Teachers are one of our country's most valuable resources. Preschool and kindergarten teachers in particular have a vital role in the educational, physical and social development of America's youth.

Because they work with kids who are often experiencing their first extended time away from their parents, these teachers must be responsible individuals who like working with small children.

If you want to join this profession, you should be comfortable using both conventional and unconventional methods to help your students build selfesteem, explore personal interests and talents and learn how to interact with others. Successful preschool teachers are patient and enthusiastic. They are also sensitive to individual student needs and cultural backgrounds and are willing to go the extra-mile to be a good role model.

A preschool teacher's duties are varied but can include keeping records of each child's progress, serving nutritious meals and snacks and teaching good personal hygiene.

Outside of the classroom, they often meet with parents to discuss each child's progress.

Being a preschool or kindergarten teacher can be quite challenging. Dealing with a classroom of small children demands a great deal of energy and enthusiasm.

However, helping today's young people develop and gain new skills that they'll use throughout the rest of their lives makes a career in teaching a very fulfilling experience.

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