



## **Good Teachers:**

**Explain Things...** Do you like to explain how something works, or how something happened? Being comfortable with explaining content to students is an essential skill for teachers.

**Keep Their Cool...** There will be times when you will be tempted to raise your voice at your students, other teachers, parents, administrators, and so on. Good teachers are able to successfully resist this urge.

**Have a Sense of Humor...** Research has consistently shown that good teachers have a sense of humor, and that they are able to use humor as part of their teaching methods. Humor, used properly, can be a powerful addition to any lesson.

**Like People, Especially in the Age Range in which They Intend to Teach...** Most teachers choose an area of specialization such as elementary education, special education, secondary education, or higher education because they have a temperament for students in those age ranges. If you are not comfortable working with young children, don't major in elementary education!

**Are Inherently Fair-Minded...** They are able to assess students on the basis of performance, not on the students' personal qualities.

**Have "Common Sense..."** It may sound a bit corny, but good teachers are practical. They can evaluate a situation quickly and make an appropriate decision. Whether managing a classroom, leading students on a field trip, seamlessly shifting from one instructional procedure to another, assigning detentions, supervising an intern, or dealing with policy and curriculum issues in the school the teacher must make practical decisions.

**Have a Thorough Understanding of the Content They Teach...** Elementary teachers must have an understanding of a broad range of content to convey the information in meaningful ways to the students. Secondary teachers must have an in-depth command of one or two specific content areas such as mathematics or biology.

**Set High Expectations for Their Students and Hold the Students to Those Expectations...** If you are thinking about becoming a teacher, you should set high expectations for yourself, and demand excellence not only of yourself, but your students as well.

**Are Detail Oriented.** If you are a disorganized person in your private life, you will find that teaching will probably be uncomfortable for you. At the very least, teachers must be organized in their professional and teaching duties. If you're not organized and are not detail oriented, teaching may not be the best choice of a profession for you.

**Are Good Managers of Time...** Time is one of the most precious resources a teacher has. Good teachers have learned to use this resource wisely.

***Can Lead or Follow, as the Situation Demands...*** Sometimes, teachers must be members of committees, groups, councils, and task forces. Having the temperament to function in these capacities is extremely important. At other times, teachers assume leadership roles. Be sure you are comfortable being a leader or a follower, because sooner or later, you will be called on to function in both capacities.



***Don't Take Things for Granted...*** This applies to everything, from selecting a college or school of education to filing papers for certification. Good follow-through habits should be cultivated throughout life, but they are never more important than during your teacher education program. Read the catalog, know the rules, be aware of prerequisites and meet deadlines. In one sense, you don't learn to teach by getting a degree and becoming certified. You learn to teach in much the same way you learned to drive -- by driving. You learn to teach by teaching, by making mistakes, learning from them and improving. The purpose of a teacher education program is to get you as ready as possible to learn **how** to teach by providing opportunities to engage in a variety of methods and experiences that are based in tradition and research.

### ***Helpful Online Resources***

Advance your career: [Online Education for Teachers](#)

Teacher certification requirements of all 50 states: [50 States' Certification Requirements.](#)

Learn about teaching requirements in all 50 states: [Education World.](#)

A larger perspective on teaching: [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#)

State-by-state breakdown of teaching requirements, testing, degree requirements, etc.: [Who Should Teach? Quality Counts 2000](#)

Become a National Certified Teacher: [National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.](#)

Education Week - for new, aspiring, *and* veteran teachers: [Teaching as a Profession.](#)