

COVID-19 and The Hiring Season: Virtual Interviews and Virtual Demo Lessons

[Educator's Ally](#) is a highly personalized placement agency that connects teachers and administrators with independent day and boarding schools nationwide. Since 1975, EA's dedicated approach to recruiting has been valued by schools and candidates alike. It's what sets us apart.

As the hiring process moves to a virtual model, many of our candidates have been asking us how they can stand out and make the strongest possible impression without the ability to meet face to face with school administrators. To put your best foot forward in this new landscape, read below for some tips on how to navigate a virtual interview and how to put together the most effective virtual demo lesson.

The Virtual Interview:

- Treat a virtual interview the same as you would an in-person interview.
- If you haven't already added a bullet point or two to your resume about your experience with remote learning, it would be smart to do so. You should also address your experience in this area in your cover letter.

- Before the interview:
 - Do your research on the school and position, and have thoughtful questions prepared.
 - Practice. Prior to your interview, call a friend via the technology you'll be using for your interview to be sure everything works smoothly and you feel comfortable speaking and listening virtually.
 - Test your technology and be sure you know how to sign into and use the video-conference software of choice.
 - Before starting the interview, turn off any notifications and other applications on your computer so you're not interrupted by dings or pop up notifications that may distract you.
 - Think of questions for your interviewer that can help you get a sense of the school culture: why do families choose your school, how long do faculty typically stay on board, how do teachers and students interact outside of the classroom, do faculty stick around campus after their teaching responsibilities are over, etc.
 - Be prepared to speak about how you've approached remote learning: what was the transition like for you and your school, what are the pros and cons, what have you learned about yourself as a teacher, how has your approach evolved, what would you change if you need to continue remote teaching in the fall?

- During the interview:
 - Make sure you're in a quiet space where you won't be interrupted (by roommates, kids, barking dogs, etc.) with a neutral, uncluttered background.
 - Know there could be a slight audio delay, so pause for a second or two after answering a question in case your interviewer has a follow-up comment.

- If you're planning to take notes during the interview, limit typing as the noise can be distracting. In place of typing, try writing your notes by hand or wait until the interview is over.
- When you speak, look directly at the webcam. While counterintuitive (your inclination will be to look at the screen), this will ensure that you will be looking your interviewer in the eye.

The Virtual Demo Lesson

Many of our schools have been asking candidates to share videos of themselves teaching so a newly important aspect of a candidate's profile is a video lesson. If you have a video of yourself teaching a "live" lesson in front of students, great! However, if you don't, and you find yourself on the job hunt, it's a good idea to record a video of one of your lessons. Not only will it give schools a sense of your skills and how you structure your lessons, but it will demonstrate how you approach remote learning.

Links are easier to share than a large attachment which may be too big to email, so video demos can be [uploaded to YouTube](#) (you can adjust privacy settings, so they are visible only with a password), [Google Drive](#), [Dropbox](#), your teaching website ([Weebly](#) and [Wix](#) are popular), etc. [Explain Everything Edu](#) is a useful app that can record your screen as you deliver instruction.

A successful video demo lesson should include:

- A detailed lesson plan to accompany the video and examples of any supplemental materials you will use
- The goal of the lesson: what is the essential question and lesson objective, what you hope the students will take away from the lesson at the end, what skills your students will be practicing, what vocabulary you'll be using
- How you plan to assess the students' understanding throughout and at the end of the lesson
- Clear and detailed explanations of instructions throughout the lesson; describe how you would engage the students and get them actively participating
- Questions you would ask the class and explanations as to why you're asking those questions
- Combination of direct instruction, teacher modeling and independent practice, and class discussion
- Wrap up of the lesson with clear closure and plans for assessment
- Ideas for how to extend the lesson should time allow, including how to tweak the lesson for different grades, enrichment activities students could do at home
- If you are recording a "live" remote lesson with your actual students, be aware of privacy concerns. Either get permission to share or don't show their faces.

Schools are understanding that a lesson recorded at home, in front of your computer, is no substitute for a dynamic lesson with live students, but administrators will be very appreciative of your flexibility and ability to be adaptable and do whatever is needed during this challenging time. Plus, here's a great opportunity to show off your creativity and tech skills! Remember to

share the link of the video and supplemental materials with your EA Placement Manager so they have it on hand when schools ask to see it.

Know that EA Placement Managers are here to serve as a resource for you during the hiring process—whether you're doing the hiring or looking to get hired! Visit our [website](#) and [apply now](#) to get started.