

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS IN AN INTERVIEW

EDUCATIONAL CAREER SERVICES

General Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to become a teacher?
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- With so many qualified applicants, why should I hire you rather than someone else?
- What do you expect of an administrator?
- What can you contribute to our school?
- What is the responsibility of public schools?
- How would your friends describe you?
- Describe yourself using five adjectives.
- Describe your working relationship with your cooperating teacher.
- What is the name of the latest professional book or article you have read that was not required reading? What prompted you to select this particular book/article?
- What is the greatest challenge for teachers today?
- What is your philosophy of education? Assessment? Parent involvement?

Development, Learning, and Motivation

- What other experiences, besides classroom teaching, have you had working with children/youth?
- What obstacles have you overcome while attaining your teaching degree? Why did you choose to become a teacher?
- What qualities do you possess that will enable you to become an effective teacher?
- Why do you want to teach in our district?
- What type of planning is necessary to teach a lesson?
- How will you determine the sequence of skills that are to be taught?
- Have you developed a unit of study that was not in the text? If so, how did you determine the objectives?
- Does your college transcript adequately reflect your knowledge base?
- How does motivation impact learning?
- Do you consider yourself an organized person? Would your friends agree? Your college professors?
- What subjects/grade levels do you feel most comfortable teaching?
- What experiences have you had working with a diverse population?
- Do you use computers/internet on a regular basis for personal use? Why or why not?
- What is your personal teaching vision statement?

Curriculum

- Describe how you would integrate our state learner outcomes/standards in your classroom.
- How will you develop a curriculum that is motivating for students?
- How will you meet the individual skills/needs of students in your class?
- What makes a lesson successful for the learners?
- What things do you consider when planning lessons?
- How would you integrate technology into lessons?
- Tell me about some specialized learning programs with which you are familiar.
- What are the basic parts of any lesson you teach?

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EDUCATIONAL CAREER SERVICES OFFICE

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign · Council on Teacher Education · College of Education · 505 E. Green Street · Suite 202 · Champaign, IL 61820
(217) 333-0740 · fax (217) 333-5689 · email: ecso@illinois.edu · <http://www.education.illinois.edu/ecso>

Instruction

- If I walked into your classroom, what would I see?
- How does the physical environment of a classroom enhance/detract from learning?
- What is your preferred teaching style?
- When would you use individualized, small-group/whole-group teaching approaches? Why?
- Describe an activity when you used cooperative groups.
- How do you maximize *time on task* in your classroom?
- What are some classroom rules that you like?
- What role does homework play in your class?
- What graphic organizers have you used when presenting lessons?
- What different teaching strategies have you used that have been successful?
- Explain the elements of effective instruction.
- How do you keep students on track during a classroom discussion?
- Do you think interdisciplinary learning has merit? Why or why not?
- What are some techniques you have used to motivate students to learn?
- Has inclusion of special education students helped or hurt the regular classroom?

Assessment

- Is it ever appropriate to give a student an F grade?
- While teaching a 2-week unit, describe some assessment techniques you might use.
- How will you communicate students' progress to parents?
- How would you prepare students for taking a standardized test?
- Name some various types of grading plans. Which ones do you feel are most effective? Why?
- How will you evaluate your own teaching effectiveness?
- What percentage of your class do you think will fail?
- Have you designed a performance or behavioral objective for a class? If so, what prompted you to do so?
- What steps would you take before recommending a student be screened for special-education evaluation services?
- How would you design a rubric to evaluate a specific classroom skill?
- Do you keep anecdotal records on student behavior/performance? If so, how do you manage them?
- What are the strengths/weaknesses of norm-referenced tests?
- After giving a test, you discover that more than half of the students have failed. What would you do?
- What type of questions do you include on a unit test? True/False? Multiple choice? Short answer? Discussion?

Classroom Management

- How do you feel about retaining students?
- What is the cause of most discipline problems?
- Describe your student teaching successes and failures.
- What is one accomplishment of which you are particularly proud? Why?
- Describe a perfect teacher.
- Describe your discipline plan and how you would implement it.
- What rules do you like to use in your classroom?
- Suppose a student broke one of those rules, what are some appropriate consequences for breaking that rule?
- How would you communicate classroom expectations to parents?
- Tell me about a difficult confrontation you had with a student and how you resolved it.
- What factors contribute to an excellent classroom environment?
- Name some nonverbal ways you can *quiet* a classroom.
- What would you do if a student continues to challenge you with disruptive behavior?
- What role does the teacher plan in establishing a productive learning climate?
- When would you definitely send a student to the principal?

Professionalism

- What things will you do to ensure continued professional growth?
- How will you develop healthy interpersonal relations with your colleagues?
- Are you a member of professional organizations? If so, which ones?
- Do you subscribe to professional journals and magazines? Name them.
- What things will you do to earn the respect of your students, parents, and peers?
- What steps will you take to ensure parent involvement in our schools?
- Visualize teachers who are real *professionals*. What characteristics do they have? What do they say? What do they do? What do they look like? What are they involved in?
- How will you demonstrate respect for the diverse cultures within your classroom?
- What would you like students to say about their classroom experience with you as their teacher? What do you hope is your teaching legacy?
- Discuss ethics in the educational setting.

Elementary School Questions

- What reading/math programs have you experienced? (basal, phonetic, Saxon)
- Why would knowledge about child development cause you to reflect about appropriate instruction from Pre-K through fourth grade?
- What is an appropriate discipline plan for kindergarten? (insert grade-level vacancy)
- Explain how you might teach a *Frog Unit* across the curriculum.

Middle School Questions

- Why do you think so few teachers select the middle school as their first choice of teaching assignment?
- What are some characteristics unique to middle school students?
- Do you think middle school students would learn more or less working in small groups? Justify your answer.

Secondary School Questions

- What is an acceptable failure rate in high school courses? Explain.
- How would you engage high school students in learning?
- Justify to a parent your homework policy.

Situational Questions (some examples follow)

- You discover that one of your students has been cheating on his/her homework. How do you respond?
- A student who has been labeled as a *troublemaker* has been reassigned to your class. What do you do?
- What would you do if you discovered that a teacher in your building was having a sexual relationship with a student?

Taken from *So You Have to Have a Portfolio, A Teacher's Guide to Preparation and Presentation* by Robert Wyatt III and Sandra Looper. Prepared by Educational Career Services Office (ECSO), October, 2000.

Interview Strategies That Work

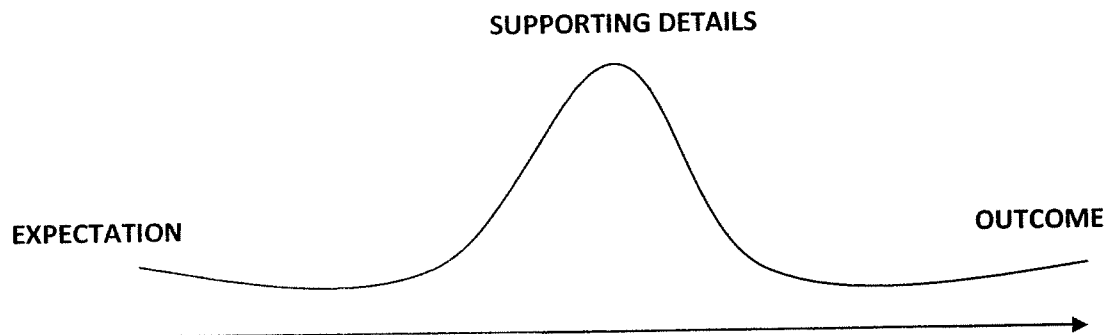
The following strategies and suggestions have been compiled from my professional interview experiences and job based training. These strategies are intended to be used systemically and facilitate improved responses during face to face interviews. For the interview to be successful the applicant must dress professionally, be well groomed, arrive on time, be respectful, and respond in complete thoughts.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW...

- ✓ Select appropriate professional dress
- ✓ Know yourself (Philosophy of education)
- ✓ Know your opening and closing remarks (religiously)
- ✓ Know your school (TEA AEIS report)
<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2010/campus.srch.html>
- ✓ Review job posting expectations (School district website)

DURING THE INTERVIEW...

- ✓ Opening remarks (be yourself)
- ✓ Strategy for responding to each question



- ✓ Closing remarks ("Punch" it)
- ✓ Questions (specific to their school/district)

AFTER THE INTERVIEW...

- ✓ Follow up with a "Thank you" (card vs. electronic)
- ✓ Recommendation status (what's appropriate?)