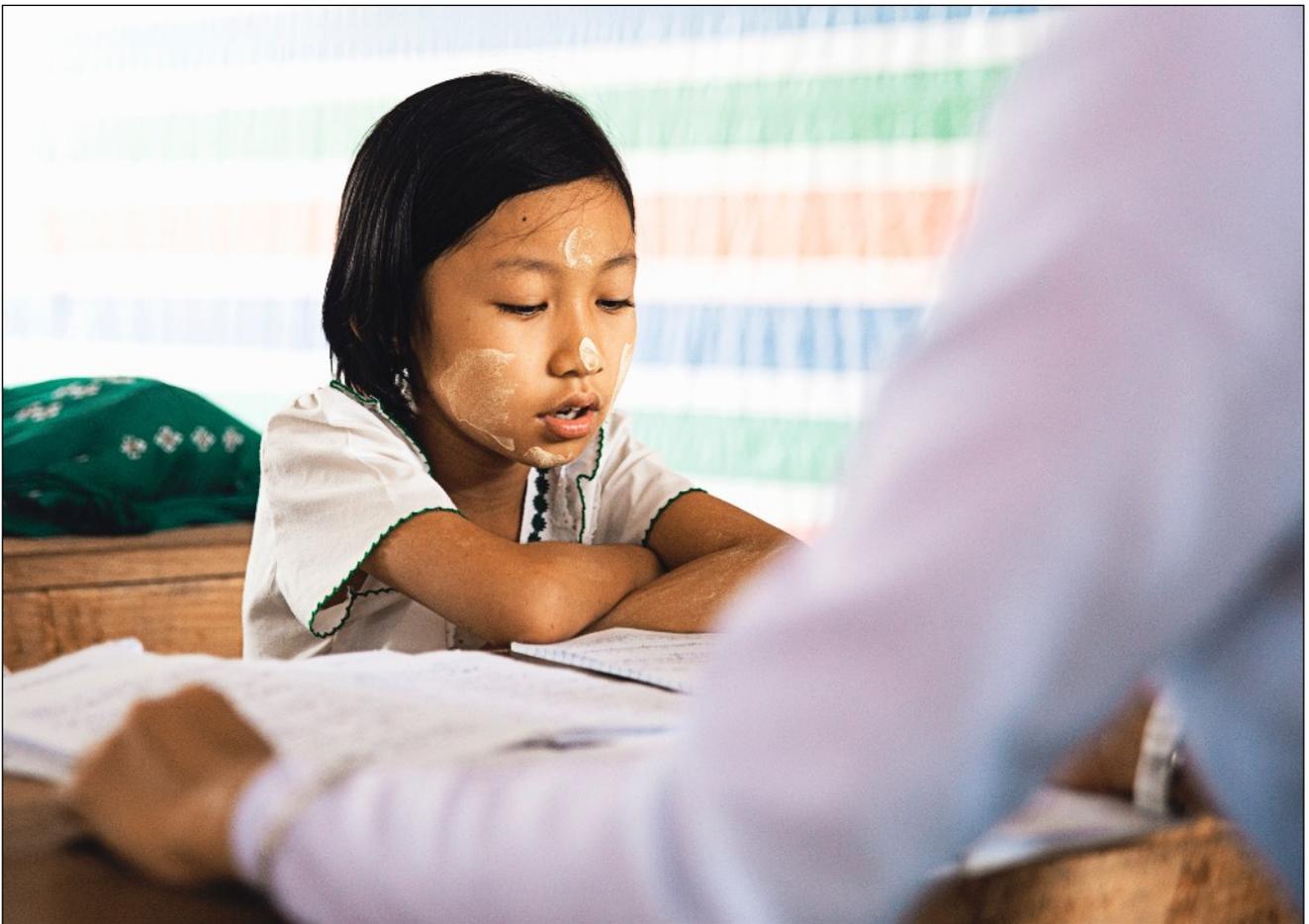

I was NOT qualified to teach overseas ... but did it anyway

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Introduction

Are you ready to move overseas? Looking for an opportunity to travel?

Many people think about teaching overseas but are hesitant because they either do not feel they are qualified or they do not see themselves as educators. Well, take it from me (a non-teacher) there are great opportunities to work in the education field overseas even if you are not a teacher.

Here are a few frequently asked questions we get at ParachuteU.com when people are interested in moving overseas and see teaching as a way to get there.

Do I need experience and a teaching degree?

There are literally thousands of opportunities to teach overseas in elementary schools, language centers, University tutoring offices, or even in private settings. Many sites will tell you that two years experience and a teaching degree are required but that is simply not true. Many schools will hire you with an ESL certificate. Tip: If you are not a teacher be sure to ask about “other” opportunities in administration or services. Some schools have roles that allow you to be involved in coaching, tutoring, or maintenance for example.

Will I be paid?

Ahhh – the \$50,000,000.00 question (or should I say \$50,000?). Salaries for teaching overseas are all over the board. The salary depends on several factors (country, school, experience, degree, position, length of service, etc..). In some cases you can earn a smaller salary but because the cost of living is so low you can save BIG. In other cases, the cost of living is high and so a higher salary might just get you through the month. There are even great faith-based opportunities in very needy, remote locations that require you to raise some funds but are deeply rewarding. In most cases schools will provide what is necessary and even provide you with a sample budget but ultimately it comes down to YOUR standard of living. Tip: Do some research on cost of living before committing to a school and speak with teachers who work at the school. You will find out more from the local crew this way. In addition many schools pay for housing, transportation and even food. Check it out!

Do I need to speak the language of the country I choose?

In most cases you do NOT need to speak the local language because you will be teaching in English. Over time many people who make it a career in a particular country

will decide to take language classes so they can better navigate the culture but it is not necessary in most settings. Tip: Some schools will pay for you to learn language while at the location. Be sure to ask!

How long do I need to commit?

I have seen people get hired for part time work for six months all the way to a commitment of two years and beyond. Because there are literally thousands of schools competing for teachers each school or center will have their needs spelled out for you in most cases. Tip: Many schools will negotiate if they are in need so it does not hurt to ask.

Can I travel during my “off” times?

Part of the joy in teaching overseas is the ability to travel. These were some of my most cherished moments. Schools and centers understand that when they hire expats they will want to travel and usually provide ample opportunity for it so get out and see the world! Tip: Make sure you ask in advance what the travel policy is for your role. Different roles might offer more or less time off depending on the contract.

Is it safe?

I have often said that “safe” is a relative term. What might be safe for someone living in downtown NY is not the same for someone living in rural Nebraska. The world is full of amazing places that define beauty differently and they should be visited but....when moving overseas everyone should be wise about who they talk to and where they go. The good news is that most have gone before you so learn from those teachers who live in the region you plan to teach. They know what is best. Tip: Be sure to ask for names of teachers who work at the school/center for reference. If they are willing to give you some names.....that is a good sign.

Where can I teach?

Nearly every country has significant needs for English teachers on all levels. The key is to stay open to all opportunities. I have found that some of the best teaching jobs are in countries where many have never even thought of teaching. In many cases these forgotten countries will be more flexible with requirements, salaries, and time off. Tip: Think outside of the box. Have you thought about Turkey, Cambodia or even Mongolia?

How do I get started?

There are a lot of great sites that will give you differing opinions about the steps to take. ParachuteU.com is one starting up soon as a FREE site that connects schools with opportunities without the red tape.



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