

What new things did you do during class in order to make the sessions more efficient? Strategies used to help your Buddy understand material better?

As a high school student who did not have any experience with the P2P program before, I was certainly worried and nervous to be a helper of a younger student that I have never met. Fortunately, my Buddy was very smart and cheerful. She made my time as a helper enjoyable by showing great interest and attention to what I was teaching. She seemed to be always ready to learn which helped me to be more comfortable during our Zoom sessions. Thanks to her eager participation in class, I was able to try a variety of interesting and new strategies during class.

For the first three P2P sessions with my Buddy, I was teaching her how to multiply and divide multiple digit numbers. I used a free drawing website called “Kleki” to use it as a whiteboard. Through that program, I shared my screen so she could see my work that I was exemplifying. Besides the screen sharing program, I used tools like Gimkit and Blooket. They are both a quiz learning game that allows students to play against each other in live time. I used Gimkit to warm up or review topics that I was covering. We played games such as racing, fishing, and Jeopardy. The variety of games kept her interested in the topics and allowed me to check for her comprehension of the content. By turning an activity that might quickly bore a younger student into a fun, competitive activity, I was able to get through the sessions efficiently. My Buddy usually emailed me her homework so we can go over them during the session, but when she didn't, I used Khan Academy to go over sample questions together. Khan Academy is a great resource for practice questions, explanation videos, and tests/quizzes. By using the website, it made assessments easy to give to my Buddy.

In my opinion I think the most important strategy was building a positive relationship with my Buddy. Building a good relationship with my student became the basis for student motivation. With a motivated student, they are more likely to participate, ask questions, engage in discussions, and willing to take feedback to do better work. I tried to build a good relationship with my Buddy by always asking about her day in the beginning of the session. I share how my day went, and it's a good way for her to start engaging with me. So, from this conversation, I ask her how she did in her school. This transitions into talking about her homework and any other problems she has in her classes. This keeps the session comfortable and not too intimidating and positive.

With the combination of a good relationship, educational websites, and other technological assets, I was able to help my Buddy understand her material better. By joining the P2P program, I had an awesome experience that taught me a lot of things. P2P sessions helped me to improve my communication and time management skills. I really enjoyed having sessions with my buddy and I am really looking forward to next year to be a helper again for another younger student.