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### Final Tutoring Reflection

I truly enjoyed getting to work with my student through the online tutoring program. She was a bright and kind young woman with a good sense of humor and I hope that our time together has benefited her. I know that the class has helped me in practicing thinking through problems I present to my students and finding good questioning techniques to figure out student thought processes. Overall, I think that this program is a great way to help students who may not have access to many adults with skills in teaching specific content areas.

It is hard to get an idea of whether or not tutoring has actually helped Lydia progress academically. Lydia is naturally bright, and often times I felt that by simply giving her direction on how to approach a problem or, if she tried to answer a question and got it wrong, just showing her why her method did not work, she seemed to understand quickly and get the answer correct the next time. This was exciting to see, and I hope that those simple changes in her approach or thought process stuck with her as she returned to her math class. There were weeks, however, when she seemed to struggle with ideas that she had appeared to master the week before. This made me wonder if we had accomplished enough practice and if I had helped her to confront her misconceptions in a way that would allow Lydia to retain her new skills long-term. My hope is that, for the most part, she was able to correct those small errors in her thinking, and therefore improve on her work in class.

Even with the occasional setback, I do think that tutoring was a good use of both Lydia and my time. I think that Lydia gained confidence in her math skills most days. When she saw where she was going wrong in an answer and was able to correct it the next time, she went from sounding unsure to confidently wanting to test her new knowledge on the next problem without assistance. This was a joy to see. I personally learned a lot through the experience as well. As math is not my subject area, it was sometimes a struggle to answer questions that she brought to our sessions or find new ways to explain

ideas when she wasn't understanding my initial attempt. It was great practice for me to work one-on-one with a student where I could ask her what her thinking was, see specifically where she went wrong, and then try to adjust my teaching based on that. This experience will definitely benefit me in the classroom.

Though it may not be the ideal way to tutor, as there is always a time lag when talking and solving problems together on a computer, I think that for students that are in remote areas, online tutoring is a great way to provide remedial support. The skills needed to online tutor differ from those of tutoring in person. Due to the amount of time it takes to communicate and write online, tutors need to be prepared in advance in order to save precious minutes. They also need to be able to communicate well with their students about their processes when it may not be reasonable to have the student take the time to write out all the steps. And, finally, tutors must be patient and creative with technology. Overall, I think that Lydia and I successfully navigated some math concepts, and it was a great way for her to get to know someone from outside her village.

Getting to know Lydia was not the easiest task in the world, but I don't think that was the effect of the online format. More likely, it was because of Lydia being a private individual. I had originally hoped that I would find out some of her interests and be able to incorporate those into our lessons more, but I only got a few surface level details, such as her love of four-wheeling, her being on the volleyball team, and her not liking to fly. Over the course of the term, I picked up a few more things, and tried each day to engage her about what was happening in her life. Though I don't think we ever got very deep into knowing each other, I felt that it was always a very warm environment when we met. I got her to laugh (sometimes with me and sometimes at me), and I hope that I was successful in providing a positive and supportive experience for her. In that way, I think that the online environment does just fine in allowing for relationships to form. I think that time was more of a limiting factor than the online format in getting to know each other.

In terms of my tutoring, I think that the working online was a challenge, but didn't completely hamper me. I often had to allow Lydia to do her work on paper and then talk through her steps in order to save the time of her trying to write things on the screen. Other than that, though, I felt that the online format worked well, and sometimes may have even been a benefit, as it forced me to have problems planned and drawn out before we met and made me review the material more deeply so that I could find ways to creatively present it in a PowerPoint. Again, I think the time that online tutoring takes is really the only thing that hampered our progress at all. And as technology progresses, this will become less and less of an issue.

Tutoring definitely helped me to look at my connections with students here in Oregon in a different way. The ability to slow down and discuss with a student what their thought processes on a problem was gave me a greater understanding of the importance of questioning students' thinking so that I can better address the wrong-turns they are taking in their thought process. I think the practice presenting information in an electronic format also opens up possibilities for how to interact with students in the classroom where most schools are equipped with chrome books or smart boards, or other technology.

Working with a student from another culture also makes me look at my Oregon students in a different way. Though Lydia comes from a very different culture, the students in my Oregon classroom come from unique cultures of their own. Getting to work with Lydia made it clear that, even if I read the information about her village or learned a bit about her culture, she is still an individual that it takes time to get to know and understand how to communicate with. My Oregon students are the same way. Though I may be more familiar with the culture that they live in, they are also individuals that take time to understand and connect with.

I was very unsure about the online tutoring when I first registered for the class. I wondered if it was going to be possible to discuss complex ideas in this kind of format. After this class, I really feel that, though there are some drawbacks in terms of the additional time it requires to communicate via computer, online learning is definitely possible and can be a great way to help students in remote areas, who are homebound, or otherwise unable to be in the larger school system have access to educators with expertise in areas where they need assistance. I appreciate the opportunity to be a part of this program and I hope that it can continue into the future.