

Letters of Recommendation-Tips and Samples

Consider the following tips and sample letters when asked to complete a letter of recommendation for you Teacher Candidate:

- Prospective employers look for anecdotal and documentary evidence based on what actually occurred during the student teaching experience.
- Hiring officials look for examples of experiences and strengths that will be valuable to their school district.
- Write the recommendation in the third person, past tense. Avoid excessive use of "I."
- Describe briefly the setting (grade, subject, school, term) and add any unusual facts about the experience that may have affected work of the Teacher Candidate.
- Give your honest judgment of the student now and a reasonable prediction of his/her probably future development. If he/she will need more support to be successful, say so in a tactful manner.
- Identify the type of situation in which you think the Teacher Candidate has the most possibility for success.
- Recall the Teacher Candidate's most outstanding achievement. Try to include additional comments about this achievement in a sentence or two.

Sample Letter of Recommendation for an Outstanding Student Teacher

Ms. _____ spent the first semester of the _____ school year as a Student Teacher at _____ School in _____ Ohio. The classroom in which she taught was tenth grade English class under the direction of _____.

Ms. _____ displayed many fine personal and professional qualities. Most impressive was the initiative which she exhibited during the early days of her student teacher experience. She carried out all of her student teacher duties in a responsible, professional manner.

Ms. _____ attended several teacher's meetings, observed teachers throughout the building and attended after-school sports and community events indicating an interest in the entire spectrum of activities affecting students and their education.

By the end of the 3rd week, Ms. _____ had assumed responsibility for all phases of planning and teaching an entire course load. Ms. _____ was creative and enthusiastic which helped the students to respond positively to her lessons. She planned and executed a creative unit on Julius Caesar and employed some outstanding creative writing techniques.

Ms. _____ already appears to be an excellent teacher and performs as well as teachers who have several years of experience. She has tremendous initiative, a highly positive outlook, and an excellent command of the subject matter and teaching strategies. She is particularly aware of the needs of adolescents. I would strongly suggest that hiring officials give serious priority to hiring Ms. _____. She would be an asset to any professional faculty.

Sample Letter of Recommendation for a Satisfactory Student Teacher

Mr. _____ student taught in a third grade at _____ elementary school in _____ Ohio during the _____ semester of _____. He taught under the direction of _____.

Mr. _____ performed his student teaching duties in a capable and responsible manner. He was punctual and prompt in planning lessons and his work was well organized. While Mr. _____'s strengths in planning were evident, it was also apparent that his attention to teaching tended to be perfunctory. The Cooperating Teacher and the University Supervisor made numerous suggestions for the inclusion of creative ideas. Mr. _____ relied primarily upon the textbook and generally lacked creativity and enthusiasm for the content.

Mr. _____ has the potential to become a good teacher. To do will require a commitment to investigate alternative strategies. He has the capacity to expand professionally and I anticipate that he will be able to do so during his first year of classroom teaching.

Sample Letter of Recommendation for an Unsatisfactory Student Teacher

Ms. _____ performed her student teaching responsibilities in a sixth grade classroom at _____ Elementary School during the spring semester of the _____ school year under the direction of _____.

Ms. _____ experienced marginal success during her student teaching experience. Despite an engaging personality and a creative nature, she frequently failed to plan lessons that were comprehensive enough to meet the necessary rigor of the standards. On several occasions, she misspelled and/or mispronounced vocabulary words relevant to the content area. She lacks depth of information in the areas of language arts and mathematics, which severely limits her ability to impart accurate information.

In addition, Ms. _____ seemed unable to comprehend those deficiencies and remained unwilling to investigate additional resources for providing students with accurate and challenging lessons.

Ms. _____'s enthusiasm and lively personality are distinct assets, which should serve her well in a variety of professions. She establishes rapport with students but needs to develop the scholastic and academic skills necessary to succeed as a professional educator.

Hiring officials should note that Ms. _____ may be able to become a successful classroom teacher but would need close supervision and mentorship throughout her initial teaching experience.