
Teachers—Self-Enrichment Education

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Significant Points

- Many self-enrichment teachers are self-employed or work part time.
- Teachers should have knowledge and enthusiasm for their subject, but little formal training is required.
- Employment is projected to grow much faster than average, and job prospects should be favorable; opportunities may vary by subject taught.

Nature of the Work

Self-enrichment teachers provide instruction in a wide variety of subjects that students take for fun or self-improvement. Some teach a series of classes that provide students with useful life skills, such as cooking, personal finance, and time management. Others provide group instruction intended solely for recreation, such as photography, pottery, and painting. Many others provide one-on-one instruction in a variety of subjects, including dance, singing, or playing a musical instrument. Some teachers conduct courses on academic subjects, such as literature, foreign language, and history, in a non-academic setting. The classes self-enrichment teachers give seldom lead to a degree and attendance is voluntary, but dedicated, talented students sometimes go on to careers in the arts.

Self-enrichment teachers may have styles and methods of instruction that differ greatly. Most self-enrichment classes are relatively informal. Some classes, such as pottery or sewing, may be largely hands-on, with the instructor demonstrating methods or techniques for the class, observing students as they attempt to do it themselves, and pointing out mistakes to students and offering suggestions to improve techniques. Other classes, such as those involving financial planning or religion and spirituality, may center on lectures or might rely more heavily on group discussions. Self-enrichment teachers may also teach classes offered through religious institutions, such as marriage preparation or classes in religion for children.

Many of the classes that self-enrichment educators teach are shorter in duration than classes taken for academic credit; some finish in 1 or 2 days or several weeks. These brief classes tend to be introductory in nature and generally focus on only one topic—for example, a cooking class that teaches students how to make bread. Some self-enrichment classes introduce children and youth to activities, such as piano or drama, and may be designed to last anywhere from 1 week to several months.

Many self-enrichment teachers provide one-on-one lessons to students. The instructor may only work with the student for an hour or two a week, but tells the student what to practice in the interim until the next lesson. Many instructors work with the same students on a weekly basis for years and derive satisfaction from observing them mature and gain expertise. The most talented students may go on to paid careers as craft artists, painters, sculptors, dancers, singers, or musicians.

All self-enrichment teachers must prepare lessons beforehand and stay current in their fields. Many self-enrichment teachers are self employed and provide instruction as a business. As

such, they must collect any fees or tuition and keep records of students whose accounts are prepaid or in arrears. Although not a requirement for most types of classes, teachers may use computers and other modern technologies in their instruction or to maintain business records.

Work environment. Few self-enrichment education teachers are full-time salaried workers. Most either work part time or are self-employed. Some have several part-time teaching assignments, but it is most common for teachers to have a full-time job in another occupation, often related to the subject that they teach, in addition to their part-time teaching job. Although jobs in this occupation are primarily part time and pay is low, most teachers enjoy their work because it gives them the opportunity to share a subject they enjoy with others.

Many classes for adults are held in the evenings and on weekends to accommodate students who have a job or family responsibilities. Similarly, self-enrichment classes for children are usually held after school, on weekends, or during school vacations.

Students in self-enrichment programs attend by choice so they tend to be highly motivated and eager to learn. Students also often bring their own unique experiences to class, which can make teaching them rewarding and satisfying. Self-enrichment teachers must have a great deal of patience, however, particularly when working with young children.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

The main qualification for self-enrichment teachers is expertise in their subject area, but requirements vary greatly with the type of class taught and the place of employment.

Education and training. In general, there are few educational or training requirements for a job as a self-enrichment teacher beyond being an expert in the subject taught. To demonstrate expertise, however, self enrichment teachers may be required to have formal training in disciplines, such as art or music, where specific teacher training programs are available. Prospective dance teachers, for example, may complete pro-



Self-enrichment teachers cover a wide range of subjects, including gardening, photography, and personal finance.

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-2016	
				Number	Percent
Self-enrichment education teachers	25-3021	261,000	322,000	60,000	23

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

grams that prepare them to teach many types of dance—from ballroom to ballet. Other employers may require a portfolio of a teacher's work. For example, to secure a job teaching a photography course, an applicant often needs to show examples of previous work. Some self-enrichment teachers are trained educators or other professionals who teach enrichment classes in their spare time. In many self-enrichment fields, however, instructors are simply experienced in the field, and want to share that experience with others.

Other qualifications. In addition to knowledge of their subject, self-enrichment teachers should have good speaking skills and a talent for making the subject interesting. Patience and the ability to explain and instruct students at a basic level are important as well, particularly for teachers who work with children.

Advancement. Opportunities for advancement in this profession are limited. Some part-time teachers are able to move into full-time teaching positions or program administrator positions, such as coordinator or director. Experienced teachers may mentor new instructors.

Employment

Teachers of self-enrichment education held about 261,000 jobs in 2006. The largest numbers of teachers were employed by public and private educational institutions, religious organizations, and providers of social assistance and amusement and recreation services. More than 20 percent of workers were self employed.

Job Outlook

Employment of self-enrichment education teachers is expected to grow much faster than average, and job prospects should be favorable. A large number of job openings are expected due to job growth, the retirement of existing teachers, and because of those who leave their jobs for other reasons. New opportunities arise constantly because many jobs are short term and are often held as a second job.

Employment change. Employment of self-enrichment education teachers is expected to increase by 23 percent between 2006 and 2016, much faster than the average for all occupations. The need for self-enrichment teachers is expected to grow as more people embrace lifelong learning and as course offerings expand. Demand for self-enrichment education will also increase as a result of demographic changes. Retirees are one of the larger groups of participants in self-enrichment edu-

cation because they have more time for classes. As members of the baby boom generation begin to retire, demand for self-enrichment education should grow. At the same time, the children of the baby boomers will be entering the age range of another large group of participants, young adults—who often are single and participate in self-enrichment classes for the social, as well as the educational, experience.

Job prospects. Job prospects should be favorable as increasing demand and high turnover creates many opportunities, but opportunities may vary as some fields have more prospective teachers than others. Opportunities should be best for teachers of subjects that are not easily researched on the Internet and those that benefit from hands-on experiences, such as cooking, crafts, and the arts. Classes on self-improvement, personal finance, and computer and Internet-related subjects are also expected to be popular.

Earnings

Median hourly earnings of wage-and-salary self-enrichment teachers were \$16.08 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between \$11.29 and \$23.08. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$8.53, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$32.02. Self-enrichment teachers are generally paid by the hour or for each class that they teach. Earnings may also be tied to the number of students enrolled in the class.

Part-time instructors are usually paid for each class that they teach, and receive few benefits. Full-time teachers are generally paid a salary and may receive health insurance and other benefits.

Related Occupations

The work of self-enrichment teachers is closely related to that of other types of teachers, especially preschool, kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and secondary school teachers. Self-enrichment teachers also teach a wide variety of subjects that may be related to the work done by those in many other occupations, such as dancers and choreographers; artists and related workers; musicians, singers, and related workers; recreation workers; and athletes, coaches, umpires, and related workers.

Sources of Additional Information

For information on employment of self-enrichment teachers, contact local schools, colleges, or companies that offer self-enrichment programs.