The Different Types of Teachers

When we say the word “teacher,” it can mean many different positions depending on the level and institution this professional works at. In terms of certification, and not philosophy or any abstract thinking, there are preschool, elementary, middle school, high school, private school, continuing education, special education, and college teachers. All of these different types infer varying responsibilities and requirements to be employed.

As most know, preschool teachers focus on teaching very young children. This level of instruction is the first formal classrooms children visit. According to the website Teacher Certification, “Preschool teachers can work for school districts, but they can also run private organizations. As a preschool teacher, you’ll have a basic lesson plan that covers early learning. To be a preschool teacher, you should have a focus on early childhood education” (Types of Teachers). As you can see, being a preschool teacher is a flexible profession.

The next type of teacher in terms of grade level is an elementary school teacher. Elementary schools feature a wide range of grades, which is usually first to fifth grade. This means teachers in these institutions need to be comfortable instructing at many levels. According to Teach.com, “Elementary school teachers usually have one class and they teach their students several different subjects. The curriculum is usually structured around the fundamental subjects of mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, music, art and reading. The exact structure and pedagogy can vary from school to school, but for the most part, elementary school focuses on building the foundation for a well-rounded education overseen by teachers who follow students closely through their development” (“Elementary School Teacher”). So, in this sense, elementary school teachers aim at giving students a comprehensive education and vie for their academic development at each stage.

Naturally, the next grade level after elementary school is middle school. Teachers who teach at this standard focus on subjects and courses designed for the sixth through the eighth grade. According to Teacher.org, “Middle school teachers are often required to teach 4 to 7 classes daily with students at different levels of learning abilities. Some classes may contain special needs students, but all classes are typically at the same grade level. Though most middle school teachers teach only one subject area, some
may choose to teach an extra elective class, monitor a club, or coach a sports team” (“Middle School Teacher”). Middle school students are notoriously difficult to deal with, but that is why these teachers are especially needed.

High school teachers are certified to work in high schools, where they develop students’ studies in middle school and gear them towards entering a college or university. As Teacher.org states, “Usually, high school teachers are responsible for teaching a single subject, like English or Math. Lessons are typically taught through classroom discussions, lectures, and other methods. Teachers tend to evaluate student progress through coursework, projects, and examinations” (“High School Teacher”). In addition, high school teachers are able to instruct in a way that is memorable and creative.

Private school teachers, on the other hand, do not need certification in order to teach in an educational institution. Most schools require background checks, an advanced degree in an appropriate field, and teaching experience. However, these teachers are rather flexible in terms of curriculum, teaching style, and certification.

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