



CAREER HELPER

How to Become an ESL Teacher

An ESL teacher is a teacher of English as a Second Language. Even though there are many job prospects for this type of teacher overseas in Korea, Japan and Chinese and in South America, there are also many opportunities for getting hired in this type of teaching position in the schools of the United States. As more and more people come to the United States from all over the world and do not have a good command of the English language, there is a need for teachers in the school system to help them succeed in school. This usually applies to schools in larger centers and to both elementary and secondary schools. Check the websites of the various state departments of education and the school districts to see just how many schools are advertising for these teaching jobs.

To determine whether or not you would like to become an ESL teacher, you could first start out tutoring those who need help in learning the language. You might volunteer at a school where there is a shortage of ESL personnel. This will then give you a good idea if you would like working in this type of position. Although you can take courses in assisting teachers in the classroom teaching English as a Second Language, The only way you will get hired as a permanent teacher in your own right is to attend university and obtain a Bachelor's degree and then enroll in a teacher training program that will help you with the specific methodology courses that you need.

When you graduate, in order to become an ESL teacher you will need to be certified in this subject area in the state in which you

teach. This could be the Praxis 11 exam or the state mandated exam for teaching English as a Second Language. Before you set out to take the certification exam, make sure you do check out the licensing regulations for teachers in your state so that you do take the correct exam. You may have to decide whether you want to teach in an elementary school or a high school, but there is no distinction in the exam for this subject. One of the advantages of teaching this subject in a school is that you will have a small number of students in a class and may be teaching on an individual basis.

If you would prefer to become an ESL teacher for adults, there are community organizations and universities who offer this program for adults who want to learn to speak English. This might be conversational

English only for those who just want to be able to function in the American society and find their own way around a city without help. Another situation for teaching English as a Second Language develops when you have adults who want to learn the language for academic purposes. These may be people who come into the country with university degrees and can only speak Basic English. They want to learn the language so that they can work in their profession or be able to take courses in an American university. Then there is a need for ESL teachers when students from other countries come to the United States as foreign exchange students so they can learn the language and return to their own countries to teach English. There is a wealth of possibilities in getting hired for a teaching position when you consider ESL.

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