

20 Math Teacher Interview Questions And Answers

Can you tell me a little about yourself?

This question seems simple, so many people fail to prepare for it, but it's crucial. Here's the deal: Don't give your complete employment (or personal) history. Instead give a pitch—one that's concise and compelling and that shows exactly why you're the right fit for the job. Start off with the 2-3 specific accomplishments or experiences that you most want the interviewer to know about, then wrap up talking about how that prior experience has positioned you for this specific role.

What can you bring to our school that makes you unique?

This question is pretty straight forward, and the perfect opportunity for you to really let your unique qualities shine. Talk about activities you've participated in or passions you have that can easily translate into teachable moments and classroom activities that fall outside the usual curriculum that is currently being enacted. Don't criticize what they're doing, but explain how what you're bringing will augment and compliment what they've already got in place.

What frustrates you the most in a classroom?

This question allows your interviewers to get to know what it takes to ruffle your feathers and how you'll behave when faced with that situation. Find a situation that is fairly common for all teachers and then explain how you've dealt with that frustration. Remember, you want to focus on positive aspects of your teaching style, so if you're still frustrated with a situation and haven't

figured out how to work around it yet, maybe don't use that one as your example.

What is your teaching philosophy?

Everyone will have a unique answer to this question as everyone's experiences with education, experience, and own personal history will determine how they've shaped their own philosophy. What drives you to teach? What is your approach to teaching and what guides you and how you run your classroom? Take time before you get into the interview to really focus on what your philosophy is and how you apply it every day.

Describe your discipline philosophy.

You use lots of positive reinforcement. You are firm, but you don't yell. You have appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior. You have your classroom rules posted clearly on the walls. You set common routines that students follow. You adhere to the school's discipline guidelines. Also, emphasize that you suspect discipline problems will be minimal because your lessons are very interesting and engaging to students. Don't tell the interviewer that you "send kids to the principal's office" whenever there is a problem. You should be able to handle most discipline problems on your own. Only students who have committed very serious behavior problems should be sent to the office.

What personality traits do teachers need to be successful?

This question evaluates a candidate's ability to assess the role and determine what is required for success. This will allow the candidate to assess their own requirements as well as those required by the administration. "I think that teachers need to have patience, flexibility, and self-discipline to be successful. Teaching can be difficult and frustrating, but it is extremely rewarding and it takes a certain type of individual to excel. Teachers have to consider state/local testing objectives when creating lesson plans while making sure that students are able to master the subject material beyond what is going to be on a test. Students also have different methods of learning and a teacher must be able to adapt their lessons to ensure that all students are engaged and able to learn the material."

How do you approach discipline and what role does it play in learning?

Teachers routinely deal with discipline issues in the course of their daily activities. It is extremely important for a candidate to explain how they view discipline and what role it plays in the classroom. Discipline is an important part of maintaining an effective learning environment and largely depends on teaching style, age of students, and district policies. "I believe that discipline is an important part of the learning process. I approach it by clearly explaining what is expected and what the limits are in my syllabus as well as my initial class orientation. Discipline is the foundation of respect in the classroom and accountability from the students. In my experience, students do not respond well to forceful discipline. They want a framework where they agree to the rules, are respected as individuals, and are held accountable for their decisions and actions."

Why Should We Hire You?

This is another incredibly common question and it gives you a great opportunity to stand out from the crowd and really show the hiring manager how you can help the company.

The key thing to remember here is: be specific.

Leverage your company research and the job description to find exactly why the company is hiring someone for this position. What problem/pain points does the new hire have to solve? You need to show that you are the perfect candidate that can solve those problems/pain points.

We have written an in depth blog post on why should we hire you here.

DO:

- Show the hiring manager that you are uniquely suited to filling this position. Be the candidate that solves their “problems”.
- Show you know some significant details about the company and their general practices because you have researched the firm and are prepared.
- Tell a “success story” that highlights how you have the ‘qualities’ needed to fill their specific needs.

DON'T:

- Don't get discouraged if the hiring manager mentions that "they have lots of very well qualified candidates..." before they lead into this question. (It's a common "lead in")
- Don't be too modest. This is your chance to shine. Make it count.
- On the flip side don't go too overboard and sound too arrogant.
- Don't be "wishy-washy" or too general with your answer.

Don't answer with "why" you want the job. Answer with "why you are the perfect fit" for the job.

What Is Your Greatest Strength?

This is a fairly straight forward question to handle. Talk about a "strength" that you know the company puts a lot of value in.

We have written an in depth blog post over at: [What are your strengths and weaknesses?](#)

DO:

- Grab hold of the opportunity this question gives you. This question really lets you guide the interview where you want it to go. This your chance to relate your most impressive success story, so take advantage!
- Highlight a strength that is crucial to the position. (As I mentioned earlier)
- Find out from your company research and from the job description what strengths the company puts a lot of stock into.

DON'T:

- Don't make claims that you can't illustrate with a brief example or fact.
- Don't be overly modest but don't claim to be Superman or Superwoman either.
- Don't name a strength that is irrelevant to the job at hand.

What Is Your Greatest Weakness?

This classic question freaks people out but it shouldn't. As long as you pick a weakness that isn't a key competency for the job and you show that you have taken steps to "work on it", you will be fine. Don't try and sidestep this question.

For a more thorough look at the what is your greatest weakness question [click here](#).

DO:

- Show that you are aware of your weakness and what you have done to overcome it.
- Show that you are "self-aware" and that you have the ability to take steps to improve yourself.

DON'T:

- Don't you DARE answer with the cliché "I'm a perfectionist" answer or any other such answer that the hiring manager can see right through.

- Don't highlight a weakness that is a core competency of the job. (Know the job description "inside and out".)
- Don't dodge this question.

To Date, What Professional Achievement Are You Most Proud of?

Candidates show up to interviews with a goal of impressing you. So, chances are, that applicant is armed and ready with a few major accomplishments up her sleeve.

Whether it's an award, a certification, or a big project that went exceptionally well, asking the interviewee what in her professional history she's proudest of will give you a better sense of where her strengths really lie.

Plus, this question offers the chance for her to expand on something she feels good about—which can ease her nerves and help to boost her confidence going into the rest of the interview.

Why Are You Leaving Your Current Employer?

Here it is—yet another question that is sure to make every job seeker cringe. Nobody wants to seem like they're bad-mouthing a previous boss or employer, which makes this one tricky for applicants to answer.

However, posing this question will give you some greater insight into that person's professional history—as well as help you to identify any red flags (ahem, complaining endlessly about his boss, for example) that might indicate that candidate isn't the best one for the job.

What do you know about the company?

Any candidate can read and regurgitate the company's "About" page. So, when interviewers ask this, they aren't necessarily trying to gauge whether you understand the mission—they want to know whether you care about it. Start with one line that shows you understand the company's goals, using a couple key words and phrases from the website, but then go on to make it personal. Say, "I'm personally drawn to this mission because..." or "I really believe in this approach because..." and share a personal example or two.

Why do you want this job?

Again, companies want to hire people who are passionate about the job, so you should have a great answer about why you want the position. (And if you don't? You probably should apply elsewhere.) First, identify a couple of key factors that make the role a great fit for you (e.g., "I love customer support because I love the constant human interaction and the satisfaction that comes from helping someone solve a problem"), then share why you love the company (e.g., "I've always been passionate about education, and I think you guys are doing great things, so I want to be a part of it").

Why should we hire you?

This interview question seems forward (not to mention intimidating!), but if you're asked it, you're in luck: There's no better setup for you to sell yourself and your skills to the hiring manager. Your job here is to craft an answer that covers three things: that you can not only do the work, you can deliver great results; that you'll really fit in with the team and culture; and that you'd be a better hire than any of the other candidates.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

If asked this question, be honest and specific about your future goals, but consider this: A hiring manager wants to know a) if you've set realistic expectations for your career, b) if you have ambition (a.k.a., this interview isn't the first time you're considering the question), and c) if the position aligns with your goals and growth. Your best bet is to think realistically about where this position could take you and answer along those lines. And if the position isn't necessarily a one-way ticket to your aspirations? It's OK to say that you're not quite sure what the future holds, but that you see this experience playing an important role in helping you make that decision.

Why was there a gap in your employment?

If you were unemployed for a period of time, be direct and to the point about what you've been up to (and hopefully, that's a litany of impressive volunteer and other mind-enriching activities, like blogging or taking classes). Then, steer the conversation toward how you will do the job and contribute to the

organization: “I decided to take a break at the time, but today I’m ready to contribute to this organization in the following ways.”

What would your first 30, 60, or 90 days look like in this role?

Start by explaining what you'd need to do to get ramped up. What information would you need? What parts of the company would you need to familiarize yourself with? What other employees would you want to sit down with? Next, choose a couple of areas where you think you can make meaningful contributions right away. (e.g., “I think a great starter project would be diving into your email marketing campaigns and setting up a tracking system for them.”) Sure, if you get the job, you (or your new employer) might decide there’s a better starting place, but having an answer prepared will show the interviewer where you can add immediate impact—and that you’re excited to get started.

What are your salary requirements?

The #1 rule of answering this question is doing your research on what you should be paid by using sites like Payscale and Glassdoor. You’ll likely come up with a range, and we recommend stating the highest number in that range that applies, based on your experience, education, and skills. Then, make sure the hiring manager knows that you're flexible. You're communicating that you know your skills are valuable, but that you want the job and are willing to negotiate.

Do You Have Any Questions For Me?

Around 75 percent of job seekers will say “Nope, I think that’s everything” to this question.

Terrible response.

This question gives you a fantastic opportunity to stand out from the crowd and show your knowledge and passion for the company or organization you are interviewing for. Always have a few questions prepared and have one based around something you found during your company research phase.

- Focus your questions on the company and what you can do for them.
- Ask about something you’ve discovered in your company research. This will show your passion and knowledge of the company.
- Ask if there is any reason the hiring manager wouldn’t hire you. (This can be a little daunting to ask BUT can really pay off. It allows you to address something they may be thinking in their head but haven’t brought up.)

DON'T:

- Never say “No, I think I’m good.” Always have questions ready!
- Don’t focus your questions on yourself and what you can get from them. (i.e.
- Don’t ask questions that you could easily find the answer to.
- Don’t ask about time off and benefits too early in the process.

- Don't ask how soon you can start applying for other positions in the company.