

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS- TEACHERS

It is good to begin with asking the candidate to tell you about themselves. “Describe yourself, your background and why you are interested in teaching in a Catholic school.”

General Questions:

- What can you bring to our school that another applicant will not?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?
- What are the most important or worthwhile qualifications of a good teacher?
- What is your greatest strength? How would you use that in your teaching?
- What is your area of growth? How will that affect your effectiveness as a teacher?
- How would you describe your organizational style?
- Describe your most significant contribution in your last job or student teaching.
- Tell me about an interesting article you have read recently in a professional journal.
- Why do you want to teach in a Catholic school?
- What is your philosophy of Catholic education?
- What excites you? Annoys you? Bore you? Motivates you?
- What are you looking for? What do you expect?
- What do you plan to be doing in 5 years? What are your career goals?

Faith/ Religion Questions

- How important is your faith in your life and how comfortable are you sharing your belief with children and adults?
- What classes, workshops or study groups have you attended as an adult that enriched your faith life?
- How comfortable are you about planning a liturgy?
- How do you make prayer a part of your life, and how would you integrate prayer into the classroom?
- How comfortable are you with teaching the morals and beliefs of the Catholic church?

Student Centered Questions

- Describe your classroom management style and how you maintain student discipline.
- What are the rules of your classroom? How are they established?
- Tell me what I would see when I come into your classroom. How would it look? What would I see students doing?
- At the end of the school year, what will your students remember most about being in your class?
- How would you handle a child who is two grade levels or more above (or below) the rest of the class?
- How do you individualize your teaching?
- What techniques do you use to keep students actively involved and motivated during a lesson?
- What kind of students do you like to work with? What type of students could you teach most effectively?
- How do you help students experience success?
- What procedures do you use to evaluate student progress besides tests?
- How would you identify special needs of students?
- Is a student's failure the fault of the teacher? Why or why not?
- What are your thoughts and experience on inclusion and mainstreaming?
- How have you incorporated critical thinking skills into your instruction?
- How have you implemented multicultural/gender-free practices in your teaching?
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Integrating Technology into the Classroom Questions

- What type of training have you had in the area of technology?
- What types of technology have you used in your teaching?
- If you are using technology, is it making your job easier and you more efficient as a teacher and classroom-manager?
- If you had your choice, would you like a computer in the classroom for each student or would you rather the students go to a computer lab to work on computer-related assignments?
- Have you had unsuccessful technology-related projects? Why do you feel these projects failed?
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Community and Parents Questions

- What do you feel is the most effective way to communicate with parents? Describe how you have used this/these techniques.
- Describe some of the reasons why you would contact parents.
- How do you communicate to parents about how a student is performing?
- Catholic schools encourage parent volunteers. How would you encourage volunteers in your classroom?
- What would you think is important to present at an Open House?
- How do you handle an angry parent, or a parent who feels you have not treated their child fairly?
- How would you become involved in school/parish/community activities?
- Why/not are parent-teacher conferences important?
- What recreation, community activities or organizations are you interested or active in? What have you learned as a result of your involvement?

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Teacher Relationships with Colleagues Questions

- What kind of teachers would you prefer to work with? Why?
- What activities would you like to be in charge of and bring to the school?
- Who should be responsible for discipline in a school? Why?
- What needs and/or expectations do you have of the school administration?
- As you enter a new job in the fall you will most likely be meeting a new staff for the first time. What kinds of things will you do to acclimate yourself and what would you want from others to help you settle in?
- Are you a team player? If so, please give an example.
- How do you see your personal role on the school's educational team?
- If you had an idea for improving the school, how would you sell it to colleagues and the principal?

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Hypothetical and Situational Questions

- You disagree with the principal's method of dealing with a student discipline situation. How do you handle this with the students, principal, parents and fellow staff?
- Visualize an ideal classroom. What does it look like? Who's in it? What resources are you using? What are your goals? What are the students accomplishing?
- Religion is incorporated into all parts of the Catholic school curriculum and classroom atmosphere. How will you help students learn the importance of living a life based upon the gospel values?
- Tell how you were able to make a difference in a student's attitude or learning problem that made their experience with you a success.
- Tell in detail a (or other subject) you developed, the reason why you planned this lesson, the children's reactions, specific learning tools utilized and things you taught through the lesson.
- You give an assignment. A student ridicules the assignment, saying it doesn't make sense. What would you do?

Diversified Learners Questions

- Do you feel capable of individualizing instruction? Could you handle a slow and an advanced student in the same classroom? What materials have you found most effective for slow learners? For advanced learners? How would you make your classroom a welcoming place for exceptional learners?
- ***What is your experience and/or training on differentiation? Please give a concrete example of how you would infuse this instructional strategy into your school's professional instructional practices."
- ***What is your experience and/or training on differentiation? Please give a concrete example of how you would infuse this instructional strategy into your school's professional instructional practices.
- What training have you done around the areas of Special Needs, Exceptional Learning, or Specific Learning Disabilities?
- What level of comfort do you have adapting or modifying curriculum?
- What level of comfort do you have implementing accommodations into a general education setting?
- What behavior support systems have you implemented effectively?
- What experience do you have working with adaptive technology?
- Have you ever worked collaboratively with support aides, therapists, or a Public school district for a child's needs to be met?

- How do you see the impact of an inclusive Catholic school environment in students both typically advancing and with need?
- How do you ensure differentiation within your classroom across all spectrums of need? (Both highly capable and profound)
- Give specific examples of how you have or would challenge those students who show readiness for enrichment and more depth.
- How do you communicate a student's needs/strengths with the family?
- What do you do to motivate a student who is failing, just getting by, or who is below grade level? And how would communicate this situation to parents?
- Describe how you have used flexible grouping in your differentiated instruction. Be specific.
- Do you have experience in differentiation, coaching teachers, co-teaching? Please give **specific examples** to touch on these.

Elementary School Specific

- What type of reading program did you use in student teaching?
- How would you describe the ways that children learn from birth to age 9?
- If you could design the ideal classroom for the elementary grades what would it look like?
- We know that children learn by making connections. What implications does this have for curriculum at the elementary level?
- Which subject area do you believe is your strength, which is your weakest? What steps will you take to improve in this area?
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Middle School Specific

- A lot has been discussed regarding motivation of students at this age. What do you think contributes to the lack of motivation students feel? How do you motivate students?
- What do you think is an appropriate amount of homework for this age student? How much weight would homework hold in your consideration for grading on report cards?
- What do you think are the top three qualities needed to be a successful middle school teacher?

- What is meant by “teaming” at the middle school level? How does it support instruction?
- What are some characteristics of middle school aged students that need to be considered when planning middle school programs?

Secondary School Specific

- What do you believe is an acceptable failure rate in courses at the high school? What do you believe causes school failure?
- How would you get a student to do their work when they absolutely refuse to do anything? (i.e. A senior who says, “I don’t care if I flunk, I have enough credits to pass anyway.”)
- Describe your grading practices. What ingredients go into grades and what percent would you give to each?
- What are some alternative scheduling configurations being used at the high school level? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?
- Which should be the primary concern of high school teachers: the content or the kids? Provide a rationale for your choice.

Unlawful Interview Inquiries

- Asking the applicants to name their birthplace
- Asking for the birthplace of the applicant’s parents, spouse, or other close relative
- Asking the applicants to submit proof of age by supplying birth certificate, baptismal record or high school graduation date
- Asking if they are naturalized citizens
- Asking the applicants how they acquired their ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language.

- Requesting the applicant to provide names of three relatives other than one's father, husband or wife, or minor-age dependent children
- Asking the applicant for wife's maiden name.
- Asking for the maiden name of the applicant's mother.
- Asking for full names of the applicant's brothers/sisters.
- Asking the applicant for a list of all clubs, societies and lodges to which s/he belongs.
- Asking the applicant to include a photograph with the application for employment.
- Asking the applicant to supply addresses of relatives (cousins, uncles, aunts, nephew, grandparents) who can be contacted for reference
- Asking about marital status, ages of children, and spouse's occupation
- Asking if they have any disabilities that would prohibit them from performing the fundamental duties of the job
- Asking if they have ever been arrested. (This is different from convictions.)
- Asking how many sick days they used on their last job.