



# TEACHER

## PRESCHOOL, KINDER, AND ELEMENTARY

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Teachers act as facilitators or coaches, using interactive discussions and “hands-on” approaches to help students learn and apply concepts in subjects such as science, mathematics, or English. They utilize “props” or “manipulatives” to help children understand abstract concepts, solve problems, and develop critical thought processes. *Preschool, kindergarten, and elementary school teachers* play a vital role in the development of children. What children learn and experience during their early years can shape their views of themselves and the world and can affect their later success or failure in school, work, and their personal lives. Preschool, kindergarten, and elementary school teachers introduce children to mathematics, language, science, and social studies. They use games, music, artwork, films, books, computers, and other tools to teach basic skills.

### **EXPERIENCE & SKILLS**

Teachers must have the ability to inspire trust and confidence, and understand the students’ educational and emotional needs. Essential skills are:

- Creativity
- Organizational skills
- Communication Skills
- Motivate others
- Administrative & recordkeeping
- Patience

### **EDUCATION & TRAINING**

All 50 States and the District of Columbia require public school teachers to be licensed. Licensure is not required for teachers in private schools in most States. Usually licensure is granted by the State Board of Education or a licensure advisory committee. Teachers may be licensed to teach the early childhood grades (usually preschool through grade 3); the elementary grades (grades 1 through 6 or 8). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education currently accredits teacher education programs across the United States. Generally, 4-year colleges require students to wait until their sophomore year before applying for admission to teacher education programs. Traditional education programs for kindergarten and elementary school teachers include courses—designed specifically for those preparing to teach—in mathematics, physical science, social science, music, art, and literature, as well as prescribed professional education courses, such as philosophy of education, psychology of learning, and teaching methods.

### **SALARIES**

Salaries vary depending on work setting, years of experience, specialty and region or state.

|                       |                                 |                                   |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Entry level: \$31,704 | Kinder, elementary, middle, and | Private school teachers make less |
| Average: \$46,597     | secondary: \$41,400             | than \$46,597                     |
| Experienced: \$66,240 |                                 |                                   |

### **EMPLOYMENT & ADVANCEMENT PROSPECTS**

Job opportunities for teachers over the next 10 years will vary from good to excellent, depending on the locality, grade level, and subject taught. Most job openings will result from the need to replace the large number of teachers who are expected to retire over the 2004-14 period. Also, many beginning teachers decide to leave teaching after a year or two—especially those employed in poor, urban schools—creating additional job openings for teachers. Shortages of qualified teachers will likely continue, resulting in competition among some localities, with schools luring teachers from other States and districts with bonuses and higher pay.

### **RELATED OCCUPATIONS**

- Counselors
- Librarians
- Social workers
- Education administrators

### **REFERENCES**

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education at <http://www.ncate.org>

Occupational Outlook Handbook, U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) 2005-06