

Report on Session # 1 with Maya

CANDIDATE PROFILE

The interview is with a girl named Maya, aged 22. She has finished her B.Sc. in Maths and wishes to become a school teacher. She has finished one year of her B.Ed. and is also preparing for TET in Gandhidham.;

Interviewer: Hello Maya! It's wonderful to meet you. I'm here to help you prepare confidently for your teaching career. Let's start with our first question.

Question 1: Can you tell me why you chose to become a school teacher?

Candidate: My mother teaches in a school and she keeps telling me about her experiences with students and how much she enjoys teaching. When I see how her students respect her and love her, I feel I also want to earn the same respect and love!

Interviewer: You gave a heartfelt and personal reason for wanting to become a teacher, which makes your answer sincere and relatable. Mentioning your mother's influence shows you have a real-life example of dedication to the profession. To improve, try to add more about your own passion for teaching or how you want to help students learn and grow. Also, a small suggestion to make your English smoother: instead of 'I feel I also want to earn the same respect and love,' you could say, 'I also want to earn the same respect and affection from my students.'

Question 2: What qualities do you think are important for a good teacher to have?

Candidate: The ability to put myself in a student's shoes. I feel this is especially important with young children, as the way a young child thinks is very different from the way an adult thinks.

Interviewer: Your answer shows a strong understanding of empathy, which is a very important quality for a teacher. You also made a good point about how children's thinking differs from adults, showing insight into your future students. To improve, you could expand a little more on why empathy helps in teaching and perhaps mention another quality a good teacher should have. For example, you could say, 'The ability to put myself in a student's shoes helps me understand their challenges and explain things in a way they can relate to.'

Question 3: Can you tell me about a time when you faced a challenge while learning something new? How did you handle that situation?

Candidate: Yes, in maths, I was learning about measure theory. I just did not understand why we needed to introduce measures. Then on the web, I saw an explanation of integrating functions that are not Riemann integrable but can be integrated using Lebesgue measures and suddenly everything became clear!

Interviewer: You did well by sharing a specific example of a challenge in learning and how you overcame it through self-study, which shows your initiative and problem-solving skills. Your explanation was clear and showed your genuine interest in understanding complex concepts. To improve, you could add more details about how you applied this new understanding afterward or how it helped you in your studies. Also, slightly rephrasing your answer could make it sound smoother, for example, 'I was struggling to understand why measures were introduced in measure theory, but after finding an explanation online about integrating functions that are not Riemann integrable using Lebesgue measures, it became clear to me.'

Question 4: Can you tell me about a time when you helped someone else understand a difficult concept? How did you approach teaching them?

Candidate: Yes, I was teaching my younger sister maths, and she just did not get what I was saying. My first instinct was to scold her, but then I remembered how I had found the concept (powers and exponents) difficult when I first studied it. I researched on the Web as to how to teach it better, used better methods and was so happy to see her understand the concept!

Interviewer: You showed great empathy by recalling your own difficulties with the concept and adapting your teaching method to help your sister. It's excellent that you took the initiative to research better ways to explain powers and exponents, which shows problem-solving skills. To improve, you could give a bit more detail about the specific teaching methods or examples you used to help her understand. Also, try to use more complete sentences, such as 'I initially wanted to scold her, but then I remembered...' instead of shorter phrases.

Question 5: Can you describe a situation where you had to manage a group of students with different learning speeds? How did you handle it?

Candidate: I had once gone with my Mom to her class (class 7, in a Government school in Sanghad, Kachchh). It was Teachers Day and my Mom asked me to teach a simple topic to the students. I chose algebraic identities. I first gave a proof of $(a+b)^2$ using algebra, but I soon realized that many students did not get it. So I drew a diagram on the board and showed the identity. I also made them calculate 14 square using the identity and many more such problems. I was very pleased to see that all of them loved the session and wanted more such sessions from me!

Interviewer: You did very well in showing how you adapted your teaching method by switching from a traditional algebraic proof to a visual diagram, which helped students with different learning speeds understand the concept. It shows your awareness of diverse learning styles and your creativity in problem-solving. To improve, you could add more details about how you noticed students struggling and how you decided to change your approach. Also, a small language suggestion: instead of 'I had once gone with my Mom,' you could say 'I once accompanied my Mom.' This makes the sentence clearer.

Question 6: Can you tell me about a time when you faced a challenge while teaching? How did you overcome it?

Candidate: I already mentioned one challenge, teaching my younger sister maths, and she just did not get what I was saying. This happened repeatedly and every time, I had to search the web for innovative ways of teaching concepts in maths. I now have my personal list of favourite web sites and I constantly consult them! I also post questions on Quora and I get a lot of help from my peers there!

Interviewer: You did well by sharing a specific example and explaining how you sought resources online to improve your teaching methods. It shows your willingness to learn and adapt. Mentioning platforms like Quora also highlights your ability to connect with a community for support. To improve, you could add more detail about what specific strategies you tried and how they helped your sister understand better. Also, try to avoid repeating phrases like 'I had to' multiple times; instead, you might say, 'I looked for innovative teaching methods online.'

Question 7: How do you handle a situation where a student is not motivated to learn?

Candidate: I faced this problem with a friend's sister. My friend, Deepa, came to me one day and told me that her sister, Rupa, refused to learn maths as she felt maths was boring. When Rupa came to my place, I introduced her to many maths puzzles, for example, multiplying 142857 by different digits from 1 to 6, using fingers to get the 9 times table, etc. When I showed her how you could easily write the 39 times table, she was fascinated and as soon as Deepa came to pick her up, Rupa proudly showed her the table!!

Interviewer: You gave a very good example showing how you motivated a student by making learning fun and interactive. Your use of puzzles and practical tricks to explain math concepts shows creativity and empathy, which are excellent qualities for a teacher. To improve, you could organize your answer more clearly by briefly explaining the problem, your approach, and the outcome in separate parts. Also, watch for small language details like 'using' instead of 'usng' and 'times table' instead of 'table' for clarity. For example, you could say, 'I introduced her to math puzzles, such as multiplying 142857 by digits 1 to 6, and using fingers to learn the 9 times table.' Overall, your answer demonstrates strong problem-solving skills and patience.

Question 8: Can you tell me about a time when you had to explain a difficult concept to a student? How did you make it easier for them to understand?

Candidate: I had to explain addition and subtraction of negative numbers to my sister. I created a small drama based on a number line, with a clown with a long nose standing at 0, facing towards the positive numbers. Given two numbers and an operation, the rules were simple: if the number is positive, move forward, if the number is negative, move backwards. If the operation is addition, face right, if the operation is subtraction, face left. Once we played this a few times, she mastered the subject.

Interviewer: You did a wonderful job using a creative and interactive method to explain a difficult concept. Using drama and a number line helps make abstract ideas more concrete and engaging, especially for younger learners. Your explanation clearly shows empathy and patience, and you gave a practical example which makes your teaching approach easy to understand. To improve, you could add a bit more detail about how you checked your sister's understanding or adjusted your method if she found any part confusing. Also, saying 'facing right' instead of 'face right' and 'facing left' instead of 'face left' would sound smoother in English.

Question 9: Can you describe a challenging situation you faced during teaching practice and how you handled it?

Candidate: No, I haven't had any experience as yet with teaching practice, I have only gone to my Mom's school on Teachers Day.

Interviewer: You were honest about your experience, which is good. It's okay if you haven't had formal teaching practice yet. You might try to share any small experiences related to teaching or helping others learn, like assisting classmates or younger students, to show your willingness and potential. Also, you could add a little more detail about your visit to your mom's school, such as what you observed or learned from that experience. This will make your answer stronger and show your interest in teaching.

Question 10: Can you tell me how you prepare a lesson plan for a maths topic? What steps do you follow to make it clear and interesting for students?

Candidate: One point I observed was that students differ in the way they learn: some prefer formal algebra, some prefer games, some prefer visual diagrams. I even found some students like to learn songs about concepts. So what I plan to do is to use the web extensively to prepare. Of course, right now, I do not have formal teaching experience as yet, so these are plans!

Interviewer: Your answer shows a thoughtful understanding that students have diverse learning styles, which is an excellent insight for a teacher. You also demonstrated awareness of using various resources like games, visual aids, and songs to make learning more engaging. Mentioning your current lack of formal experience honestly sets a realistic expectation, which is good. To improve, you could organize your steps more clearly, for example, by listing specific stages you would follow when preparing a lesson plan. Also, adding how you would assess student understanding or adapt the plan based on feedback would make your answer stronger.

Final Assessment

Session Summary

Maya showed strong empathy and insight into students' learning needs throughout the interview, which is a significant strength for a future teacher. She was reflective and adaptable, often considering different approaches to explain concepts. She communicated with warmth and sincerity, which created a positive atmosphere. Maya's honesty about her lack of formal teaching experience was balanced by her eagerness to learn and use online resources effectively. Areas for improvement include organizing answers more clearly and elaborating on practical teaching methods and assessment techniques. Maya's confidence improved slightly as she provided more detailed answers later in the session, showing growing comfort in expressing her thoughts. Both Maya and Naukri Mitra learned that she is motivated, creative, and ready to develop her skills further, with a genuine interest in teaching. Continuing to practise will help Maya present her ideas more clearly and confidently, especially by structuring responses and including examples from any teaching practice she may get. Next sessions could focus on lesson planning details, classroom management, and explaining mathematical concepts simply.

Overall Evaluation

Maya is a 22-year-old recent B.Sc. Maths graduate pursuing a B.Ed. and preparing for the TET exam in Gandhidham. She is motivated to become a school teacher, inspired by her mother's positive teaching experiences. Maya demonstrates strong empathy and insight into diverse student learning styles and adapts her approach creatively using visual aids, games, and songs. She is reflective, patient, and problem-solving oriented, actively seeking resources and peer support to improve her teaching skills. Though she has not yet had formal teaching experience, she shows honesty about this and eagerness to learn. Maya communicates warmly and sincerely but can improve by organizing her answers more clearly and providing more practical examples. She is developing confidence in expressing her thoughts and is open to feedback and growth.