

Frequent Questions and Answers

How do you set-up or envision the classroom?

I make every effort to create a place where students feel relaxed enough to draw out their natural curiosity and interest in learning so that they will not only challenge themselves but never feel embarrassed to make mistakes publically. I structure my classroom using three main strategies: activities, lecture, and research. I like to begin unit (or daily) lessons with open questions to discuss, after which I transition to a related activity — frequently group work. The activities can vary greatly, from modeling a phenomenon to group reading/researching. Activities then transition to group discussion finally reviewing with lecture. At the middle level I rely more on activities than lecture while at the upper level relying less on activities but more on lecture and individual research. Depending on the grade level will my teaching have different emphasis: the middle level emphasizes preparation for high school, and the high school level preparation for tertiary education.

How comfortable are you with technology in the classroom?

I am very comfortable with using technology in the classroom; I enjoy using it as much as possible. The modern classroom ideally has technology that allows the teacher more avenues to teach material and have an accessible classroom. Examples of technology used in my classroom include SMARTBOARD, PPT, videos, podcasts, online discussion board, internet based research and paper submission (via Turnitin). Classroom websites are also enormously useful; students and parents can access a calendar and homework 24/7. I like to use all possible technology available for the modern classroom

How comfortable are you with differentiated instruction?

Education today tries to incorporate teaching all ability students in the same room but by also finding ways to accommodate the gifted and disabled in an individual way. I understand the need to accommodate lessons and formal testing for students who in particular have learning disabilities. I have practiced differentiated instruction where needed, in point of fact, when possible I have made accommodations for *all* students that were originally meant to be made only for the learning disabled because I believe that if certain accommodations can be helpful for some students then the accommodation is likely to be good for all students. I look for simple, streamlined adaptations that can be made without much notice to the whole group, such as using subtitles in videos and listening twice

to podcasts. Adaptations have also included modifying tests which reorganize information more simply and using note cards.

What weaknesses do you have in teaching?

I have been teaching for close to ten years but am still learning how to be a better teacher. Great teaching is an art form, and mastering anything takes years of work. I am still learning how *not* to make my class overly serious for students. Finding the appropriate balance between creating a relaxed environment that engages in humor and one that works to the grindstone has been difficult for me. I have seen teachers who erred too much to the relaxed side and had great trouble managing the classroom. I tend to err too much to the grindstone and have been working to make a better balance.

What can you add to our school?

Having worked internationally and on several prestigious international curriculums, as well as having a Master's Degree in Global Studies Education gives me the ability to add an international perspective or norm to any school which can be applied to policies, curriculum and lessons. Whether a school wishes to have me teach subjects such as International Relations, International Economics, World History, and World Cultures, teach an internationally recognized curriculum, or simply consider the international perspective I possess the distinctive ability to specialize in this area for the school bringing knowledge and understanding compared to teachers without that experience. Also, working internationally has made me more perceptive to subtle cultural awareness. The international viewpoint or outlook is my brand.