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## How Will YOU Spend Your Summer?

### 30 Sources of Experience for Students Planning to Teach

Spring is in the air, and summer is fast approaching. Summer – the time when every education student's thoughts turn to...work-related experience.

Have you found a summer job yet?

As a career counselor, I always recommend that students start thinking about summer jobs *early* – setting the goal of finding the perfect position by the end of spring break. In reality, though, most students have other things in mind at that time of the year. It's *after* break that they start thinking – and asking us – about their best summer job options.

Education students are especially interested in using their summers as investments – honing their finest skills in working with children, while boosting the strength of their resumes. Face it: the market for teachers is highly competitive, and administrators are going to want to know what you've done in addition to your student teaching to demonstrate your commitment to the profession.

I've talked with many students who want to do something career-related, but they don't know where to begin. That has prompted me to draw up a list of potential summer jobs for soon-to-be teachers (and already-employed teachers, too) that will fit a wide range of abilities, interests, economic needs and teaching levels. Here is my list (which is by no means exhaustive):

### 30 SOURCES OF EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS PLANNING TO TEACH

1. Summer camps (anywhere!) – residential, day, and special interest camps
2. National, state parks and county parks/nature centers
3. Community park district programs
4. Volunteer tutoring
5. Respite care ("Respite" refers to short term, temporary care provided to people with disabilities in order that their families can take a break from the daily routine of care-giving. Unlike child care, respite services may sometimes involve overnight care for an extended period of time.)
6. YMCAs
7. Big Brother/Big Sister programs
8. Summer school programs
9. Nanny programs
10. Day care centers
11. Before and after school programs during the summer school
12. Disney internships (you have to apply EARLY for these)
13. Other amusement/theme parks
14. Water parks
15. Children's museums
16. Outward Bound
17. Library (summer reading) programs and story hours
18. Religious programs (children's education, teen and pre-teen groups, nursery care)
19. Hospitals: children's ward volunteers
20. Mentoring programs for at-risk children and adolescents
21. Social service agency and court service summer programs
22. Community outreach activities

23. Language programs for ESL/ELL children
24. Scouting
25. Habitat for Humanity
26. Service trips – both in the U.S. and abroad
27. Resort and cruise ship child care programs
28. Resident assistant and community assistant programs for university-based athletic camps
29. Special lessons: music, horseback riding, sailing, athletics
30. Coaching for summer sports programs

Once you've decided on the sort of job that sounds interesting, do a reality check to assess how it will fit with your special interests and talents. Talking with a career counselor might help you process where your gifts can best be used.

The next step is actually landing the job. What sources can you use? You can talk to friends, family and teachers at your student-teaching site, some of whom may have had similar positions. You can make direct contact with organizations with which you are familiar. And, of course, you can use your school's Career Services Office. Most will have databases (Northern Illinois University uses a version of eRecruiting) of summer, temporary and part-time job listings. You can apply for many of the jobs online. Just be sure, as with any regular job, that your resume is updated.

Don't pass up the opportunity to use your summer productively, to build on your confidence, and to gain great job-related experience. Who knows? It may be the best summer of your life!