

# Why Be a Teacher?

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Do you remember when you decided what you wanted to be in life? For me, it was in early elementary school. I grew up in a time when all little girls wanted to be either a teacher or a nurse. We didn't even think about being a doctor because boys became doctors and girls became nurses or teachers. Thankfully, we have made much progress in encouraging children to dream big and supporting them in becoming whatever they choose, regardless of their gender.

Unlike most little girls who turned to other occupations as they progressed through school, as I grew older, my desire to become a teacher grew stronger. I have never regretted my decision to choose teaching as my life's occupation. In fact, I can't even imagine me doing anything else.

People become teachers for many different reasons. I chose education as a career because I believed that education is the power that can not only change individual lives, but can also change the entire world. Engineers, doctors, lawyers and every other occupation has its foundation in teaching. Without teachers, these occupations would not exist. No matter the position that someone may hold in the world, every one of them owes their position in society to teachers who taught them the things they needed to know in order to be successful.

In today's society, however, fewer and fewer girls and boys are choosing to grow up to be teachers. Good teachers are an important part of maintaining a stable workforce and sustaining a strong economy. If something doesn't change soon, however, the number of overcrowded classrooms will increase as the number of people willing and qualified to fill the position of teacher in these classrooms decreases. It is becoming harder each year to find the qualified teachers needed to teach our students. This is due in part to fewer teacher candidates graduating from colleges and also the fact that many teachers are reaching retirement age and leaving the profession. The stress of federal and state mandates is taking a toll on still other teachers, causing them to leave the classroom. Teaching is not an easy job and not everyone is suited to teach. In fact, statistics show that many new teachers leave teaching within the first 3–5 years of teaching.

The great teachers I have had throughout my education are my heroes and my role models. Even now, I can remember the names and faces of the great teachers I have had on my path to becoming an educator. I can also recall the few teachers who were not effective and the attributes that they possessed. I learned valuable lessons from both types of teacher.

One thing that has not changed in my years in education are the qualities that make good teachers. Good teachers love and enjoy working with children because children are funny and entertaining. As a teacher, I laughed with my students every day.

Good teachers never stop learning, no matter what grade or subject they teach. I was often surprised at how much I learned from my students like how to be patient and how to motivate people who often strongly resist being motivated.

Teachers get to influence the next generation of young people. Someone has said that the most influential people are the people who stand up every day in front of a classroom. They not only teach subject matter, but they also help students develop qualities such as perseverance, kindness, compassion, and citizenship. Unfortunately, not every student succeeded in my class but every student had the potential for success and every student deserved my time, attention, love, and faith in their abilities. Seeing students be successful is what drives teachers to continue to teach. When you finally reach that student that has been unreachable, you know why you became a teacher.