



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

JOB DESCRIPTION

Teaching at the elementary level is ideal for those who enjoy working with young children and are interested in education. Elementary school teachers need creativity and enthusiasm to design lessons to help children learn new skills and develop their interests. It is rewarding to help shape a child's emotional, educational, and social growth.



SALARY

Newly qualified teacher ★★★★★
Elementary school principal ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Elementary schools may be public or privately run • Many jobs available worldwide • Pay levels generally low to begin with but increase with experience

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Working with children • English • Mathematics • Science • Arts and crafts • Computers • Problem-solving



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS Employers look for a degree in early childhood or elementary education. In most states, teachers must pass the PRAXIS I exam.



LIFESTYLE Though they have summers off, hours are long. Teachers use time outside the classroom to plan lessons, talk to parents, and do further training.



LOCATION While most work is classroom based, there are also teaching opportunities in hospitals and schools run by the armed forces.



THE REALITIES Class sizes can be very large. Teachers can expect to have to instruct children of varying skill levels and backgrounds.

CAREER PATHS

Once qualified, and with several years of experience, elementary school teachers can choose to coordinate school-wide efforts in key areas, such as numeracy, literacy, or special needs, or take up senior positions, such as an assistant principal or principal.

STUDENT TEACHER While studying for your degree, you can support qualified educators as a student teacher. This is an excellent way for young teachers to learn how to run a classroom.

GRADUATE To become an elementary school teacher, you must be proficient in English, mathematics, and science. Most teachers hold a bachelor's degree, and some hold graduate-level teaching qualifications. There may be opportunities to study and train on the job.



▼ RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **SOCIAL WORKER** *see pp. 258–259*
- ▶ **SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER** *see pp. 268–269*
- ▶ **PRESCHOOL MANAGER** Responsible for the day-to-day running of a preschool, planning and supervising activities, and interacting with parents and other staff.

Teachers on average work 10 hours and 40 minutes a day. Less than half of that time is spent teaching children.

SKILLS GUIDE



Good communication skills for giving instructions and relaying information clearly and simply.



Creativity and innovation when designing activities to inspire and educate young children.



Flexibility and adaptability to respond to different needs and situations.



Good team-working and people skills for daily interaction with colleagues and parents.



The ability to solve a wide range of problems, both academic and social.



A good sense of humor and patience with young children in day-to-day classroom situations.

PRINCIPAL Runs the school, from leading and managing teachers to deploying the school's resources effectively.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER In charge of the class assigned to them. As a teacher, you may also specialize in a specific subject and oversee its running throughout the school.



SPECIAL NEEDS TEACHER Works with children who have a range of special educational needs. Extra training is required for this job.



ESL TEACHER English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers instruct students whose first language is a language other than English. They must undergo special training in order to teach these classes.



PRIVATE TUTOR Works privately with students to improve their performance in a particular subject or to prepare them for an examination.