

ESL Teacher Training: CHINA

By now, you are probably realizing how many details there are to keep track of throughout this process: preparing your documents, having interviews with school directors, reading up on Chinese history, and maybe even brushing up on some Chinese words. Your flight date is swiftly approaching and you're in the last stages of preparation before you're ready to arrive in China: ready to say "Ni hao" to the folks at the airport, ready to try famous Chinese delicacies, ready to start that new travel blog. You're even envisioning needing enough gusto to get you through the first few weeks of culture shock and jetlag!

But what about the teaching? Are you ready to face a couple dozen classes of 10 to 40 kids (like these



How do I handle a situation like this one?

ones on the left) and teach them English? Are you ready to motivate and inspire children to learn your language without knowing a word of their language? Are you prepared for the classroom management issues that may arise from a bunch of likable but occasionally unruly schoolchildren? We are not trying to scare you. The staff at Adventure Teaching has all taught in Asia, and *we believe that teaching is a challenging, satisfying, dynamic, and professional career path, and we firmly believe that you'll be an excellent teacher too.* However, as a new teacher, you need to be able to answer these questions. You need the basic tools and the knowledge to turn an unmotivated classroom of 40 into an excited, cooperative group. You'll need to know how to explain grammatical concepts, current thinking behind second language

acquisition and use critical thinking skills to imply these things (and much more!) in the classroom. No matter who you are, if you are teaching in China for the first time, you'll need some training! Without it you may not have the confidence you need to step into this new experience with two firm feet. We want to introduce you to a valuable opportunity to become more knowledgeable about teaching ESL.

It is hard to tell what sort of training you can count on upon arrival at your new school. Some schools will hold week-long group training sessions, while some might make you wait months before offering any orientation and training. Some schools will put you at the front of the class on Day 1, while some might let you sit in on classes for a week before starting. Your level of training is dependent on your school and when you arrive, so be prepared for anything. The reality, however, is that very few schools do a sufficient job of training. Getting a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) Certification will give you a head-start and a considerable upper hand on other applicants. *You should probably trust us on this one.*

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A TEFL Certificate is a visa requirement in China. Take it from us – as business owners in the industry, we sift through many of these applications ourselves; seeing a TEFL certification on a resume gives us more confidence in matching teachers with suitable job placements. Keep in mind that your TEFL certificate will be a great asset to have in your pocket moving forward. If you decide to pursue other teaching opportunities in other countries, your TEFL certificate and teaching experience will really set you and your resume apart from the sea of international applicants.

Of course, the real benefit of getting a TEFL certificate is for your own experience. Students can sense how much or how little experience a teacher has, and are more likely to act out if you have no clue what you're doing. A TEFL course teaches you not only how to teach, but how to set up your classroom to minimize behavioral issues and maximize results. An uncertified teacher will drone through lesson plans that end up being horribly ineffective and slug through difficult material in a complicated manner, while students stare blankly at their textbooks. Some teachers lose rapport with students because of a lack of organization and confidence, or because of an all too casual disposition. By the time the uncertified teacher figures out what they're doing, the contract is almost up!

Expat Voices: *"(The three-day) Orientation gave me some information about living in China and what to expect in the culture, but wasn't very informative about what to expect in the classroom. I began teaching with a limited idea of the expectations from my school, and am rarely given feedback on my actual teaching."*

Layla, Beijing

Expat Voices: *"I got a Bridge TEFL both for the visa requirement and the extra training.*

There are lots of courses about teaching grammar to students, teaching one-on-one and large classes, teaching with limited resources, lesson planning, teaching using games. It's very helpful. They give you tips on stuff you otherwise wouldn't know unless you were studying to be a teacher. And you get a teaching certificate, which many teachers working abroad don't have, so it gives you an advantage if you continue to teach later."

Andrew, Jinzhou

Imagine skipping most of what we call an unpleasant "trial and error" teaching phase. Wouldn't it be nice to know, right off the bat, how to manage a classroom? How to answer questions? How to motivate Chinese students effectively? With a TEFL Certification, you'll have a better grasp on how to turn those 30 energetic, distracted children into a motivated, engaged classroom ready to delve into the English language. You'll be able to build practice lessons plans and learn how to explain those foreign grammatical concepts in English succinctly. You'll even have personal email feedback from a tutor, an experienced ESL teacher with insight and skill into the in's and out's of an ESL classroom at all levels. This doesn't mean you won't have classes that don't listen or lessons plans that you bomb every now and then, but you will have a better idea about what works and what doesn't – and have a bigger toolbox to work from.

If you have done any research into teaching foreign language courses, you know that there are hundreds of companies and courses available. It's hard to even know where to begin when looking for

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a course or analyzing its quality, so we've done the research for you. We've analyzed and spoken with a myriad of companies and course directors, and we have proudly partnered with one of the leading TEFL companies, *Bridge TEFL*, to offer our teachers special rates for a quality program. The company has had over 20 years of experience and is also authorized to teach Cambridge ESOL's CELTA course (Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults).

What else can Bridge TEFL do for you?

Why is Bridge TEFL the best choice?

The courses and certificates are:

- Widely known and very reputable. Experts in the industry have come together to create the Bridge TEFL Curriculum.
- Worldwide and conveniently portable. Bridge TEFL offers all of their lessons online and in classrooms around the world, including China.
- Going to grad school in the future? Taking a Bridge TEFL class may translate into graduate level credits. The IDELT course was recommended for 6 credits, and the "Blended Learning" course for 3. A course like this not only makes you money, it may save you money later in life!
- Bridge TEFL is Accredited by ACCET, the U.S. Department of Education, and other governmental agencies.
- Outstanding value. The value of every resource included is at least \$1,000 USD, and probably more. (Think of how much 6 credits at graduate school would cost you!)

Since you'll be setting out for China soon, it might be difficult (and expensive!) for you to attend an on-site training course. Bridge TEFL's online courses can be completed from anywhere in the world and provide all the curriculum of the live class for just a fraction of the cost.

Chinese immigration recognizes any level of certification – the 40 hour / 60 hour / 100 hour / 120 hour certification will all be acceptable for visa purposes. We recommend the 100 or 120-hour course as it's the most comprehensive course of its kind available. It's by far the best value and gives you tools to teach even after the course is over. Why?

- ✓ If you are planning on teaching children, the section about teaching young learners (in the 100 hour or 120 hour course only) gives you specific tips about classroom management that every new teacher must know. It will teach you how to establish your classroom in a way to minimize disruptions, and how to reach out to children who are behind, lost, or apathetic.
- ✓ The content is extremely comprehensive. You get the same package online or in the classroom, and it includes specialized endorsements for English for Young Learners and Business English. This special knowledge makes you even more valuable to your future employer.
- ✓ You work through the whole course under the guidance of a tutor, a real live professional ESL teacher, who provides feedback on your work.
- ✓ You'll have access not only to video tutorials within the course, but also to TEFLVideos.com, a library of over 100 "How-To" videos with step-by-step instructions for lessons, activities,

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classroom management skills, and more.

- ✓ You'll get a certificate for successfully completing an online grammar course called *Grammar Advisor*, which reinforces all those grammar rules you learned in high school but may have forgotten about.
- ✓ What if you're presented with a grammar question you can't answer? Chinese learners are notorious for asking questions about the complicated grammar points. You can use Grammar Advisor as a resource once you begin teaching! You can ask BT's grammar pros about grammar questions as well as how to teach grammar points. You'll be able to come up with answers quickly and know how to answer them for future reference.

Sounds Great, how do I sign up?

1. Go to <http://adventureteaching.teflonline.com> (You must use this link if you want the Adventure Teaching discount!)
2. Choose your course.
3. Enroll and pay for the course through the website.
4. Update your resume and **email** it to Adventure Teaching. When your employers know that you're completing a BridgeTEFL course, they won't be putting your resume in the rejected pile.
5. Complete the course.

If you have any other questions about the TEFL Certificate, don't hesitate to contact us. As always, we'd love to give you further information or answer some of your questions. Remember, even though Adventure Teaching and Bridge TEFL are partners, this offer is not guaranteed to last forever.

For online courses and the special Adventure Teaching Discount, click [here](#).

A Parting Thought...

Unruly school children? In China, where discipline was practically reinvented?

That's right. Kids will be kids no matter where they are. In the past, teachers commanded respect in Chinese society simply by the stature of their position in the community, which has engrained strict discipline and behavior into much of Chinese culture. This, unfortunately, comes as no consolation today as the rise of hectic English classrooms and "energetic" Chinese students continue to test the patience and experience of Western teachers.

Our advice? **Just ask your Chinese co-workers.** Public school teachers in elementary and middle school note that the younger generation of students are more laid back about education, and are losing respect for the profession of teaching. They text on their cell phones, talk in Chinese in English class, and often fall asleep. Imagine yourself in a classroom full of 40 kids, and one of the students keeps disrupting the class. Are you prepared for that situation? **What's the right balance between disciplinarian and "Mr./Mrs. Fun English teacher?"**

And what about adults? Adults pay for their lessons and are presumably more motivated to learn than children, but do you know how to explain the difficult grammatical structure of English so that they'll learn to communicate at a higher level? Can you explain when to use the present simple tense and when to use the present perfect tense? Can you explain the differences between "I will go," and "I am going to" in a simple, easy to understand way? All the more reason to seriously consider which type of certification to pursue!