

## ❖ Lesson 11

# Tutoring Social Sciences

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### Summary

This program presents strategies for enhancing tutorial sessions in the large and complex field of the social sciences. Tutors can create a meaningful framework by providing context, applying theories and using analogies to make diverse concepts understandable to their students. To foster critical thinking, tutors can ask students to focus on the analytical process and to provide supporting evidence rather than simply relate facts. Tutors guide students in mastering terminology by making terms meaningful and clarifying distinctions. By administering practice tests and encouraging students to predict what will be on the exam, tutors help students prepare for their exams as well as allay their test anxiety. Excerpts illustrate these strategies in economics, anthropology, psychology, and history tutorials.

### Preliminary Discussion

- ❖ What do you believe are the goals of social science instruction? In what ways is the study of social science different from the physical sciences? From humanities?
- ❖ What might inexperienced students find particularly difficult in social science studies? What techniques might they use to help overcome these difficulties?
- ❖ What types of tests are most common in social sciences? What special techniques do you use to prepare for these tests?

### Discussion and Activities After Viewing the Tape

#### CREATING A FRAMEWORK

*Jennifer introduces a historical framework for the issues discussed.*

*Nobel uses Tracy's family as an example of the probabilities of carrying sickle-cell anemia.*

*Chris uses an analogy from everyday life.*

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*Activity:* Make a list of concepts from the course you will tutor. What contexts could you provide for these concepts? Can you think of analogies from everyday life that would help students create a framework for these concepts? Which of these concepts may relate to your students' experiences?

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*Activity:* Select a concept from your field. Roleplay a session in which you help your "student" create a framework for this concept.

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### FOSTER CRITICAL THINKING

*Marsha explains the market forces depicted in diagrams.*

*Nobel asks students for supporting evidence.*

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*Discussion:* What kinds of tables/diagrams frequently appear in the literature in your field? How could you describe the processes underlying these diagrams while fostering critical thinking?

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*Activity:* Select a table or diagram from a textbook from the course you will tutor. Roleplay a session in which you have your "student" present the processes underlying this figure.

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### MASTERING THE TERMINOLOGY

*Chris conducts a psychology tutorial and reflects on the importance of bringing components together.*

*Nobel shows the distinction between terms.*

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*Discussion:* What terms in your field are potentially confusing? How would you make these terms meaningful? How would you help a student distinguish between terms?

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*Activity:* Make a list of terms from a textbook your students use. Roleplay a session in which you present these terms to your "student" while attempting to encourage independence. You may also want to select two terms that are often confused and attempt to distinguish them.

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### MASTERING THE EXAMS

*Chris gives his students a quiz and reflects on the importance of preparing students in test-taking strategies.*

*Mike directs students to guess what might be on the upcoming economics test.*

*Jennifer allows Lynn to express test anxiety and then suggests some test-taking techniques.*

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**Activity:** Obtain examples of tests from the course you will tutor. Are the tests multiple choice, short answer, essay or a combination? Which areas receive the most emphasis? How could you help students prepare for these exams?

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**Activity:** Design a quiz that would help your students prepare for one of the sample tests you obtained. Roleplay a session in which you administer the quiz and provide feedback to your "student".

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**Activity:** Roleplay a session in which you help your "student" prepare for this exam by discussing test-taking strategies.

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### Summary Discussion

- ❖ How has the discussion contributed to your understanding of the strategies that help most in tutoring within your field?

