



## Paraprofessionals (Teacher Assistants)

Some teacher assistants work exclusively with special education students who attend traditional classes.

Teacher assistants work with a licensed teacher to give students additional attention and instruction.

### Duties

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Teacher assistants typically do the following:

- Reinforce lessons by reviewing material with students one-on-one or in small groups
- Follow school and class rules to teach students proper behavior
- Help teachers with recordkeeping, such as taking attendance and calculating grades
- Get equipment or materials ready to help teachers prepare for lessons
- Supervise students outside of the classroom, such as between classes, during lunch and recess, and on field trips

Teacher assistants also are called *teacher aides*, *instructional aides*, *paraprofessionals*, *education assistants*, and *paraeducators*.

Teacher assistants work with or under the guidance of a licensed teacher. Reviewing with students individually or in small groups, teacher assistants help reinforce the lessons that teachers introduce.

Teacher assistants may provide feedback to teachers for monitoring student progress. Some teacher assistants meet regularly with teachers to discuss lesson plans and students' development.

Some teacher assistants work only with special education students. When special education students attend regular classes, these teacher assistants help them understand the material and adapt the information to their learning style. Teacher assistants may also work with students who have severe disabilities in separate classrooms. They help these students with basic needs, such as eating or personal hygiene. Teacher assistants may help young adults with disabilities to learn skills necessary for finding a job or living independently after graduation.

Some teacher assistants help in specific areas. For example, they may work in a computer laboratory, helping students use programs or software. Others may work as cafeteria attendants, supervising students during lunchtime.

Teacher assistants in childcare centers work with a lead teacher to provide individualized attention that young children need. They help with educational activities, supervise the children at play, and help with feeding and other basic care.

**SUGGESTED CITATION:**

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Teacher Assistants, at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/teacher-assistants.htm> (visited January 18, 2023).

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