

Study Buddy Training Guide



What is Study Buddy?

Study Buddy is a tutoring program that offers academic support to students in Edmonton Public Schools. Post-secondary students are recruited as volunteers to work with K-12 students, individually or in small groups, for at least one hour per week during the school day. Volunteer opportunities occur during two terms, following the post-secondary schedule (September-December and January-April).



Why should I get involved?

Study Buddy provides volunteers with the opportunity to make a difference in childrens' lives while gaining experience working with students and learning from professional educators. Volunteers receive a certificate of recognition and a letter of reference.

General Tips for Success:

- ★ Be positive, committed and professional! Arrive on time, dress appropriately and keep devices tucked away.
- ★ Connect with your students' teacher for support and direction for working with students.
- ★ Communicate with your school if you will be absent one day, must reschedule to another day, or have any issues or student concerns.
- ★ Keep the relationship with your students professional: be a positive role model and only communicate with students in the school context.
- ★ Remember you have much to offer your students and will make a difference!



Your First School Visit:

Before working with students, it is important to understand your school context. The first time you visit your school you will meet your school's Study Buddy Coordinator who will help you become acquainted with the volunteer program and the school. Questions such as the following will be discussed:

- ★ What is the school's student population?
- ★ Are there unique programs offered at the school (e.g. Interactions, Behaviour and Learning Assistance, Culture and Language, etc)?
- ★ What types of students will I be working with? Are there any unique needs or customs I should know about?
- ★ Will I be working with the same student each time I visit?
- ★ Will I be assigned to work with a specific teacher?
- ★ What should I keep in mind in regards to FOIP (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) and confidentiality?
- ★ What is the guest sign-in process at the school?
- ★ Where should I park my vehicle?
- ★ Where should I put my belongings while at the school?
- ★ Who should I contact if I am unable to make my scheduled time?
- ★ Are there any school protocols I should know about (staff room access, etc)?



How can I support students with literacy?

★ When **reading** a book with one or more students:

- Briefly read the text (or a portion of) beforehand. This will better prepare you in supporting students.
- Before reading the text together, help students connect their background knowledge with the text by asking related questions. This will make their reading more meaningful.
- While reading, take turns. Sometimes individual students may read, sometimes a small group may read in chorus and sometimes you may read a small section yourself. Listening and following along as others read supports literacy growth. When you are the reader students also have the opportunity to listen to an excellent model of fluency, expression and intonation.
- Throughout the reading, stop and ask questions: What do we know about this character so far? What do you think might happen? Does this remind you of anything you've seen before?
- If students become "stuck" on a word, ask them to do one of the following:
 - Look at the context: can they figure out the word by looking at what comes before and after?
 - S-t-r-e-t-c-h out the word into each of the letter sounds.
 - Look at the pictures in the book (in any). Are there any clues?
 - Chunk the word into smaller parts.
 - Think about a word that would make sense in that spot.
 - Skip the word and read to the end of the sentence. Now, go back and read the sentence again.

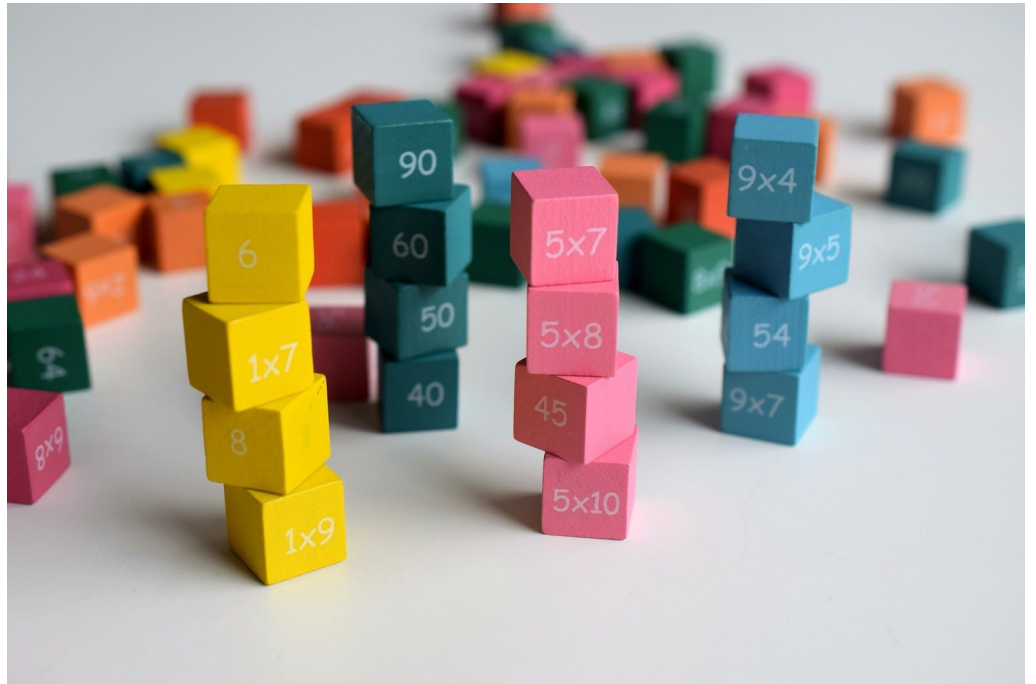


★ When **writing** with students:

- Encourage the generation of ideas. The sky is the limit in writing! Sometimes it is helpful to brainstorm collaboratively before beginning a writing task.
- Where possible, try to save the editing process (punctuation, capitals, grammar, etc) until the end of a thought or paragraph. This prevents the interruption of student thoughts, which is important to avoid especially for tentative writers.
- Model the writing process by providing an example before students begin writing.
- If students are having difficulty beginning a sentence, provide some sentence starter options. This is also helpful in encouraging sentence variety (e.g. avoiding the use of "the" at the beginning of each sentence).
- "Share" the writing, where appropriate. For struggling writers, it helps to take turns writing sentences.

How can I support students with numeracy?

- ★ Encourage students to problem solve in a way that makes sense to them. The traditional “stacked columns” method for addition, for example, is only one strategy. Students may be more successful drawing pictures, using place value charts or manipulating Base 10 blocks.



- ★ Discuss math thinking. Even if students have strong mental math skills, ask them to explain their thinking. Sharing the problem-solving process in a group supports all students and can provide additional math strategies.
- ★ Use real life examples. When students can connect mathematical concepts to the real world it deepens their understanding. Math is used in cooking, shopping, building, travel, music and more! Check out the following video from Alberta Education to see the many applications of numeracy in real life: [Numeracy Video](#).



- ★ Use manipulatives and visuals to support student understanding. These can include connecting cubes, Base 10 blocks, two-colour counters, Cuisenaire rods or hundreds charts.