PEER TUTORING IN THE CLASSROOM

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MEANING OF PEER TUTORING:

Peer tutoring is a strategy in which students support other students in the learning process. Peer tutoring can be used for academic, social, functional, and behavioral skills. It is a teaching strategy where students work in pairs or groups to help each other learn. It can be used to help students develop critical thinking and active learning skills, and to promote academic progress and social enhancement.

It groups high achieving with low achieving students for structured and comfort learning for academic gains as well as social enhancements.

Types of peer tutoring:

- Fixed role tutoring: A more experienced student is paired with a less experienced student to provide tutoring.
- Reciprocal role tutoring: Students take turns being the tutor and the tutee.
- Cross-age tutoring: Students of different ages work together, which can help students develop social skills and academic skills.

- Class-Wide Peer Tutoring: The entire class is split into equal groups to work on an assigned task. Students take turns teaching and learning.
- Peer Assisted Learning: Students are paired with peers of similar abilities for structured tasks.

Characteristics of Peer Tutoring

Improved communication: Peer teaching meaning allows students to interact with one another well. One student teaches, the other one listens, and they cross-question. All these activities improve speaking and active learning skills among others.

Better academic status: improved student engagement, independent skills, and problem-solving enhance the academic status of the class.

Improved interpersonal skills: peer teaching improves social and interpersonal skills among learners to a great extent. The classroom becomes more fun and engaging for all.

Empathy and compassion: sometimes teachers and parents fail to understand what problems their child is facing. However, students of the same age group and academic stream understand each other well. Peer teaching improves empathy and compassion among learners. Offering a helping hand, and emotional support are other benefits.

A constructive learning environment: peer tutoring meaning is when students teach other students. This helps in developing a constructive learning environment where learners help each other and learn how to work as a team.

Some benefits of peer tutoring include:

Peer tutoring has many benefits for both the tutor and the student, including:

- Academic achievement

  Peer tutoring can improve academic achievement for both the tutor and the student.

- Confidence

  Peer tutoring can boost the tutor's confidence.

- Communication skills

  Peer tutoring can help tutors improve their communication skills, such as body language, eye contact, and turn-taking.

- Social skills

  Peer tutoring can help students develop meaningful relationships with their peers, which can help alleviate feelings of isolation.

- Leadership skills

  Peer tutoring can help tutors develop leadership skills, such as the ability to motivate and encourage other students.

- Higher-order thinking

  Peer tutoring can help students develop higher-order thinking skills and retain information better.

- Flexible scheduling

    Peer tutoring sessions can usually be arranged during gaps in the class schedule.

- Understanding of subject

    Teaching a concept or subject can help the tutor gain a better understanding of the subject.

Samples of Peer tutoring

Reading PALS (PEER ASSISTED LEARNING STRATEGIES)

Reading PALS pairs students in a systematic way. First, students are ranked according to reading competence. Next, each student in the class is paired with another student. The pairs consist of one higher- and one lower-achieving student. The higher-achieving student always reads first, as a model for the other student. Students are monitored as they engage in the lessons.

The chart below describes the typical format for a Reading PALS lesson:

There are **three parts** to PALS sessions in which the partners take turns reading and describing what they read to each other.

Task 1:

Partner Reading - the higher-achieving student reads aloud while their partner follows along correcting mistakes. After five minutes the students switch roles and reread the same selection.

Task 2:

Paragraph Shrinking - students must state the main idea in ten words or less which encourages them to display and monitor comprehension while taking

turns reading one paragraph at a time. They earn points when the goals of the exercise are met.

Task 3:

Prediction Relay - a partner predicts what information will be in the next half page of text, and then reads out loud to find the information. This reading exercise includes use of the prior tasks (i.e., correcting errors and summarizing the text).

Math PALS

Math PALS can be applied to many diverse learners at varying skill levels. According to Drs. Doug & Lynn Fuchs (2001) this approach uses structured interactions between students to encourage high-level feedback while in pairs. These interactions increase the level of participation on topical areas through verbal rehearsal, until the process becomes routine, and verbal rehearsal is no longer needed. In these activities students learn that strategies can be applied to other content areas. Students get step-by-step feedback through their interaction during tutoring sessions. The tutoring sessions are reciprocal with students taking turns as tutor and tutee.

During PALS sessions, the teachers assist students in making connections between the material presented and math concepts. They indicate that with structure and guidance from teachers, students can move past basic concepts and questions into conceptual knowledge. Methods that have enhanced

conceptual math knowledge include: providing real-life examples, discussing meaning and answers to problems, and the use of manipulative or concrete representations.

Below is a typical format for a Math PALS lesson:

There are **two parts** to PALS sessions in which the students work through math problems and activities.

Task 1:

Coaching — each of the partners work on math problems in a specific area (i.e., addition and subtractions). The "coach" questions the "player" in order to guide the activity. The "coach" has been trained in how to correct the "player." This activity should last 15-20 minutes.

Task 2:

Practice — all students receive a worksheet containing problems they just went over, some as difficult and some less challenging problems. Once they have completed the worksheet, they exchange papers and score them. This activity should last 5-10 minutes.