



185 Student Services Building
201 North University Street
Campus Box 2520
Normal, IL 61790-2520

Interview Questions for Education majors

The following questions will help you analyze your background and identify your qualifications. Each interview will start with some general questions. Relate your answers to the position you are seeking.

1. Why do you want to teach?
2. What is your philosophy of education and/or your approach to classroom instruction?
3. Describe your style of teaching and/or your approach to classroom instruction.
4. What do you know about our school district and/or why do you want to work with our district?
5. Would you like to be involved in school (extra-curricular) activities? If so, what type?
6. In what extra-curricular activities do you participate?
7. Describe your student teaching experiences: number and type of students, subjects, methods, etc.
8. What was your biggest challenge in student teaching? How did you respond to it?
9. What three words would your students use to describe you as a teacher?
10. What is the greatest attribute you can bring to a class of students?
11. What are the qualities of an excellent teacher? Which of these do you have?
12. How would you work with students who perform below grade level, especially those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds?
13. What grade level or subject would you be most comfortable teaching? Why?
14. Tell me what you think the role of a principal is.
15. Describe an ideal classroom.
16. How organized are you? How do you stay organized?
17. What methods do you use for classroom management? Describe one difficult incident with a student and how you handled it.
18. Give me an example of a rule you might have in your classroom and why.
19. How do you go about planning a lesson?
20. How do you individualize your teaching?
21. What methods have you used or would you use to assess student learning?
22. Many parents are reluctant to get involved with their children's schools. Why do you think that is and what can be done about it? How would you hope to involve the parents of your students?
23. How much knowledge and experience have you had with inclusion or collaborative teaching? How would you evaluate this practice?
24. What does "at-risk" for school failure mean? What are some of the factors you believe put a child at-risk?
25. What experiences have you had incorporating technology resources in the classroom?
26. Give me an example of how you have been a team player.
27. What are your career goals in this profession?

Elementary School Specific:

1. What type of reading program did you use in student teaching? (basal, novel, whole language, etc.)
2. How would you describe the ways children learn from, for example, ages 6 to eight?
3. If you could design the ideal elementary classroom, what would it look like?
4. We know that children learn by making connections. What implication does this have for the elementary curriculum?
5. Which subject area do you believe is your strength? Which is your weakest? What steps will you take to improve this area?

Middle School Specific

1. A lot has been discussed regarding the motivation of students at this age. What do you think contributes to the lack of motivation some students feel?
2. What do you think is an appropriate amount of homework for this age student? How much weight would homework hold in your consideration for grading on report cards?
3. What do you think are the top three qualities needed to be a successful middle school teacher?
4. What is meant by “teaming” at the middle school level? How does it support instruction?
5. What are some characteristics of middle school aged students that need to be considered when planning middle school programs?

Secondary School Specific

1. Which should be the primary concern of high school teachers: the content or the kids? Provide a rationale for your choice.
2. How would you motivate a student to do their work when they absolutely refuse to do anything?
3. Describe your grading practices. What ingredients go into grades and what percent would you give to each?
4. What are some alternative scheduling configurations being used at the high school level? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?
5. What do you believe is an acceptable failure in courses at the high school level? What do you believe causes school failure?

Questions for Education Candidates to Ask Employers

If you are serious about teaching in the district where you are interviewing, there are many questions to which you need to know the answers before you accept an offer. By asking pertinent questions you will show your interviewer that you do understand fundamental issues relating to teaching. You should have several questions in mind before you arrive for your interview. Here are a few examples:

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 typically teach?
4. Tell me about the students who attend this school, socio-economics, patterns of achievement, etc.
5. Does the district have a statement of educational philosophy or mission? (This should be on their web site!)
6. What are prospects for future growth in this community and its schools?
7. What textbooks does the district use in this subject area?
8. Do teachers participate in curriculum review and change?
9. To what degree do parents and the community support the schools?
10. Do your schools use teacher aides or parent volunteers?
11. What support staff members are available to help students and teachers?
12. How does the current staff help develop/embrace the skills of new teachers?
13. What discipline procedures does the district use?
14. What allowances are provided for supplies and materials?
15. To what degree does the administration encourage field trips for students?
16. How are teachers assigned to extra-curricular activities? What level of compensation is provided?

Visit the Career Center Web site at www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu or call (309) 438-2200.