INTERVIEW PREP

Sarah's interview questions

For: Instructional Designer – mid-size software company (remote)

The questions you're most likely to be asked, which experience to use, and a sample answer for each. Practise out loud in your own words; don't memorise.

ABOUT THE ROLE

1. How would you work with a subject matter expert to turn a complex technical topic into a clear lesson?

They want to see your process for working with experts and simplifying material.

Use: Westbrook High School: creating lesson plans and unit exams from complex texts.

How to answer: Describe how you'd approach it step by step, grounding it in how you already plan lessons.

> SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS
>
> Sure. I'd start by asking the expert what people actually need to be able to do after the course, because that tells me what to keep and what to cut. Then I'd draft an outline and check it back with them so the content stays accurate. In teaching, I've built lesson plans and unit exams for ninth and tenth graders, which is a lot about taking something dense and breaking it into pieces people can follow. Here the topic would be software, not literature, but I'd plan it the same way: clear goals first, then the lessons, then a check that people actually learned it.

MAKE IT YOURS

- Do you have a lesson where you broke down a hard text into steps you could describe?
- Have you co-planned with another teacher or specialist?

2. How would you measure whether a course worked, and use that data to improve it?

They want to see if you think about learning outcomes and evidence, not just content.

Use: Westbrook High School: writing quizzes, unit exams and progress reports.

How to answer: Explain how you'd measure, drawing on your assessment experience, and how you'd act on what you found.

> SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS
>
> Sure. I'd decide up front what success looks like, so what someone should be able to do after the course, and build checks around that. As a teacher I've written quizzes and unit exams and tracked progress in reports, so measuring whether people learned something is familiar to me. Here I'd want to look at the data the LMS gives, like where people drop off or which questions they miss, and then go back and fix those parts of the course. For customer training I'd also want to know if it makes a difference in how people use the product.

MAKE IT YOURS

- Did you ever change a lesson or unit because of quiz or exam results? Describe it if so.
- How did you track student progress across the year?

3. What experience do you have managing content in an LMS?

They need someone who can organise and maintain courses in their platform.

Use: Westbrook High School: led the Google Classroom switch.

How to answer: Use the Google Classroom work as your closest real example and connect it to a corporate LMS.

> SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS
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> Sure. The closest I have is Google Classroom. I led our school's switch to it and trained twelve teachers on it, so I've worked with a platform from the setup side as well as day to day as a teacher. I know your LMS will be different and probably has more to it, like enrollments and reporting. Here I'd want to learn how your courses are organised first, and then keep things consistent so learners can find what they need.

MAKE IT YOURS

- What did you set up or organise in Google Classroom yourself?
- Have you used any other learning platforms?

ABOUT WHAT'S NEW TO YOU

4. Have you built anything in Articulate Storyline or Rise?

They need to know how fast you can produce content in their authoring tools.

Use: No direct example on your résumé.

How to answer: Say honestly you haven't, point to the tools you do use for building materials, then explain how you'd get up to speed.

> SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS
>
> Honestly, no, I haven't used Storyline or Rise yet. What I do have is a lot of practice building learning materials. I've made lesson plans, quizzes and unit exams for years, and I use Google Workspace and Canva to put materials together. I also led my school's move to Google Classroom, so learning a new platform and then teaching others to use it isn't new to me. I'd want to get hands-on with Rise and Storyline early so I'm building real content quickly.

MAKE IT YOURS

- If you've tried a free Articulate trial or built a sample module, say so.
- Have you built anything interactive in Canva or Google tools you could mention?

5. Most of our learners are adults. What experience do you have teaching adults rather than teenagers?

They're checking whether your teaching skills carry over to adult learners.

Use: Westbrook High School: training 12 teachers on Google Classroom; parent-teacher conferences.

How to answer: Be honest that most of your teaching was teenagers, then point to your adult-facing work, and say how you'd adapt.

> **SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS**
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> Honestly, most of my teaching has been ninth and tenth graders. But I've worked with adults too. I trained twelve teachers on Google Classroom when I led that switch, and I've run parent-teacher conferences and written progress reports for parents. Adults usually want to know why something matters to them before they'll put time in, so here I'd make sure every course connects straight to the person's job.

MAKE IT YOURS

- What was different about training teachers compared with teaching students?
- Anything you noticed in parent conferences about explaining things to adults?

6. Have you worked with the ADDIE model or any formal instructional design framework?

They want to know if you understand structured design processes.

Use: No direct example on your résumé.

How to answer: Be honest you haven't used it formally, link it to how you already plan units, and say how you'd apply it.

> **SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS**
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> Honestly, I haven't used ADDIE by name. But the steps aren't foreign to me. When I create lesson plans and unit exams, I'm working out what students need, designing the unit, building the materials, teaching it and then checking results through quizzes and exams. ADDIE gives that a clearer structure and a shared language with the rest of a team, which I think matters more here than in a classroom. I'd want to use it from the start on my first project so my process lines up with how your team works.

MAKE IT YOURS

- If you've read about ADDIE or other frameworks, mention what you've looked at.
- Do you plan units backward from the final exam? Say so if true.

ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE

7. Tell me about leading the switch to Google Classroom. How did you get the other teachers on board?

They're testing whether you can design and deliver training for adults.

Use: Westbrook High School: led the Google Classroom switch and trained 12 teachers.

How to answer: Tell it as a short story: the situation, what you did, how it ended, then link it to employee onboarding.

> **SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS**
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> Sure. At Westbrook I led the school's switch to Google Classroom, and part of that was training twelve teachers on it. These were colleagues who had to change how they ran their own classes, so the training had to be practical for them. That project is the closest thing on my record to what you're describing for employee training: adult learners, a new tool, and a need to get people using it in their real work. Here I'd bring that same focus on making a new system usable for the people who depend on it.

MAKE IT YOURS

- How did you run the training sessions?
- How long did the switch take, and did everyone end up using it?
- Was there any pushback, and how did you handle it?

8. You coached the debate club to state finals twice. What did that teach you about helping people learn?

They want to see how you develop skills in learners over time.

Use: Westbrook High School: coached the debate club, which reached state finals twice.

How to answer: Tell it briefly, stick to what happened, then link it to building skills through practice in courses.

> **SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS**
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> Sure. I coached our debate club at Westbrook, and the team reached state finals twice. Debate is a skill people build through practice, not something you can just read about, and that's how I think about good training too. For the courses here, especially onboarding, I'd want people practicing the real tasks rather than just reading slides, and interactive content is the way to do that.

MAKE IT YOURS

- How did you run practices with the team?
- What were you proudest of from those seasons?

9. You taught around 150 students a year. How did you make lessons work for people at different levels?

They want to know how you design for a varied audience.

Use: Westbrook High School: taught 9th and 10th grade English to about 150 students per year.

How to answer: Ground it in your real classroom, keep specifics for what you actually did, and link it to diverse customers and employees.

> **SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS**
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> Sure. I taught ninth and tenth grade English at Westbrook, about 150 students a year, so every lesson plan I made had to work for a lot of different people. A software company's learners will be just as mixed, with new employees, experienced customers and everyone in between. Here I'd want to understand who's taking each course before building it, and design it so people can move at their own pace.

MAKE IT YOURS

- Give one real way you adjusted a lesson for students at different levels.
- Did you use Google Classroom or Canva to give different materials to different students?

ABOUT YOUR MOVE

10. Why move from teaching high school into instructional design at a software company?

They want a real reason for the switch, not just an escape from teaching.

Use: Westbrook High School: designing lessons and leading the Google Classroom switch.

How to answer: Give a genuine reason tied to the parts of teaching you liked most, then link it to this job.

> **SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS**
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> Sure. When I look back at my time at Westbrook, the parts I've liked most are building things, like lesson plans, quizzes and unit exams, and helping people get comfortable with something new. Leading our switch to Google Classroom and training twelve teachers on it showed me I like teaching adults too. Instructional design is that work as the whole job. Here I'd be designing courses and onboarding for customers and employees, which feels like a natural next step from where I've been.

MAKE IT YOURS

- What specifically made you start looking at instructional design?
- Which part of the Google Classroom rollout did you enjoy most?

11. Why our company, and why training for software in particular?

They want to see you've thought about this role specifically.

Use: Westbrook High School: Google Classroom rollout and training teachers.

How to answer: Connect your real experience with tech adoption to their product training, and keep it specific.

> **SAMPLE ANSWER · SAY IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS**
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> Honestly, helping people adopt new software is the part of my school work that's closest to this. When I led the Google Classroom switch and trained twelve teachers, I saw that a tool only helps if people actually know how to use it. Your role covers training for both customers and employees, which I like because it's about getting people successful with a product. And being remote, building e-learning makes sense, since the courses have to work without someone in the room.

MAKE IT YOURS

- What do you know about this company's product? Mention something real you found.
- Is there a specific reason this company caught your eye?

QUESTIONS TO ASK THEM

- Who are the main subject matter experts I'd work with, and how do they usually share knowledge with the training team?
- Which courses need the most attention right now, customer training or employee onboarding?
- What data do you currently collect from the LMS, and how is it used to decide what to improve?

A saved example written by AI from Sarah's fictional résumé.