

Questions Employers Might Ask at a Teacher Interview

- What can you tell me about yourself?
- Why do you want to teach?
- What is your philosophy of education?
- What do you enjoy most/least about teaching?
- Describe your style of teaching.
- With what school/community activities would you like to be involved?
- What are your career goals?
- What three words would your students use to describe you?
- What values are most important to you?
- What do you know about our school district?
- Why do you want to work for our school district?
- Why should our school district hire you?
- What is the greatest attribute you can bring to a class of students?
- What plans would you make to improve your professional skills?
- What are the qualities of an excellent teacher, and what are some examples that prove you possess them?
- Describe your ideal classroom.
- What are the most important things students should learn in your classroom?
- Describe an ideal curriculum in your area of study.
- What field trips would you arrange for your class?
- What should schools do for students?
- What is the role of the student in your classroom?
- How do you want your students to view you?
- What experiences have influenced you the most in your professional development?
- Describe your student teaching experiences.
- What failures have you experienced, and what did you learn from them?
- How have you used technology in your lessons?
- What innovative ideas would you like to initiate in your classroom?
- What is your philosophy on homework?
- What was your biggest problem in student teaching, and how did you resolve it?
- What is your approach to dealing with controversial topics?
- With what kind of student do you most/least like to work?
- How do you develop positive rapport with students?
- How do you make students feel at ease with you, yet still respect you?
- How do you motivate students?
- How do you generate student involvement?
- How do you feel that rapid learners should be provided for in your area of teaching?
- How do you deal with the free time of those students who always finish their assignments early?
- How would you work with students who perform below grade level, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds?
- How would you handle assignments that are handed in late?
- How would handle a student who is consistently late for your class?
- How would you handle a student who sleeps in your class?
- How would you handle a student who consistently misbehaves in your classroom?
- What is your opinion of after-school detention?
- When would you send a student to the Principal's/Dean's Office?
- What do you do about a student who is consistently picked on by other students?
- How would you deal with a student who appears depressed?
- How would you reinforce self-esteem in your students?
- How should a student's academic achievement and progress be measured?
- Do you grade on ability or effort, and why?
- How do you get students excited about learning?
- Elementary: Can you handle instruction in art, music, and physical education?
- Secondary: Can you handle three or more different class preparations?
- Describe a typical unit plan in your classroom, including specific instructional activities.
- What would be your approach to teaching reading? writing? mathematics?
- What role does active participation play in your teaching?
- How have you used cooperative learning in your classroom?
- How do you teach a classroom of students with widely differing ability levels?
- How would you individualize instruction to meet the needs of all your students?

- What is your opinion about mainstreaming?
- What is your viewpoint on ability grouping?
- How do you handle a learning activity that completely falls short of your expectations?
- What does it mean to a fair teacher?
- What grade level do you prefer, and why?
- What is your opinion of standardized testing?
- Describe an interesting article about the area of education that you have read recently.
- What is the most exciting thing happening in the field of education?
- What do you consider to be the most pressing current issue in education?
- How would you use teacher aides and parent volunteers?
- For what reasons would you contact parents?
- What would you include in an Open House presentation to parents? in a back-to-school or weekly newsletter?
- How important do you think parent-teacher conferences are, and why?
- Describe your view of effective parent communication.
- How would you react if a senior staff member criticized some aspect of your teaching?
- What do you expect from your supervisor?
- How can the school/district help you become successful?

Source: American Association for Employment in Education

Questions to Ask an Employer at a Teacher Interview

- Tell me about the students who attend this district.
- What is the typical socioeconomic background of the students in the district?
- How many students participate in extracurricular activities?
- What is the student-to-teacher ratio in your district?
- What discipline procedures does the district use?
- What allowances are made for supplies and materials?
- Does the administration encourage field trips for the students?
- Do teachers participate in curriculum review and change?
- What support staff members (e.g., counselors, social workers, special education resources, etc.) are available to help students and teachers?
- Do parents and the community actively support the schools in the district?
- Do your schools use teacher aides or parent volunteers?
- How are teachers assigned to extracurricular activities?
- What type of in-service training does your district provide to teachers?
- What are the prospects for future growth in this community and its schools?
- What are the greatest challenges that this school/district is currently facing?

Source: American Association for Employment in Education

Skills/Qualities Employers Seek in Teacher Candidates

Accurately assesses student progress	Interacts well with students and parents
Approachable/personable	Knowledgeable
Communicates facts and abstract concepts well	Open to diverse ideas
Conservative attire	Poise/composure in stressful situations
Creative	Professional pride in/commitment to teaching
Dedicated to human potential	Resourceful
Effective leader	Respect for students
Effective listener	Sense of humor
Emotional stability	Strong classroom management skills
Energetic	Strong communication skills
Engages the audience	Strong problem-solving/decision-making skills
Enthusiastic	Team player
Fair/objective	Understands educational theories and practices
Flexible/adaptable	Well-organized

Source: American Association for Employment in Education

Sample Thank You Letter

123 S. Main Street
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
708-555-1111
kdoe@mailbox.com

March 10, 20xx

Melissa Smith
Assistant Superintendent
Fairview School District 123
7890 W. State Street
Fairview, IL 60404

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you very much for interviewing me for the Third Grade Teacher position with your school district today. You and your colleagues provided me with a very warm reception and informative discussion.

My enthusiasm for working with your district was strengthened as a result of our meeting, and the opportunity is congruent with the type of teaching experience I am seeking. As mentioned during our conversation, my experiences as a Teacher's Aide and as a Tutor have prepared me extensively for the type of work required of an elementary school teacher. In addition, my positive interpersonal qualities, strong creativity skills, and proficient communication abilities would make me an ideal candidate for the position. Furthermore, my willingness to assist with extracurricular activities would enable me to be a versatile contributor.

Once again, I wish to reiterate my genuine interest in the position and your organization. If you have any questions, please contact me at 708-555-1111 or at kdoe@mailbox.com. Thank you very much for your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kerry J. Doe

Kerry J. Doe