

Electronic Reserves

WELCOME TO THE ELECTRONIC RESERVES COURSE READINGS

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TITLE: Appendix C: Possible Interview Questions

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SOURCE: Effective Teacher Hiring

PUBLISHER: ASCD

YEAR: 2002

PAGES: 91-99

File #: 060517005_Peterson



POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Opening/Ice-breaking

- ☛ How are you today?
- ☛ Tell me a little about yourself.
- ☛ Did you have any trouble finding our location?
- ☛ Do you feel ready for an interview?
- ☛ What are some of your most memorable experiences in education?
- ☛ Describe some strengths of your teacher preparation program
- ☛ How do you recall your experiences as a student at the grade level and subject area for which you are applying?
- ☛ How did you find out about our district?
- ☛ What drew you to our district?
- ☛ What do you think of our school?

School Organization

- ☛ What has student teaching taught you about organizational and problem-solving options?
- ☛ What type and size teacher groups do you work best with?
- ☛ How would you describe good support from administrators?

- ☛ Define teacher collaboration and provide examples of your own practice.
- ☛ Tell me about your experience with difficult adults at school. How do you think schools should be set up to deal with these kinds of conflicts?
- ☛ Tell me about a situation where you had to convince a group, teacher, class, or administrator to change a procedure.
- ☛ What insights, if any, have you gleaned from alternative schools?
- ☛ What actions have you taken to better work with and understand school secretaries, janitors, and other staff members?
- ☛ What actions have you taken to better work with and understand school counselors, special educators, nurses, media specials reading specialists, and other support educators?

Knowledge of Students

- ☛ What have you learned about the developmental changes of students at different ages? Can you provide an example?
- ☛ How do you get to know (and know about) students?
- ☛ How do you get to know and use current student interests?
- ☛ How do you get to know about the different cultural backgrounds of students?
- ☛ How do you keep in touch with youth culture outside of school?
- ☛ What do you find most challenging about the age you will be teaching?

Curriculum

- ☛ What should the curriculum content be for your grade or subject?

- ☛ Name two key ideas in your subject area.
- ☛ What do you find most challenging about the subject area you will be teaching?
- ☛ How should curriculum be determined?
- ☛ How do you incorporate subject-matter standards, career education, and reading, inquiry, and critical- and basic-skill instruction into your classes?
- ☛ What challenging subject-matter problem have you worked on lately?

Instruction

- ☛ Tell me some good ways to begin classes, lessons, or parts of the day.
- ☛ Tell me some good ways to end classes, lessons, or parts of the day.
- ☛ How do you feel about homework? Why?
- ☛ How do you alter instruction for students at different achievement levels?
- ☛ How do you teach for conceptual learning?
- ☛ How do you teach so that students remember what they have learned years later?
- ☛ How do you use planning in your teaching?
- ☛ Tell me about your ideas for grading and reporting progress to students and parents.
- ☛ Describe your use of tests.
- ☛ How do you feel about state- or district-wide standardized testing?
- ☛ How do you tailor testing for exceptional students?
- ☛ How do you handle controversial topics in the classroom?

- ☛ How do you incorporate computers and other technology into your classes?
- ☛ How do you incorporate textbooks into your classes?
- ☛ What experiences have you had with cross-age tutoring?
- ☛ Do you track your students' learning in previous and subsequent years? If so, how?
- ☛ What experiences have you had with reciprocal peer teaching?
- ☛ How do you set up cooperative learning in your classes?
- ☛ What are some good uses of field trips?
- ☛ Tell me about any unusual yet effective instructional techniques you have used.
- ☛ How do you use recesses or breaks as part of your teaching?
- ☛ How do you provide for students who are far more advanced than their peers?
- ☛ Describe your record-keeping systems.
- ☛ How should a teacher pass information about students along to the next year's teachers?
- ☛ What challenging teaching problem(s) have you worked on lately?

Classroom Management

- ☛ When is it appropriate to involve administrators in disciplining students?
- ☛ When is it appropriate to involve parents in disciplining students?
- ☛ What experience do you have with schoolwide discipline programs?
- ☛ Describe your philosophy of classroom management.
- ☛ How would you promote tolerance, acceptance, and cultural diversity in the classroom?

- ☛ How comfortable are you with classroom inclusion for special education, ESL, or culturally distinct students?
- ☛ Describe your experience working with teams on individual learning plans.
- ☛ How do you teach communication in the classroom?
- ☛ Describe your experience with class meetings.
- ☛ How would you handle unmotivated students?
- ☛ What challenging classroom-management problem(s) have you worked on lately?
- ☛ Describe a time when you lost control of your classroom.
- ☛ What role do you expect parents to play in classroom management?
- ☛ How would you use ground rules in your classroom?
- ☛ In your experience, how does classroom management differ at the beginning of the year from the rest of the year?

Other Classroom Issues

- ☛ What preparation or experience do you have working with classroom volunteers?
- ☛ How would you ensure gender-respectful treatment in the classroom?
- ☛ Describe your ideal classroom environment.
- ☛ What is your preferred method of arranging furniture and seating in the classroom, and why?

Dealing with Parents

- ☛ What are some ways in which you've kept parents informed about your class?

- ☛ What advice would you give to parents who want to support their children in the classroom?
- ☛ What preparation or experience do you have working with parents?
- ☛ Tell me about an experience you've had with a difficult parent.
- ☛ What experiences have you had with parent nights, class newsletters, e-mail communications to parents, or class Web sites?

Professional Life

- ☛ What level of support from or interaction with administrators do you expect from a school?
- ☛ How interested are you in teacher teams?
- ☛ Tell me about a time when you contributed to team building.
- ☛ What plans do you have for pursuing professional development as a teacher?
- ☛ How do you expect to contribute to your colleagues' professional development?
- ☛ How and where do you get ideas for your own professional development?
- ☛ Do you read regularly to support your teaching? If so, what do you read?
- ☛ What teaching ideas have you gleaned from professional magazines, journals, or organizations?
- ☛ Tell me about a work situation in which you have had to use fact-finding skills.
- ☛ What methods do you use to evaluate your instructional effectiveness?

- ☛ How do you feel about outside evaluations, such as student or parent surveys and peer reviews?
- ☛ Are you a member of any formal or informal teacher networks?

Educational Philosophy

- ☛ Describe the most effective teacher you have known.
- ☛ How should school systems respond to the achievement gap between rich and poor students?
- ☛ Respond to this statement: "Teacher should forget their training and start from scratch."
- ☛ Some people think that all students should be able to achieve certain standards, whereas others think that students should only be pushed as far as they can go. What is your position on this issue?

Personal

- ☛ Are you permitted by law to work in this country?
- ☛ Do you write or speak any foreign languages?
- ☛ Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
- ☛ What schools did you attend? Did you graduate?
- ☛ Do you wish to tell me of what teaching-relevant organizations you are a member?
- ☛ Describe your favorite professional problem-solving strategies.
- ☛ How can we help you to be the kind of teacher you want to be?
- ☛ What can you bring to this district that other candidates cannot?

- ☛ How do you manage stress?
- ☛ How do you manage conflicting demands?
- ☛ How well do you work with difficult adults and students?
- ☛ Describe your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher.
- ☛ How have you handled professional criticism in the past?
- ☛ How would you handle a meeting in which you couldn't get a word in, or where your words were misconstrued?
- ☛ If you were not a teacher, what profession would you choose?
- ☛ What are the most striking differences between teaching and other jobs you have held?
- ☛ What do you find most difficult about teaching?
- ☛ Can you perform the tasks required of the position for which you have applied?

Assignment

You were asked to _____ [e.g., visit a classroom, park, or museum; read an article or book; watch a movie; listen to a tape].

- ☛ What did you notice during this activity?
- ☛ What aspects of the activity do you believe were handled well?
- ☛ What aspects of the activity do you believe were handled poorly?
- ☛ How would you have handled the activity, had you been in charge of it?
- ☛ How would a team of teachers have handled the activity?
- ☛ What kind of training would prepare someone to engage in this activity?

Ending

- ☛ How do you think this interview went?
- ☛ Did my questions cover everything you think is important?
- ☛ Do you have any reservations about accepting a job in this district?
- ☛ Is there anything that would prevent you from accepting this job if we offered it to you?
- ☛ Is there anything else I should know about you that has not come up in this interview?