Questions Asked by Education Employers During Interviews With College Seniors

These are examples of questions asked in an interview. Be prepared to talk about lesson plans, discipline, and your organizational skills.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to work for our district?
3. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
4. Where do you see yourself five years from now? Ten years?
5. Describe your typical teaching style. Techniques used.
6. Why should we hire you over all the other applicants?
7. What role do you think the principal should take?
8. Tell me about your student teaching experience.
9. Why did you decide to become a teacher?
10. How have you involved parents in the learning process?
11. What has been your most positive/negative teaching experience?
12. How would you teach reading, math, science in your classroom?
13. Describe an ideal curriculum in your area of study.
14. How have you emphasized the development of basic skills?
15. Describe a lesson plan that you developed (objectives, format, and evaluation).
16. How do you use lesson plans?
17. Define cooperative learning. How have you used it?
18. Do you use homogeneous or heterogeneous grouping?
19. How do you motivate students? Yourself?
20. What kind of relationship do you have with your students?
21. How do you reinforce self-esteem in your students?
22. What is your philosophy of education?
23. What is the ideal education philosophy for a school district?
24. What is your philosophy on homework? Grading? Report cards?
25. Would you rather teach the slow learner or advanced learner?
26. What classroom management system do you use?
27. What are the basic principles of effective discipline?
28. Describe the ideal position for which you are looking.
29. How would you change the public schools for the better?
30. What do you like most about being an educator? Least?
31. How do you evaluate your teaching?
32. How is your classroom organized?
33. How would you use an extra 5-10 minutes at the end of class?
34. How would you work with a students who is mainstreamed and learning disabled?
35. How do you handle the different ability levels of students?
36. What role does active participation play in your teaching?
37. What do you know about our school and/or district?
38. If a student tells you s/he has engaged in an illegal or immoral activity, what would you do?
39. Do you have any questions for us?
40. What issues in education are of greatest concern to you? Why?
41. What class did you like the most/least, and why?
42. What is your role as a teacher?
43. How would you involve parents in the learning process?
44. What if a parent complains that your class standards are too high--you are ruining their child’s chances for college?
45. You notice a significant behavior change in a student. What action would you take?
46. What would you do if you suspected that a student is being abused at home?
47. What would you say to the school board president if s/he protests the detention you assigned to his/her child?
48. How do you evaluate your students’ learning?
49. What innovative ideas would you like to initiate in your classroom?
Sample Questions to Ask the Employer

These are examples of the types of questions you might ask in an interview. You will want to develop your own questions. Each employer is different, and what is appropriate at one school may be inappropriate at another.

1. What do you consider ideal experience or education for this position?
2. Do you use ability grouping in your schools?
3. Would I be part of a team-teaching situation?
4. Do you have open classrooms in your schools?
5. Could you tell me about the other educators who would be working with me?
6. Are extracurricular assignments available for teachers interested and qualified?
7. Does your district offer teacher in-service training days during the school year?
8. What reading/math series is currently being used?
9. Do you have an active parent-teacher organization?
10. What percentage of your graduates continues their education?
11. What is the retention rate for secondary students?
12. What types of support personnel are employed by this district (counselors, coordinators, language & reading specialists)?
13. Are computers available for classroom use?
14. Do you have a media center, resource center, and resource materials?
15. Does your district use the state guidelines for curriculum or other guidelines?

Potential Knockout Factors

Reasons why candidates may receive rejection replies:

1. Lack of proper career planning, purposes and goals ill-defined, needs direction.
2. Lack of knowledge concerning field of specialization, not well qualified, lacks depth.
3. Inability to express thoughts clearly and concisely, rambles.
4. Insufficient evidence of achievement or capacity to excite action in others.
5. Not prepared for the interview, no research on organization, no presentation.
6. No real interest in the organization or the industry, merely shopping around.
7. Narrow location interest, unwilling to relocate later, inflexible.
8. Little interest and enthusiasm, indifferent, bland personality.
9. Overbearing, overaggressive, conceited, cocky, aloof, assuming, cynical. Interested only in best dollar offer, too money conscious.
10. Asks no or poor questions about the job, little depth and meaning to questions.
11. Unwilling to start at the bottom, expects too much too soon, unrealistic.
12. Makes excuses, evasive, hedges on unfavorable factors in history.
13. Lack of confidence and poise, nervousness, ill at ease.
14. Failure to participate in activities.
15. Low GPA, just got by.
16. Lack of maturity.
17. Lack of courtesy and tact, ill mannered.
18. Condemnation of past employers.
19. Marked dislike for coursework.
20. Sloppy application form.
21. Wants job only for short time.
22. Little or no sense of humor.
23. Emphasis on whom he/she knows.
24. Low moral standards.
25. Lazy.
26. No interest in community activities.
27. Inability to take criticism.
28. Lack of appreciation for the value of experience.
29. Late to interview.
30. Failure to express appreciation for interviewer's time.
31. Asks no or few questions about the job or organization.
32. Indefinite response to questions.