

TEACHER CAREER TOOLKIT



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WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A RESUME FOR A TEACHING POSITION?

A resume is a **strategic document** that helps you proceed through the process of your next step. This could be to secure an on-site interview at a district/school for an internship or full-time job, be awarded a scholarship, or gain admission to a graduate program. It is a summary of your education, experience, and skills. Focus on your accomplishments, strengths, and transferrable skills. Think about experiences you are most proud of and want to highlight to tell your story and how you will add value.

GENERAL TIPS

- Avoid using templates online – they can be difficult to revise in the future
- Tailor to the job/program applying for
- When applying for industry positions, keep resume to 1 page
- When applying for graduate programs or those with advanced degrees, resume can be 1-2 pages
- Use 10-12 size font in a professional style
- Margins should be no smaller than 0.5 inches
- Experiences are to be listed in reverse chronological order or by importance/relevance
- Proofread! Check punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure
- Use verbs similar to those found in the job posting or that kind of work
- Use nouns (keywords) that relate to things that are part of the job with which you may have previous experience
- All dates, abbreviations, and formatting should be consistent

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE BUILDING YOUR RESUME

1. Who is my audience? To whom am I writing and why will they care?
2. What are my professional career goals?
3. What are the unique strengths I bring?
4. What experiences am I most proud of?
5. Do my descriptions summarize what I've learned or accomplished?
6. Which competencies and skills do I want to highlight throughout my resume?
7. Can the reader visualize my experiences?

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

Mailing Address | Phone Number | Email Address | LinkedIn Customized URL/Online Portfolio

EDUCATION:

Master of Education in _____ Month and Year of Expected Graduation
University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida
Certifications: Elementary Education (K-6), Special Education (K-12)
Endorsements: Reading, ESOL

Bachelor/Master of Degree Obtained Month and Year of Expected Graduation
Name of School/Organization, City, State Overall GPA or Major GPA ____/4.0 (OPTIONAL)
Minor/Outside Concentration/Certificate:

Study Abroad (OPTIONAL): Include institution and coursework if related Month Year – Month Year

Relevant Coursework (OPTIONAL): List 4-6 classes relating to career goals/that help you stand out from other applicants

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Position (ex. Student Intern, Practicum Intern, Teaching Assistant), Grade Taught Month Year – Month Year
Name of School/Organization, City, State

- Begin each bullet point with a present tense action verb – if it happened in the past, use past tense verbs
- Use formula ACTION VERB + TASK + RESULT
- Answer the questions, “What did I accomplish?,” “How did I do this?,” “Why is this important?”
- Focus on quantifiable accomplishments vs. tasks and job duties
- Avoid repeating same action verbs and fragments
- Use verbs similar to those found in the job posting or a description of that kind of work

WORK EXPERIENCE

Position Month Year – Month Year
Name of Company or Organization, City, State

- Use similar formula as above
- Should have at least 2-3 bullet points

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Should be formatted similar to other experience sections
- Other headings can include military service, volunteer/community service, academic projects, personal projects, shadowing, and research (below are formatting options for additional headings)

LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT (optional)

Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education, *Member* Dates
ABC School Tutor, *Reading Tutor* Dates

AWARDS OR HONORS (optional)

Dean’s List List semesters or range of semesters
Recipient, Scholarship Year Awarded

SKILLS (optional)

Computer skills, technical skills beyond MS Office, certifications, databases
Language skills (fluent, bilingual, conversational)

 **Career Tip!** For additional resume examples, visit the [Education Career Community Page](#)

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EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Geology

Dec 20XX

UFTeach: Minor in Secondary Math and Science Education

University of Florida, Gainesville FL

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

P.K Yonge Developmental Research School

Aug 20XX – Nov 20XX

Apprentice Teacher, Gainesville, FL

- Designed and implemented daily lesson plans for students in 8th grade science classroom
- Adapted lessons according to students' academic needs and provided support to students that needed extra guidance
- Integrated technology into curriculum, class lectures, and laboratories to promote student understanding of course material

Florida Museum of Natural History

July 20XX – Aug 20XX

Museum Education Assistant, Gainesville, FL

- Assist with the development of new programs and securing supplies to ensure event success
- Revise current curriculum to enhance program's sustainability and environmental efforts
- Engage with visitors in hands-on activities and demonstrations to ensure learning and best guest experience
- Assist summer camp teachers with the implementation of lesson plans and classroom management

Oak Hall Middle School

Jan 20XX – April 20XX

Student Intern UFTeach, Gainesville, FL

- Design and implement project-based lessons that encourage exploration in STEM
- Assess student learning using formative assessment to identify student academic need

Gainesville High School

Oct 20XX - Nov 20XX

Student Intern UFTeach, Gainesville, FL

- Observed and assisted educator through the course of an environmental management class
- Created and taught science lessons using technology resources to enhance student engagement
- Administered pre-lesson clinical interviews to create customized lessons

Aces in Motion

Aug 20XX - Oct 20XX

Student Intern UFTeach, Gainesville, FL

- Co-authored and executed science lessons to students from local under-resourced areas
- Fostered students' curiosity in learning through hands-on activities that promote collaboration and teamwork

WORK EXPERIENCE

University of Florida

College of Education Recruiter, Gainesville, FL

Dec 20XX – April 20XX

- Promote UFTeach minor program during course registration
- Engage with students interested in the program and present benefits of education courses
- Manage recruitment area and supplies

INVOLVEMENT AND AFFILIATIONS

UF Collegiate Veterans Society

Jan 20XX - Present

Member

- Coordinate and organize club sponsored events that promote transition from the military to college life.

SKILLS

Languages: English (Fluent), Spanish (Fluent)

Computer/Software: Nearpod, Google Classroom, TI-Nspire series, Canvas

Competency: Classroom management, teamwork, creative lesson planning, patience, self-starter

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A COVER LETTER?

A cover letter is a formal letter that complements a resume or other position application materials. It allows you to introduce yourself to an organization and demonstrate effective written communication by expressing your interest and showcasing your education, experience, and skills. It is important for this document to not replicate your resume, but to still highlight your accomplishments, strengths, and transferrable skills focusing on what you've learned and how you will add value. A cover letter is an important part of the job search process and should be tailored to the position which you are applying. They are typically one page and 3-4 paragraphs. Save your cover letter as a PDF before sending.

TIPS FOR WRITING A COVER LETTER

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Email · Address · Phone Number · ePortfolio URL

Date
Name of Contact Person, Title
Organization
Street Address
City, State ZIP
Job ID # (if Known)

Dear (Contact person's name, hiring manager, selection committee, or position):

Opening Section: Who You Are & Why You Are Applying

- Name the job for which you are applying and how you learned about it
- Briefly highlight your education, skills, and experience
- If appropriate, mention the name of the person who referred you to the organization

Second Section: Your Skills & Qualifications

- Discuss the skills and strengths you bring to the job, and explicitly connect them to the tasks of the position
- Provide brief examples of a few related achievements or experiences, discussing how it can transfer to the position
- Even if you haven't done the exact things the job entails, you can show your preparedness through transferable skills

Third Section: You & the Company

- Demonstrate that you've researched the district/school by incorporating information such as their mission statement, motto, services, or products and relating it to your previous experience, goals, and why you are interested in working for them
- State why you would be a good fit for the organization, emphasizing how you can help the organization reach its goals
- Some organizations may have a focus on helping employees grow, but overall focus on what you offer, not what you want

Closing Section: Wrapping Up

- Very briefly restate any important themes, creatively tying them together into a cohesive conclusion
- State that you are available for a personal interview at your reader's convenience
- Make it easy for the person to contact you: list your email address, as well as your phone number. Even if this information is on the resume, list it here again, as you do not want to make the employer search for a way to contact you
- Thank the reader for their time

Sincerely,

Your Name (sign if printing)

Your Name

Imma EduGator

Email · Address · Phone Number · ePortfolio URL

February 10, 20XX
Kimberley Jones
Alachua County Board of Education
750 Headquarters Parkway, Suite 123
Gainesville, FL 32333
Job ID: 999999

Dear Ms. Jones,

Please accept my application for a First Grade Teacher position at William Talbot Elementary School. In May 20XX, after six years of leadership and education as a student at the University of Florida, I will be graduating with a Master of Education in Elementary Education. I recently learned about this position from Alberta Lagator, a current instructor at your school and a great mentor of mine. I strongly believe that my education and previous teaching experiences qualify me for this position.

Over the past year as a Student Teacher at Littlewood Elementary School, I have developed a strong foundation of teaching and classroom management skills. Through co-teaching a second-grade class, I sought opportunities to incorporate SmartBoard technology into lessons to create more engaging activities to foster student learning. Through small reading group discussions tailored by reading level, I was able to truly meet the varying needs of my students and provide a customized learning environment. My experience as a student teacher has helped me to develop my own teaching style that is innovative and strives to truly meet the developmental needs of my students. I hope to bring this knowledge and innovative outlook to William Talbot Elementary.

I am confident that I would be a valuable addition to William Talbot Elementary School. In researching your school, I learned about the commitment to using innovative educational techniques held by your instructors, and I embody a similar philosophy in my teaching style. I also highly value professional development opportunities as a teacher and am impressed by the support from the administration for such growth for new professionals. I hope to learn and develop as a new professional while contributing new and innovative instruction in the classroom.

As a teacher with relevant experience, I am excited to submit my application for consideration. If you would like to discuss my qualifications further, please feel free to contact me at [phone] or at [email]. Thank you so much for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Imma EduGator
Imma EduGator

THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS

WHAT IS A JOB SEARCH?

A job search is a **circular process** that requires continuous engagement in research, networking, and reflection.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF TO GUIDE YOUR SEARCH

1. What are you looking for in this opportunity?
2. Are your application materials such as your resume, cover letter, and teaching portfolio updated?
3. Are you comfortable with customizing your application materials to reflect each unique teaching position you apply for?
4. What are your “must haves.” These vary from person to person, however common considerations include:
 - Location
 - Salary
 - Benefits (e.g. stipends or signing bonus)
 - Teacher support systems
 - Professional development
 - District demographics
 - Individual values and needs
 - Workload
 - Required skills and certifications
 - Opportunities for growth
 - Interest
 - Mentoring opportunities

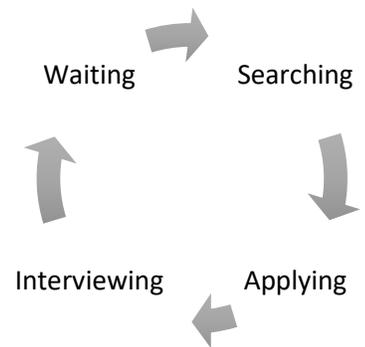
UNDERSTANDING THE SEARCH PROCESS

The search process requires a lot of patience and perseverance. You may find yourself at different phases of the process in each opportunity you apply for.

1. **Searching:** identifying opportunities via network connections, online job boards, professional associations, conferences, university resources, and industry events
2. **Applying:** evaluating job postings, customizing application documents, attending career fairs

 **Career Tip!** [Five Reasons Why You Aren't Getting a Job Interview](#)

3. **Interviewing:** communicating and assessing your fit for the position and organization – also an opportunity for you to evaluate how the position and organization meets your needs and confirm timelines
4. **Waiting:** utilize this time to reflect and recalibrate your search techniques, reconnect with your network and continue to make connections, develop professionally, work on your weaknesses, practice your interviewing techniques, and continue searching



HOW TO INITIATE YOUR SEARCH

1. Share with your family, friends, and community that you are actively job searching for teaching positions
2. Utilize the resources available to you to research, network, apply to opportunities, and prepare for interviews
3. Organize your search in a system that works for you. You can use the example template on the next page or the excel template as a guide. Remember, to save the job posting/description, and use a consistent and professional naming convention for documents (F.Last_resume_organization)
4. Evaluate and incorporate stress management techniques to maintain motivation (self-care is important)

 **Career Tip!** [The Top 6 Job Search Mistakes That Student Makes](#)

SEARCHING & APPLYING: TEACHER JOB BOARDS & FAIRS

UF Resources:

- Gator CareerLink: [Education Job & Internship Board](#)
- [UF College of Education Student Newsletter](#)
- UF [Careers in Education Fair](#)

Popular Education & Teaching Job Board Websites

- [K12JobSpot.com](#)
- [Ed Surge](#)
- [Idealist](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education](#)
- [FL Department of Education](#)
- [WorkForGood.org](#)
- [Listings of Florida Teacher Fairs](#)

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWS

Reflect before the interview

It is important that you can demonstrate a clear understanding of yourself. This means that you should be able to communicate your competencies, values, interests, and goals, and be able to relate them back to the employer/organization. Here are some important questions to consider:

- How does the district/school's mission match with my interests?
- Does the nature of the job sound interesting?
- How does the district/school run? Do you like this style of operation?
- How do the employees interact with each other? What is their overall dynamic?
- Does this job match my career interests?
- Are you excited about the possibility of obtaining this position?

 **Career Tip!** [3 Ways to Utilize Your Top 5 Strengths in the Job Search](#)

The above questions are important considerations when preparing for your interview because they can reveal how well you may fit in with an organization. It is important that you can articulate to an employer that you are a good match to their organization.

 **Career Tip!** [Conquering the Imposter Syndrome](#)

Research the Organization

You will want to research the district/school that you are applying to. How much should you know before the interview? As much as possible.

Be attentive to any district/school news that could come up in the interview. Know their vision, history, and mission. Check their website, newsletters, and social media to be sure you are knowledgeable of current events. Consider talking to your network to get valuable insight and tips. Researching can also be helpful when thinking of questions to ask during the interview.

 **Career Tip!** [4 Steps for Researching an Employer](#)

PRACTICE

The best way to feel more comfortable during an interview is through intentional practice. Fortunately, the Career Connections Center can help! Here are some resources to help you practice your interviewing skills:

- Make a Career Planning Appointment to practice with a Career Connections Center staff member. Virtual and phone appointments are available.
- Log into Gator CareerLink and use the Virtual Mock Interview Module.
- If you are near campus, stop by the center for an Express Drop-In Mock Interview.

 **Career Tip!** [5 Questions to Ask Yourself Before an Interview](#)

TYPES OF INTERVIEW FORMATS

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW: Individual or one-on-one interviews are typically facilitated between the teacher candidate and a human resource professional or a school principal.

PANEL INTERVIEWS

Panel interviews consist of several individuals interviewing the candidate all at the same time. The interviewers will likely take turns asking the candidate questions. For teaching positions, the panel could consist of the school principal, administrative staff, teachers, or other professionals in the search committee.

 **Career Tip!** [Conquering the Multi-Person Interview](#)

PHONE INTERVIEWS

Phone interviews are short interviews designed to serve as a first-round interview before bringing the candidate on-site.

VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

Virtual interviews help companies save resources while still seeing your personality and mannerisms.

 **Career Tip!** [7 Tips for Nailing a Virtual Interview](#)

PRESENTATIONS/LESSON INTERVIEWS

Depending on the school district/school, it is typical to be asked to facilitate a lesson or presentation to a group of students. To prepare:

- Identify how much time you have to present and ensure you are aware of the prompt or lesson topic, and the technology available to you in the location of your lesson.
- Practice with someone in the room so you can receive feedback (i.e., a peer, colleague, or friend).
- Some schools may request that candidates bring in a pre-recorded video of your teaching a lesson. You will then discuss this video together as a part of the interview.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

RESPONDING TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

When answering interview questions, your answers should typically be 30-90 seconds. Think of your responses to those questions as opportunities to share who you are and what you could bring to the organization, as it relates to the job. When responding to questions:

- Touch upon aspects of your skill set, education, and experience that are relevant to the position you are applying for. In addition, offer examples.
- Understand that everything on your resume is fair game. Be able to talk in-depth about those experiences.

- If a weakness or an area of development comes up during the interview, explain how you are improving and developing that skill set.
- When outlining your career goals be sure they align with the position and organization you are applying to.
- Ask your own questions about the organization, position, training, and working environment- doing so shows genuine interest.
- Request that your interviewer clarify their question if necessary or inquire whether you've fully answered their question.

 **Career Tip!** [5 Tips to Calm Your Interview Nerves](#)

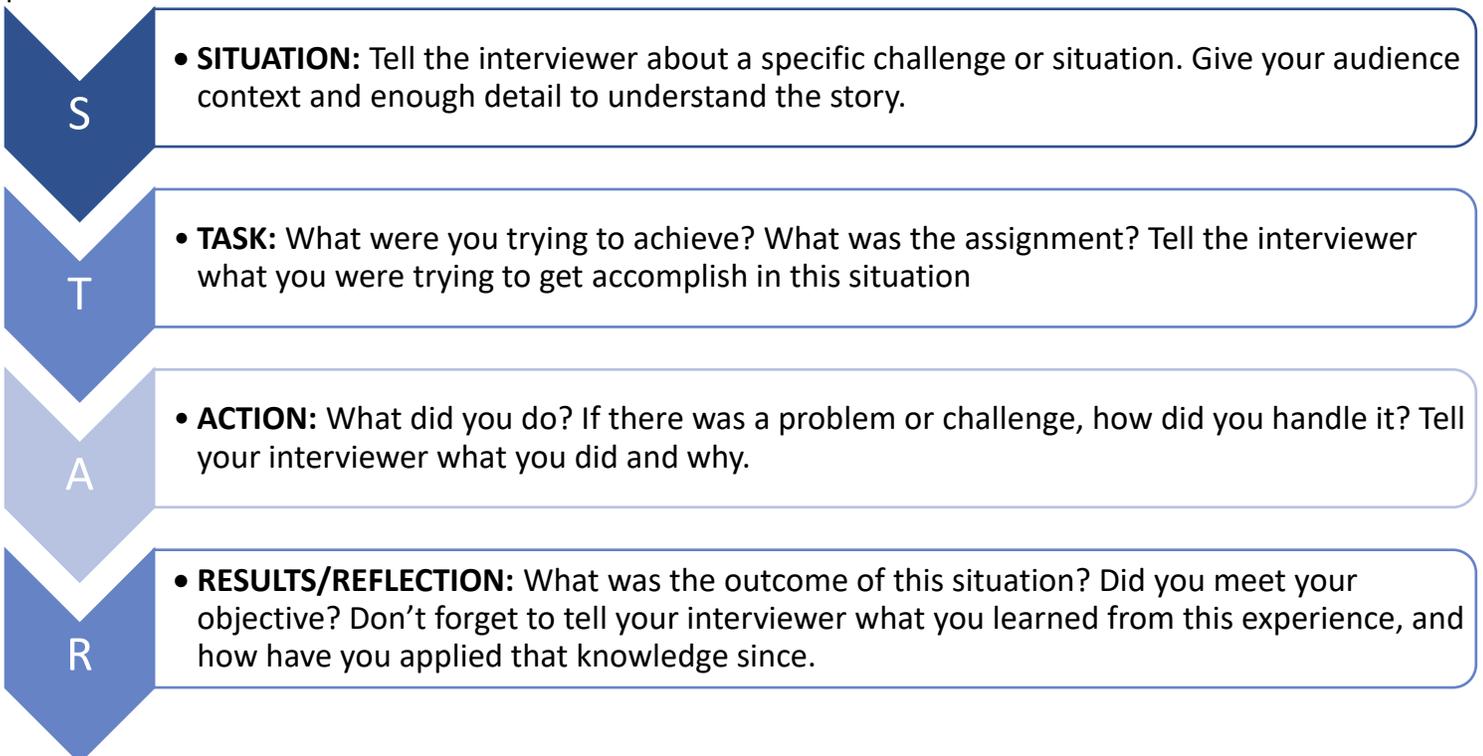
ASKING THE INTERVIEWER QUESTIONS

Asking the interviewer questions is an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and enthusiasm in the organization. Interviewers appreciate and expect questions. Also, think about what you wish you knew in past positions. Here are some tips regarding questions for the interviewer:

- Ask open ended and intentional questions to determine if a job is a good fit for you.
- Ask questions that help you align your values with the organization's values.
- Review the website to generate ideas, but do not ask questions explicitly answered on website.
- Avoid asking about salary. It is the interviewer's job to initiate conversations regarding salary. It may not even be discussed during the first interview.
- Ask about supervision style and how they measure success.
- As a final question, ask for the interviewer's contact information, such as a business card, if you do not already have it. This will allow you to send a thank you email after your interview.

S.T.A.R. METHOD

The **S.T.A.R. Method** is a technique for answering questions that helps you structure your answers in a way that gives the interviewer all the relevant information about a specific qualification for a job. Consider using the STAR method for situational questions, behavioral questions, or questions that prompt you to recall a problem.



TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

✓ OPENER/SELF-DESCRIPTIVE

Opening questions are generally similar, and because of this they are easy to be prepared for. Your answer should address your experiences, qualifications, and goals.

Examples

- Tell me about yourself and share why you want to teach at [district/school] and/or [subject area]?
- How would you describe yourself and your teaching philosophy?

✓ BEHAVIORAL

Behavioral questions are designed to see how you have handled challenges in the past and what you have learned from it. Though a past example is preferable, you may provide a theoretical case and the way you would handle it to show your critical thinking competency.

Examples

- Tell me about a time when you worked on a team.
- How would you engage a reluctant student?

✓ NEGATIVE

Negative questions address one of your weaknesses or failures to determine if you have some level of self-awareness. You should also demonstrate that you are able to put into action a process for improvement.

Examples

- What would your previous employer, site host/mentor teacher/university supervisor say were your greatest strengths for teaching, and what areas would they suggest were areas that need growth? And do you agree with those assessments?
- Tell me about a difficult circumstance you handled. What action did you take? What were the results?

✓ SITUATIONAL

Situational questions are designed to see how you would make decisions on the job. You may be given a situation or case and asked to describe how you would handle it. It is advisable to give examples if possible.

Examples

- What would you do if you faced resistance or opposition when introducing a new idea or policy to a team or work group?
- If you noticed a child being bullied in your class, how would you deal with the situation? How would you communicate with parents/guardians?

✓ DISCIPLINE/DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC

Discipline/departments specific questions are a great chance for you to demonstrate your knowledge of the organization or in your field. It is also a chance to better clarify why you are a good fit for the position.

Examples

- What are some challenges faced by professionals in this field?
- How are you staying up to date with news, pedagogy, or best practices in this area?

✓ CLOSING

Closing questions are always asked in some form. You should summarize your competencies, directly addressing why you are a good candidate.

Examples

- Why do you believe that you are a good candidate for this position?
- Is there anything else that you would like to add?

TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (EXAMPLES)

1. Tell us a little about your background and why you want to teach [subject] at [school/district].
2. Why did you decide to become a teacher?
3. Tell us about how you plan lessons.
4. How might you incorporate things such as instructional technology, higher order thinking questions, problem solving, or cooperative learning into your lessons?
5. Describe a time when you received constructive feedback from a supervisor/peer and how you responded to that feedback.
6. How do you use data to drive your instruction?
7. In your experience what makes a successful team?
8. Give an example of a time you worked well within a team.
9. How do you foster parent/guardian involvement?
10. How do you cultivate positive relationships with your students and create a sense of class community?
11. How do you use data to differentiate instruction and support students identified with specific learning disabilities so all students can learn?
12. How do you incorporate collaborative and project-based learning?
13. Tell me about what you like or dislike about instructional technology
14. What is your grading system like? What are your homework policies?
15. How do you motivate your students to excel?
16. How do you motivate yourself?
17. Describe your teaching style and how you accommodate the different learning styles of the students in your classes.
18. What has been your experience with ESE students?
19. How do you want students to describe you?
20. What is the most important characteristic a teacher should have?
21. Tell us your approach to classroom management. How do you ensure your students are engaged and what steps do you take if they are not?
22. How would you design your instructional program?
23. What characteristics do you think teachers need to be effective in helping struggling students be successful?
24. How would you communicate with parents/guardians? Tell me about a time when you resolved a difficult situation involving parents/guardians?
25. How would your present or previous employer describe you in terms of effectiveness as a teacher/employee?
26. How would you get your classroom ready for the first day of school?
27. Describe for me a lesson you taught that went very well. Why did the lesson work so well?
28. How have you used, or how will you use, technology in the classroom?
29. What interests you about our district/school?
30. What questions do you have for us?

Additional Resources:

- **UF Career Connections Center:** <https://career.ufl.edu/services-resources/interview-prep>
- **The Muse:** <https://www.themuse.com/advice/interview-questions-for-teachers-answers>
- **Indeed:** <https://www.indeed.com/hire/interview-questions/teacher>
- **The Balance Careers:** <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/teacher-interview-questions-and-best-answers-2061223>

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

FOLLOWING UP AFTER AN INTERVIEW

Follow-up with a thank you email or card within 24 hours of an interview. After an interview, you may not hear right away as to whether you have been hired. You can email either the HR Representative or Hiring Manager a week after an interview to see if they have any additional questions or need further information. After that, only initiate contact via email or phone once a week. The hiring process can be lengthy, so be patient.

If you are given an employment offer, ask the employer how much time you have to respond to the offer if you have not already been told. Be sure to respond within that time frame. If you need an extension in response time, politely ask the employer. Be sure to give a good reason as to why you need an extension. The employer is not obligated to give you an extension so be sure to be professional and polite when making any requests with the employer.

 **Career Tips!** [7 Tips to Help You Survive Your First Week on the Job](#)

WHAT IF THE INTERVIEW DOES NOT GO WELL?

Reflect on the experience and learn from it. Examine what went well, then identify and reflect on what you would have changed and note it for the future. The interview experience may have felt worse for you than how it happened, so try to not be so hard on yourself but also learn to accept mistakes and move forward into determination and positive actions. If you did not receive the position, let them know you are sorry to not get the offer, but enjoyed meeting them and would love to be considered for other positions in the future and remind them of your key strengths. Sometimes it simply comes down to best fit for the position, and you will find the right one.

 **Career Tips!** [Recovering from a Bad Interview](#)