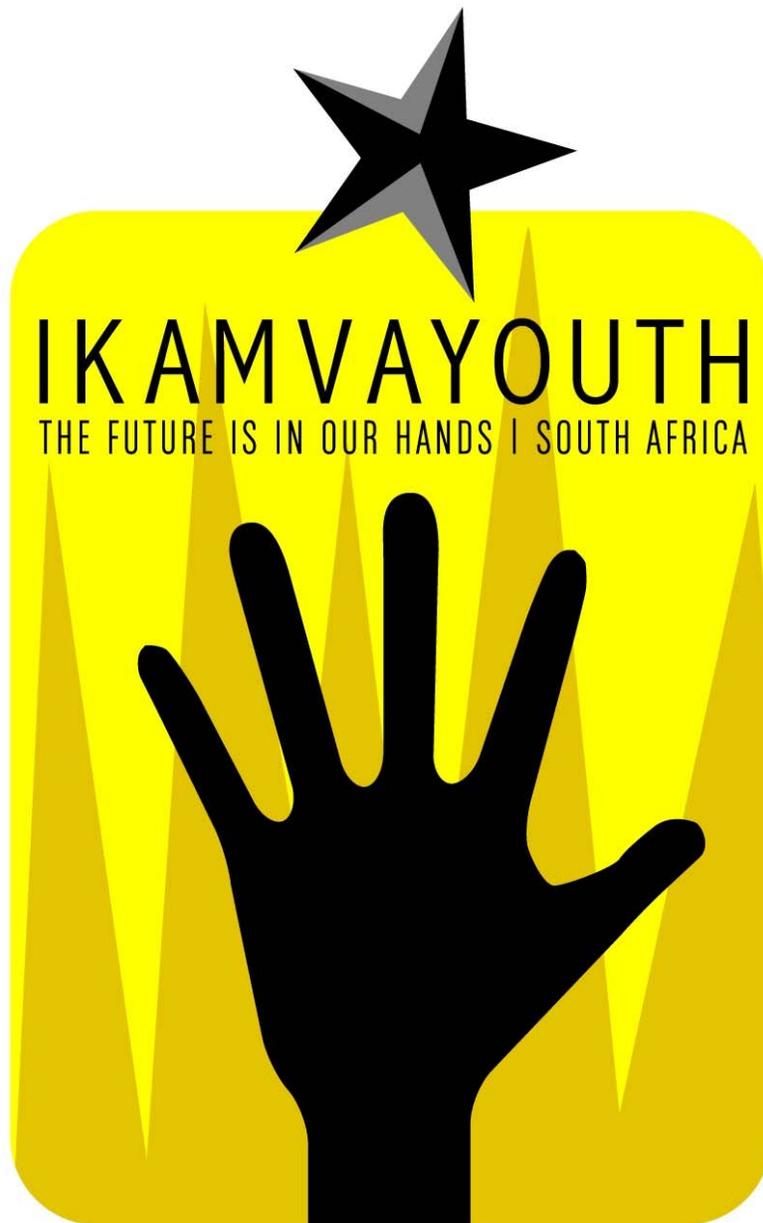


Tutor Training Guide



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IkamvaYouth at a Glance

IkamvaYouth is a by-youth, for youth community-based non-profit organisation that drives social change in South Africa by enabling disadvantaged youth to access post-school opportunities in tertiary education.

The organisation achieves its mission by providing supplementary tutoring, career guidance, mentoring, computer literacy training, voluntary HIV counselling and testing, and activities under the media, image and expression programme to learners in grades 10 – 12 free of charge. IkamvaYouth is based in the Western Cape (at the Nazeema Isaacs library in Khayelitsha and the Nyanga library) and Kwa-Zulu Natal (at the Mayville Secondary school in Cato Manor). The organisation is driven by the commitment, enthusiasm and creativity of the ikamvanites (volunteers and learners), and is daily proof that by-youth, for-youth transformation can happen with very little resources.

- Between 42 and 65% of IkamvaYouth's learners access tertiary institutions (estimates for township youth are generally less than 5%)
- 60% of the volunteer tutors and 91% of the management committee members are ex-learners

IkamvaYouth has a great vision: we provide cost- effective solutions to some of South Africa's biggest problems, including poor learner attainment, the low skills base, unemployment, lack of black professionals, brain drain, poverty and youth turning to crime. We have shown that positive change is possible with very little resources and a lot of passion, and believe that our model is replicable across South Africa. Volunteer tutors are the lifeblood of our organisation. Thank you for joining us!

Supplementary Tutoring Programme

The supplementary tutoring programme runs every Saturday morning. There are also homework sessions on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, where learners work together on their homework, past exam papers and worksheets, and view learning channel videos in the library. Both KZN and WC branches hold winter schools at the UKZN and UWC campuses respectively during the July holidays, and KZN also has a summer school in December.

During the tutoring programme, tutors (mostly students from nearby tertiary institutions) provide individual attention to learners in all matric subjects.

The programme's objectives are to:

- Improve grades in all matric subjects;
- Improve confidence in speaking and writing English;
- Provide a space for intellectual debate;
- Enable learners to develop active learning skills, whereby they identify the learning areas with which they need help, and take responsibility for their academic progress.
- Develop learner' ability to work independently;
- Develop problem-solving skills
- Ensure learners understand parts of the syllabus they struggle with
- Ensure learners get practice doing the types of problems they'll encounter in tests, assessments and exams
- Ensure learners get rapid and accurate feedback about their performance

Learners bring the material they want to cover (sections of the syllabus with which they're struggling, past tests and exam papers, homework etc), and sit in small groups with the volunteers.

Everyone works together, and ensures that the work is understood by every member of the group before moving on to the next problem. Maths and Physics are the subjects for which assistance is most sought.

IkamvaYouth offers supplementary tutoring in the following subjects:

- Maths
- Physics
- English
- Geography
- Biology
- History
- Accounting
- Business Economics
- Economics
- Life orientation
- Xhosa
- Maths literacy
- Tourism

Homework sessions are held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, These learners drastically improved their marks, with the result that the far majority have secured places in tertiary education for 2008.

The positive impact that the tutoring programme had on these learners' academic achievement has prompted teachers at Harry Gwala high school to recommend IkamvaYouth to its learners, over similar programmes offered in the area. As a result, over 200 learners registered at the Nazeema Isaacs library at the beginning of 2008. In order to keep their place in the programme, learners are required to attend regularly.

How to be a good tutor

A good tutor...

- Respects the learners – we are all equal at Ikamva!
- Is motivated, committed and dedicated – it's important to remember you're a role model!
- Gives learners space to do things
- Is accessible - easy to approach and ask questions
- Motivates the learners
- Has good communication skills and is a good listener
- Perseveres and is patient (doesn't get bored!)
- Takes as much time and as many tries as needed to make sure the learners understand
- Is understanding, and interested in the learner
- Is always ready to help
- Knows how to facilitate the group
- Has a good knowledge of the subject
- Understands that learners learn at different paces
- Gives all learners equal attention
- Puts in extra energy to make sure the learners are engaged, interested and really understanding
- Does what they say they will, and ensures that learners know that their progress is important to you
- Open – accepting and answering questions;
- Willing to admit when you don't know the answer (it's very important that

learners see that everyone learns by asking for help! So when you get stuck, don't be afraid to get input from other tutors and learners!)

- Willing to accept suggestions and constructive criticism
- Listens well – make sure that you understand what learners are saying to you
- Flexible & adaptable – if one approach isn't working, try something else
- Encouraging – motivating the learners so that they give of their best
- Expects the best from learners – show the learners that you are confident that they can perform well

Expectations of tutors

IkamvaYouth tutors are expected to:

- Honour the amount of tutoring they committed to when applying to be a volunteer (please let the volunteer coordinator know as soon as the situation changes!)
- Communicate with the volunteer organisers and let them know when you're available
- Be punctual
- Be flexible (e.g. to tutor in an unexpected location if required; sometimes there are last minute changes and we may need to ask you to work with different learners, or tutor a different subject.)
- Be reliable and honour the commitment you have made to the programme and the learners.
- Be on time. It's important for the programme, and sets a good example for learners.
- Let the volunteer coordinator know if you are not going to be able to attend on a certain day. The more advance notice you can provide, the better.
- Treat all other tutors and learners with respect. If you have concerns about anybody's behaviour, it is your responsibility to let the director know.
- Behave appropriately with learners. Do not pursue romantic relationships with learners.
- Speak English with learners as much as possible. While we understand that sometimes it helps to use isiXhosa to explain a concept, please remember that the learners will be tested and examined in English, and that English will probably be the language of instruction when they get to university.
- Turn off their mobile phones during tutoring time. If you're expecting an urgent call, then let the learners know in advance.
- If you have any other problems, concerns or suggestions, it is your responsibility to let the volunteer coordinator or the director know.

Volunteer Commitment: Tutor attendance is always low during university exam time. We therefore ask our non-undergraduate students and/or young professional volunteers to commit to attending tutoring sessions during the exam period upfront.

Volunteer Diversity – IkamvaYouth welcomes a diverse group of tutors. Ex-learners are important, as they are extremely inspirational to learners, and show that it's possible to go from a township school to university. Ex-learners also have a keen understanding of what's needed to make this transition. However, those who attended advantaged schools can pass on the fruits of that education to learners, and usually have more practice writing and speaking English, which is useful for tutoring.

Expectations of learners

A good IkamvaYouth learner...

- Seeks out knowledge
- Participates actively in tutoring sessions
- Asks questions

- Listens
- Respects the tutor and other learners
- Helps other learners
- Is committed to IkamvaYouth and attends regularly
- Is motivated and dedicated to their studies
- Manages their time well
- Is punctual
- Is not afraid of challenges

IkamvaYouth learners are expected to...

- Work exceptionally hard
- Attend every Saturday (compulsory) and Tuesdays and Thursday homework sessions (minimum attendance to keep a place on the programme is 75%)
- Work on their own, and bring specific questions and problems to the tutoring sessions
- Get to know the other learners
- Communicate with the learner reps and the volunteers
- Encourage and help other learners

The following points are important considerations when dealing with learners:

- Most of our learners are hard-working, dedicated, and serious (the programme is optional after all) – but they're also teenagers, and sometimes they need reminders, or a bit of gentle discipline. However, it's really up to them to make sure they are taking their studies seriously enough. If you become concerned about any particular learner's behaviour, please let the director know so that we can address any problems together.
- Learners must do any homework assigned to them. However, please be considerate when setting homework – homework is definitely encouraged, but remember that not all learners have access to somewhere that they can study in the evenings.
- Learners should bring books and study materials for all the subjects they are working on at winter school. Please remind your learners to bring all their books every day.
- Learners should treat all other learners & tutors politely and with respect. If you see rude or disrespectful behaviour, please let the director know.
- Learners must not leave the tutoring area without letting the director know and obtaining my permission.
- Cell phones must be turned off. If there is an emergency and a learner needs to use his/her phone, they must go outside so as not to disturb anybody else.
- Learners must attend every day. If they will miss a session, they must excuse themselves in advance if possible, and provide the tutoring coordinator with a letter explaining their absence.
- If learners are not understanding, it is their responsibility to ask questions until they do understand. Please try to encourage them to ask questions.
- If learners are unhappy with the tutoring they are receiving for any reason, it is their responsibility to let the director or the learner reps know so that the problem can be addressed.
- If learners have concerns about the behaviour or anybody else on the programme (tutor or volunteer) it is their responsibility to let the director or the learner reps know so that the problem can be addressed.

Key things that learners need to be taught to do include:

Taking Notes – Learners should take out paper and pens before each tutoring session, and take notes throughout.

Language - Speak English throughout the session.

Organization - Keep all Learner materials in files or folders

Speaking - When learners first join, they need to be encouraged to ask questions, and learn to speak up even when they aren't sure about the answer

Confidence - Build learners' confidence: it is extremely important for Learners to know that the tutoring space is a safe place for them to express when they do not understand something.

Responsibility - Learners need to learn to take responsibility for their learning by identifying which questions / sections they don't understand, and bringing their questions to the tutoring sessions.

Time Management - The homework sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays are meant to be the place where Learners work with one another. The work that they are unable to figure out with their peers is the work they bring to the Saturday sessions.

Tutoring strategies

Don't teach – ask questions!

- Don't spoon feed learners – giving them the answers won't help them to be able to solve other problems
- Ask questions that will help the learners to find the answers themselves
- Ensure that you ask each learner questions, to ensure that they participate
- Avoid using the blackboard / white board yourself (though it can be useful to get learners to use it)
- If learners can't answer the first question you ask, try breaking down your questions into small pieces, until they can answer them
- Try to ask questions that will help the learner work out the solutions themselves
- Encourage all learners to participate actively – ask quiet ones to read questions out and encourage them to ask questions.

Help build understanding

- Do lots of examples - practice makes perfect
- Go through problems and solutions step-by-step – never assume that learners have understood how you got from one point to the next
- Never ask learners if they understand – they will say yes even when they don't. Instead ask them to explain back to you or another learner, or give them a similar problem to work through on their own
- Show learners tips and tricks that you've found useful in understanding how to solve particular problems

Develop text-based competencies

- Ensure that all learners are making notes throughout – if they don't, they'll forget everything that they've learnt as soon as they get home.
- Get learners to each write down the answers to questions, and mark each one
- Give spot tests during the tutoring sessions to check understanding and focus
- Give learners the chance to do it themselves – set some problems and then leave them alone for a while to work on it

Help learners become self-sufficient

- Give learners the chance to do it themselves
- Don't spoon feed learners
- Encourage learners to help each other – getting one learner to explain a problem to another can be very useful
- Show learners how to use the dictionary and thesaurus to work out the meanings of words themselves
- Often learners want to work on subjects or sections they find easier – encourage

them to spend the tutoring time on the most challenging aspects of their work

Give accurate and comprehensive feedback

- Make sure learners understand where and how they've gone wrong, and show them how to make it right
- Help learners to figure out which sections they need to focus on
- Identify problem areas, highlight them to the learners, and concentrate on those until learners overcome them
- Give and mark homework
- If you assign homework, make sure you check that it's done and mark it

Build a strong tutor-learner relationships

- Get to know the learners, and their particular strengths and weaknesses. Try as much as possible to work repeatedly with the same learners
- If you help learners prepare for a test, find out how it went

Use English - Volunteers should speak English during tutoring, and revert to Xhosa / Zulu only if learners do not fully understand a key concept as described in English. The use of English during tutoring is important because learners' exam papers and their written answers are in English. Even when learners can understand and articulate their work in Xhosa, they are often stumped by language and vocabulary used in the exams, and therefore do not understand the questions, or are unable to articulate their understanding of the question. Tutoring sessions are important opportunities to enable learners to improve their English reading and writing skills.

Practice Writing & Reading Comprehension - Tutors should write questions for learners, or use questions written for past papers. Tutors should also ask each learner to write down their answer and mark them accordingly. It is very important that learners get used to writing things down, rather than all the tutoring happening orally.

Tutor / Learner Ratio - There should ideally be no more than 5 learners per volunteer tutor.

Remember, the programme does NOT aim to:

- replace teachers – your responsibility is not to teach the material, but to help learners explore and understand it (you may need to teach some topics, but remember that they have already been taught it at school, so don't let teaching become the core of what you do with learners).
- spoon-feed learners – we want to give them skills, not answers
- give learners unrealistic hopes and expectations – most of our learners are currently performing poorly, and it's generally unrealistic to expect that they'll be getting A's. Work with learners to set realistic and attainable, but challenging, goals and targets.
- discourage learners – even if you are disappointed in their performance, try to encourage them to perform well. Setting challenging, but realistic and attainable goals will help.

Introduction to socio-cultural learning theory

How do people learn?

This question has kept educators, psychologists, neurologists, economists and philosophers busy for centuries, and there are many theories from many fields that seek to answer it.

IkamvaYouth's approach to learning is best described by the socio-cultural theory of learning, which was pioneered by a soviet psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, in the 1920s and '30s. Two of Vygotsky's key theories provide a useful framework to inform the

tutoring process: *Mediation* and the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD).

Mediation

Vygotsky said that "all the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals" (1978:58). By "higher functions", he is referring to the higher psychological functions that distinguish people from animals, and enable people to learn. He explains that "every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts." (Vygotsky, 1978: 57).

Vygotsky (1978) "use[s] the term higher psychological function, or higher behaviour, as referring to the combination of the tool and sign in psychological activity." Through his research and writing, Vygotsky depicts the process of learning as mediation through the use of tools and signs. For Vygotsky, "the learning is not only inside the person, but in his or her ability to use a particular set of tools in productive ways and for particular purposes"

This is the explanation of cultural mediation offered by Wikipedia:

Vygotsky investigated child development and how this was guided by the role of culture and interpersonal communication. Vygotsky observed how higher mental functions developed through social interactions with significant people in a child's life, particularly parents, but also other adults. Through these interactions, a child came to learn the habits of mind of her/his culture, including speech patterns, written language, and other symbolic knowledge through which the child derives meaning and effects a child's construction of his or her knowledge. This key premise of Vygotskian psychology is often referred to as cultural mediation. The specific knowledge gained by a child through these interactions also represented the shared knowledge of a culture. This process is known as internalization.

Zone of Proximal Development

"An essential feature of learning", Vygotsky explains, "is that it creates the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD); that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment, and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.90). Vygotsky defines "the distance between the actual developmental levels as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers... What is in the ZPD today will be the actual developmental level tomorrow -- that is, what a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow (1978, p.86-87)".

The concepts of mediation and the ZPD are useful to us as tutors, as it reminds us about:

- The importance of tools to mediate learning (use language, concepts, writing, conceptual links, calculators, learning materials etc. to help learners to develop understanding)
- The importance of finding out from which point the learner is beginning. (We can only take learners through the ZPD if we know where they're starting from; i.e. what they know, and what they don't know)
- The importance of interactions between learners and peers, and tutors, for mediation, and building a culture of active learning.

Recommended Resources

For more information and tips for tutoring, read what a Leap teacher has to say about his experiences teaching science to grade 11 learners in Langa:

Available at: <http://www.scienceinafrica.co.za/2006/april/leap.htm>