



AN EXPLANATION OF STANDARD RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

The RULES OF ENGAGEMENT (ROE) are tutoring guidelines. The development of ROE that express the needs of your academic requirements and anticipated needs of your students is a process unique to NetTutor. Pedagogically speaking, the ROE form the underpinnings of the entire pyramidal structure of successful Online Tutoring. Detailed ROE allow for a seamless transition between students' experience in a course, the questions and challenges that may arise for the student, and successfully obtaining assistance through online interaction with our tutors. This document includes not only an explanation of necessary definitions of terms and better practices, but also marks the starting point of how we plan to help you create and develop your NetTutor ROE.

1. **We provide you with a summary of fundamental practices that have been established over the past decades of tutoring experience.** While you may see the following as *too* general, or perhaps *too* specific, we urge you to consider it the foundation for building your NetTutor rules of engagement to which we will bind our tutors.
2. **We work with you to integrate into the general ROE that guide all tutoring the special requirements and expectations of your educators and student support administration.** We will begin by sending a questionnaire for you to review and fill out. Subsequently, we may include joint brainstorming sessions and close critique between your main contacts and NetTutor management to help craft the full and unique dimensions of NetTutor support at your school. You may, for instance, need to specify resources more completely, or direct tutors' attention and emphasis to particular aspects of a subject. In every case, we will help translate your concerns into concrete guidance.
3. **We will then supply a complete document that encompasses all the considerations discussed, translated into practical, verifiable guidance for our tutors.** At the same time, since the ROE is a living document, rather than considering it 'finished' it is open to revision, should the need arise. Hence, the NetTutor ROE represents the beginning of a process of delivering to your students increasingly enhanced and informed tutoring through continuing collaboration.

Beyond the purpose and outcome of the three steps outlined above, the ROE is also a document that helps affirm faculty trust in the services we provide, and cultivate confidence and enthusiasm about sending their students to seek online tutoring assistance.

Subject Area - Each of the areas in which students may seek help from NetTutor is identified with a particular subject. For instance, if you need tutoring in Mathematics (up to Pre-Calculus), Online Writing Lab, and Chemistry, students may log into any of these rooms. Rules of Engagement may be set up for each subject area (not to be confused with individual course or section).

SYNCHRONOUS TUTORING SESSIONS

PROCESS

- Live tutors connect with students individually, one-on-one.
- Tutors review the material submitted by the student, begin a conversation, and provide immediate assistance and suggestions according to the topic and level of mastery demonstrated by students.
- Tutors show respect for students' efforts at all times, work to clarify and explain step-by-step processes related to students' questions, and facilitate students' finding their own path to the correct solutions.
- Tutors ask students to summarize the session to determine if students reach understanding (the "aha" moment), and will type closing remarks that point back to achievements made during a session.

The screenshot shows a NetTutor session window titled "WorldWideWhiteboard". The interface includes a menu bar (Session, Tools, Keypad, Fsize, Fstyle, Color, Help) and a clock showing 1:45:01. The chat area on the left contains the following text:

Hello, and welcome to NetTutor. How can I help you today? Hi, I need help with a biology question

I'd be glad to help. Can you first please type out the complete original problem, including all instructions given and any work so far?

How do vestigial structure, homologies, and convergent evolution give evidence of evolution by means of natural selection. Thanks for that. Can you please tell me what you have so far as a response?

So I just basically defined what each term was. Can you explain how they provide evidence of evolution?

I'm not sure. You see that's the part that I was stuck but I think probably has to do with the structure they got from their ancestors.

Let's start with homologous structures. First, let me drag and drop an image to illustrate...

Ok... wow!

If a human, a cat, a whale, and a bat all evolved from a common ancestor, then they should share common anatomical traits, which they do. If you compare the forelimbs of each animal (specifically the skeletal structure) you'll find they are very similar despite their different outside appearances.

Do you think these similar structures develop like this coincidentally over the span of the animal's life?

No, they are similar when they are embryos also.

Yes, that's true. Structures that are embryologically similar but have different functions are called homologous structures. The comparison of these structures indicates that they are similar and suggest these animals evolved from a common ancestor.

Does that make sense so far?

Yes I believe I understand as far as homologous structures.

Can you provide a similar explanation for vestigial structures?

A vestigial structure is an anatomical feature that no longer has a purpose in the current form that animal has.

Can you give me an example? Ex: the tailbone of a human

Correct! We can look at vestigial structures, like the tailbone of humans, and see that it is homologous to the functional tailbone of other primates. Thus, vestigial structures can be viewed as evidence for evolution: organisms having vestigial structures that are homologous to the functional structures of other organisms probably share a common ancestry.

And what about convergent evolution? Let's start a new page.. hold on just a moment please ok

The whiteboard on the right displays four diagrams of forelimbs labeled Human, Cat, Whale, and Bat. The bones are labeled: Humerus, Radius, Ulna, Carpals, Metacarpals, and Phalanges. A table titled "Users (2)" shows the names Tim P. and Chris. J. C. and their status (online/offline).

EXPLANATION OF SERVICES

- Tutors will invite students to provide all work they have done up to that point (including graphs, figures, tables, essays, other written work, etc.), thus ensuring that tutors have enough information to genuinely help students bridge the knowledge gap. Students can type text, draw, copy and paste images or text, and drag and drop a problem or paragraph of a written piece directly onto the tutoring interface.
- Tutors use tools on the whiteboard such as the equation editor, square root tool, aromatic benzene ring, dipoles, and wedge symbols to represent three-dimensional bonds, different colors and lines, arrows, etc.
- In no case will the tutor give the answer or solve the problems submitted by students without students' participation. When students are reluctant to answer the questions asked by the tutor, or if students demonstrate many gaps in their knowledge of a topic, tutors may provide examples or first work through a related, preliminary problem to provide a bridge from students' existing level of mastery to that required for obtaining a correct solution to students' submitted questions.
- Overall, tutors engage and facilitate students' cognitive advance by using the Socratic Method. Tutors will point to issues by asking pertinent questions that will coach students' solution-building process, reveal points where students need to do additional preparation, and otherwise support students' development of correct methods, application of procedures, judgment of when a solution is complete, and ability to anticipate the solution of other problems of the same form.

Tutors will systematically apply pedagogical tactics shown to be effective with online tutoring, including contextualization, to place problems within students' life experiences and current levels of mastery; scaffolding, to help students understand what they may be missing and what they need to do to acquire missing knowledge; and metacognition, to help students focus on, digest, and later make use of recently acquired learning.

ASYNCHRONOUS PAPER REVIEW SESSIONS

PROCESS

- Students can submit papers asynchronously to NetTutor 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They can provide information on the assignment in the form submitted along with their paper. Items on this form include paper title, type of assignment, two areas of feedback, etc.
- NetTutor tutors will review and return papers via the same interface. Their feedback will be in the form of written comments and a review summary and returned as a PDF. Students have to make manual changes to their draft.
- All tutor feedback will focus on the individual needs of each student, as shown in the writing they have submitted, and will encourage students in their writing efforts.

1. **Tutors will acknowledge the strengths of students' writing.**
2. **Tutors will make suggestions in areas where revision may strengthen students' writing.**

Paper Title:	Benefits of the Bible - Complete English Paper #1.docx
No. of Pages:	5
Feedback Areas:	Topic Development, Focus/Thesis Statement

Summary:

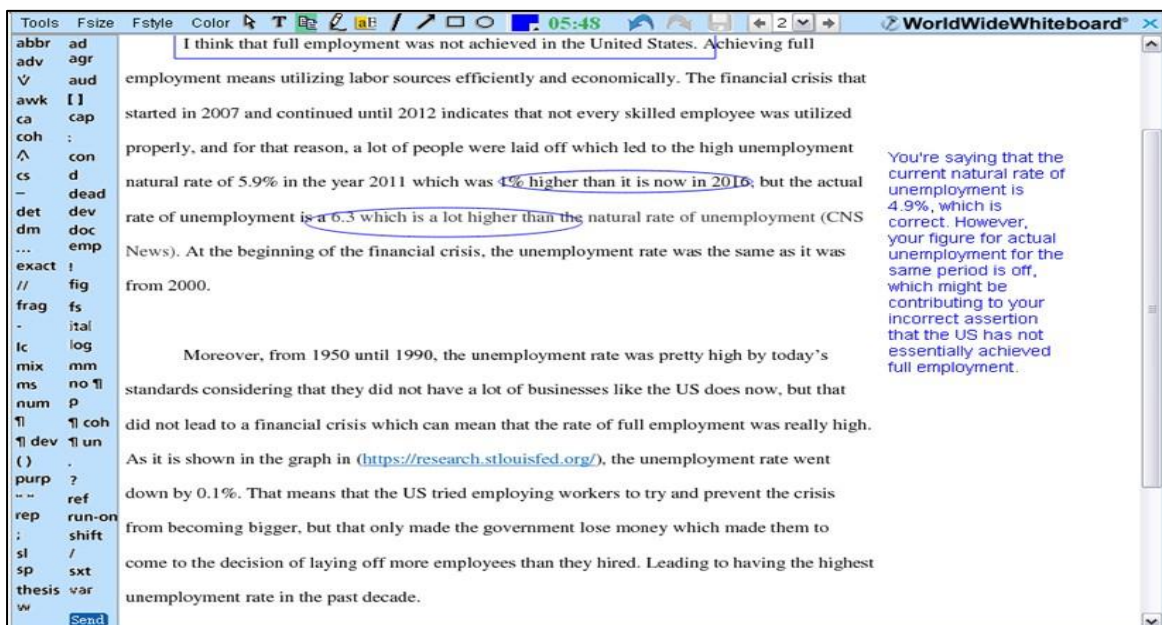
Hello Matthew. My name is Javier and I reviewed your work today.
Thank you for submitting your causal essay to NetTutor. I really enjoyed reading your discussion persuading high school freshmen to memorize bible verses.

Strengths:

Your introductory paragraph clearly identifies your main topic and presents the main focus of your entire essay with a thesis statement. Each body paragraph focuses on developing a specific support topic that your thesis statement introduced. The conclusion summarizes the key points of your body paragraphs and uses them to reaffirm your thesis statement. Great job!

Suggestions:

The majority of the issues are with grammar, mechanics, and sentence construction. Review guidelines for capitalization and possessive forms of nouns. When you carefully reread the essay, make sure your word choice is appropriate for the surrounding context. This should help you avoid issues such as misused or miswritten wording. Review how to identify and appropriately separate with a comma independent clauses (which is a complete thought that can stand alone in a sentence) to dodge run-on sentences.



- Students will receive an email notification when their papers have been reviewed. The reviewed papers will be held online, and students will access their personal locker to retrieve, view, and print their reviewed papers.
- If students indicate that they are submitting a second draft of a paper they already submitted to the NetTutor Paper Center, tutors will acknowledge improvements they have made and will provide additional feedback.
- If after the review students join a live session, they can ask a live writing tutor for an explanation of the feedback on their papers, for statements in the review summary, or about writing issues in general.
- Tutors will not 'fix' any writing issue for the student by, for instance, rewriting a paper, paragraph, or sentence, or correcting students' spelling errors, although the tutor may provide an example of an alternative form of expression and the reason that such alternative may improve students' writing.

EXPLANATION OF SERVICES

Tutors will make comments and mark areas within the paper in both higher and lower order concerns.

- Structural Level (Higher Order Concerns)
 1. **Tutors will check that the paper has a logical, coherent structure and purpose.** This will include whether there is a pattern of organization that is appropriate to the assignment, an appropriately placed thesis statement, and a satisfying and appropriate conclusion.
 2. **Tutors will verify that each paragraph is focused, unified, and fully developed.** This includes consistent development and support of the thesis throughout the essay, a consistent point of view, the inclusion of adequate, concrete details and specific examples where appropriate to express ideas concretely, and appropriate and fluid transition from one paragraph to the next.
 3. **Tutors will review language usage.** This includes an effort to use appropriate words and proper expressions, deliberate avoidance of slang or other informal or inappropriate language, and the absence of offensive language, including sexist, racist, and or otherwise biased language.
 4. **Tutors will check the formatting of the paper according to specified standards (APA, MLA, Chicago Style, etc.).** Elements of formatting include consistent and correct formatting of references, consistent citation of references, and use of a reasonably sized fonts and margins.

- Sentence Level (Lower Order Concerns)
 1. **Tutors will identify punctuation and grammar issues.** For example, the tutor may indicate improper use of a comma.
 2. **Tutors will note serious sentence level errors.** These include incomplete sentences, run-on sentences, problems with subject-verb agreement, and errors in verb tense.
 3. **Tutors will check for secondary but noticeable sentence-level errors.** These include pronoun antecedent disagreement, prevalent use of the passive voice, improper use of punctuation, (including, but not limited to, commas, semicolons, colons, dashes, and quotation marks (including dialogue), improper or missing capitalization, missing words, misspellings, and noun errors.

ASYNCHRONOUS QUESTION (DROP-OFF A QUESTION)

PROCESS

Some students may not have time to join a live session with a tutor. In such instances, students have the option to drop-off their question showing some of the work they have done on their assignment. Tutors will review it and send back information that will help guide students toward completing the assignment. Students receive an email notifying them that their question has been commented on.

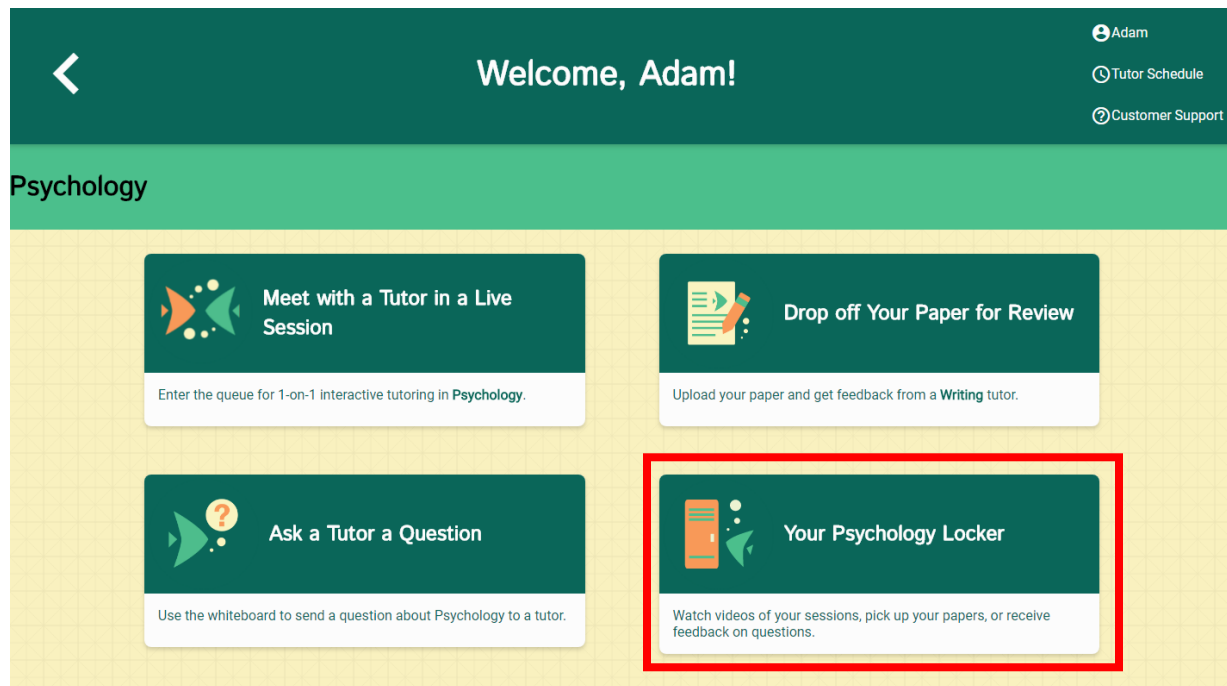
EXPLANATION OF SERVICES

The same approaches to and methodologies of online tutoring described above also apply to questions students drop-off for a tutor.

- Tutors will review each question and the work students submit.
- Tutors will respond to the question without supplying the answer, but by providing enough information to orient and guide students towards working out a final answer for themselves.
- If students do not supply evidence that they have begun to address the question, tutors will request that they resubmit the question showing the work they have done up until that point.
- If students request a simple, broad definition is requested, such as 'What is Piaget's theory of cognitive development,' tutors will provide that definition, along with the note of where the definition can be found by the student, such as in a textbook or on a website.

STUDENT LOCKER

The student's personal locker is the final of the four modalities in which students can receive help from NetTutor. **It does not involve the service of the tutors.** At any time, students can review their live session in playback or download a PDF version. The image below illustrates the landing page and the locker where students can retrieve their archived sessions.

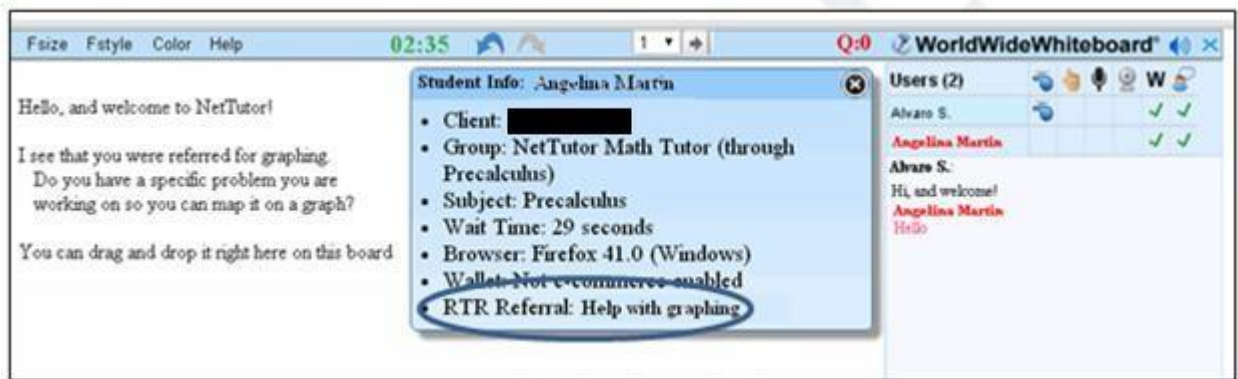


REFER TUTOR REPORT (RTR®) – OPTIONAL ADOPTION

Refer Tutor Report (RTR) is our online tutoring referral system that enables seamless connection of students with tutors and communicates referral information back to on-campus administrators. It is a discretionary product, sold at an additional cost that works seamlessly with NetTutor to customize the interaction between student and tutor.

PROCESS and EXPLANATION OF SERVICES

- Instructors identify students in their class who might be at risk of failing the course and login to the RTR portal to refer these students to tutoring.
- RTR generates an email sent to both student and tutor that briefly describes the kind of help the student needs.
- When the student enters a live session, only the tutor can see the details of the referral.
- The same detailed Rules of Engagement apply to tutoring in an RTR-referred online tutoring session. In addition, however, tutors will use referrals to make referred sessions more efficient. Given that students often login unsure of where they need the most help, in ordinary tutoring session, the tutor must engage in a preliminary exploration to determine the level of the student's knowledge. Tutors will immediately direct students' focus to issues mentioned in the referral and tailor tutoring to the specific needs of the student.
- When the session is over and the tutor closes the session, RTR automatically generates a report and an email notifying the instructor and campus administrators that the student has received tutoring.



Tutor View of RTR Referral

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF NETTUTOR

NetTutor assists in promoting usage as a supplement to classroom instruction and contributes its expertise to help you encourage students to use the service. We are available to provide consultation on the best ways to optimize NetTutor student usage.

WAYS TO OPTIMIZE NETTUTOR USAGE

Based upon our experience, we can suggest some general ways to optimize NetTutor usage:

- Publicize the availability of online tutoring through classroom and Learning Center announcements, emails, flyers in campus venues, etc.
- Include directions in the course syllabus on how to access NetTutor.
- Offer credit for logging in to NetTutor at least once.
- Manage student expectations. For instance, share with students that NetTutor tutors are there to help to get to the answers but do not *give* answers.
- Email all students with instructions on how to access tutors and the benefits of working with the trained tutors at NetTutor.
- Arrange for direct assistance in connecting students to NetTutor.