



Education Interview Questions From Both Sides of the Desk

You've invested four years preparing to teach. These questions can help you prepare for the biggest test so far, the interview. Research your potential employer, make a great first impression (some say the first 30 seconds of an interview will determine your success or failure), and be confident and enthusiastic in the interview. Remember to follow up after the interview with a thank-you letter to the interviewers.

Warm-up/Personal:

These questions are set to "warm-up" the applicant. Be brief and keep the information about your preparation and motivation to teach.

1. What can you tell us about yourself?
2. What book are you currently reading or have you read recently?
3. What are some of your hobbies or leisure-time activities?
4. What do you plan to be doing in five years? What are your career goals?
5. What community projects or organizations have you been involved with?
6. Who are some people who have had a great impact on your life?

Philosophy/Classroom Management:

This is to see what can be expected in your classroom.

7. Why do you want to teach?
8. What is your philosophy of education?
9. Describe your style of teaching.
10. What is your philosophy of classroom discipline?
11. What kind of classroom management plan do you like best? How would you implement it in your classroom?
12. What are some trends, issues & methodologies that relate to your specific curriculum area or grade level?
13. What is your philosophy of team teaching?
14. What are the qualities of an excellent teacher? Which of these qualities do you have?
15. Describe a belief you hold about education. How would you implement it in the classroom?
16. What is your attitude toward Individual versus Total Class discipline?
17. What would we see if we walked into your classroom?
18. Describe an ideal classroom.
19. How should a student's educational achievement and progress be measured?

Role-plays/hypotheticals:

These give you the opportunity to say what you "would do" in certain situations. If you have been in similar situations, it is always better to give an example of what you have done for these questions.

20. How do you work with disruptive students?
21. How would you motivate a student who won't even try?
22. How do you individualize your teaching?
23. Some students always finish their assignments early. How would you deal with the free time that they have?
24. How would you use teacher aides and parent volunteers?
25. A student is consistently late to your class. How do you handle the situation?
26. What would you do if a parent became angry during a parent-teacher conference?
27. You suspect a project turned in by a student was completed by someone else.
28. You observe a student cheating on a test during class.
29. One of your students doesn't respond to your discipline plan.
30. Two of your students are fighting. What would you do?
31. How do you handle a situation where a student refuses to salute the flag or observe certain holidays?
32. A student reveals a situation at home that makes you think she may be the victim of some kind of abuse.
33. What would you do, or how would you treat a student who refused to do the work you assigned?

Research/fit:

These questions are designed to see if you have done your homework regarding the job, school district, or community and to see if you will fit in or how much assistance you will need to fit the work environment.

34. Why do you want to teach in this district/school?
35. What do you know about our school district?
36. What special skills or talents will you bring to your classroom?
37. Would you be willing to teach at a different grade level (elementary) or teach a different subject (secondary)?
38. Would you be willing to pursue an extra certificate or credential?
39. At what point do you involve the principal in a discipline matter?
40. Would you be willing to coach a sport, advise an organization, or assist with extracurricular activities?
41. What are some ways you would communicate with a parent regarding a student's progress?
42. Would you like to be involved in school (community) activities?
43. Are parent/teacher conferences important? Why or why not.
44. What do you expect from your supervisor?
45. If you started teaching in the middle of a school year, how would you get to know the students & their parents?

Stumpers/description

Some questions are designed to allow you to de-select yourself with negative responses. Even negative aspects should be presented positively in interviews. A greatest weakness of procrastination can be countered with a positive of setting goals and deadlines. With descriptions, keep it brief and to the point.

46. What is your greatest strength (weakness) as a teacher?
47. Describe a time when a lesson was not going well; what did you do about it?
48. With what kind of student do you most (least) like to work?
49. Describe your student teaching experiences. What was your biggest problem? How did you resolve it?
50. What three words would your students use to describe you as a teacher?
51. What grade level do you prefer? Why?
52. How do you relate with minority students in the classroom?

Wrap up

53. Why should we hire you for this position?
54. What were you hoping we would ask you today, but didn't?
55. Do you have any questions for us?

Questions for the Interviewer:

You should always have questions for the interviewer. Don't ask questions that have been answered in the interview or that you should know from your research. These can be asked in the middle of the interview if they connect to a question asked of you.

1. What is the teacher/student ratio in your district?
2. Do you encourage teachers to earn advanced degrees?
3. How many classes a day will I be expected to teach?
4. Tell me about the students who attend this school.
5. What textbooks does the district use in this subject area?
6. Do teachers participate in curriculum review and change?
7. What support staff members are available to help students and teachers?
8. What discipline procedures does the district use?
9. What kind of parental/community support does the school have?
10. Do your schools use teacher aides or parent volunteers?
11. Does the administration encourage field trips for students?
12. How are teachers assigned to extra-curricular activities? Is compensation provided?
13. Does the district have a statement of educational philosophy or mission?
14. What are the prospects for future growth in this community and its schools?
15. What is the ethnic composition of your student body?
16. What is the average tenure of teachers at this school?
17. What would you describe as the _____ department's strongest classroom program or activity?
18. When will this position be filled?
19. May I tour the facilities, including the classroom that will be assigned to the individual that is hired?
20. Why is this position vacant?