that they can discuss the structure of the essay.

Feedback

It is very important to help keep students motivated by giving them feedback. It is best to balance praise with constructive criticism. The "sandwich" approach works well. Start with positive comments, then indicate what could be improved, focusing on the main issues and being as specific as possible—no student wants to be bombarded with a long list of things to correct. Finally, it is good to offer further positive comments to end the discussion on a good note.

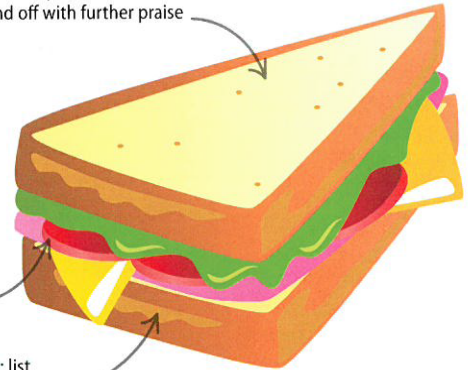
▷ Feedback sandwich

Even if the work needs a lot of improvement, helpers should praise the effort that the student has made or the fact that they completed the task on time.

Tips for improvement: focus on the main issues

Positive feedback: list a few good points

More positive feedback: round off with further praise



HINTS AND TIPS

Why study?

Some students believe in luck— they think that some people achieve good grades because the teachers like them or they are naturally bright students who do not need to study hard. They feel

that only low achievers need to study. Helpers should encourage students to realize that practicing good learning habits, and not luck, is the key to success—and that it is within their grasp.

"Whatever the difference between brilliant and average brains, we are all creative. And through practice and study we can enhance our skills."

Jeff Hawkins, (b. 1957), Inventor