

A Day in the Life of an IEP Teacher

Thidamaepra has an Intensive English Program (IEP) that many Super English teachers work in. You teach your IEP sections every day M-F for about 50 minutes each. It is the same students each day with the same Thai teacher. There are many pros of being an IEP (Intensive English Program) teacher.



There are privileges others can only dream of, such as your eight year old student feeling comfortable enough to ask where you live, for your phone number, and when they can come over, being able to learn all their funny names, from Donut to Jumbo to Ice to Yell, fights breaking out over who gets to carry your water bottle, and, in all seriousness, experiencing the joy of witnessing progression on a daily basis, both from a student and teacher perspective.

So you want to know what the average day in my life is? Well, it starts with the alarm going off just a few minutes too early, about 7am. I'm usually on my motorbike by 7:35 and from the New House it takes 5-7 minutes to get to Old Thida, depending on the two traffic lights. I pick up a yogurt for about 40 cents on my way in from a very smiley woman and her 'dairy cart.' She used to have a coconut yogurt ready for me the minute she saw me walking up. After eating coconut flavor for a month straight, I think I must have blown her mind when I requested strawberry for the next two weeks, and then plain soon after. Seriously...things got crazy. Now she just waits for me to point and say what I want in broken Thai, we both giggle, and I'm on my way across the street and into school. I should mention when I feel extra tired (Mondays!!!), I grab an iced coffee for about 75 cents from the adjacent almost-equally-as-smiley coffee lady.



I get to school about 15-20 minutes before the time I technically need to, which is 8:00. I find I need the time in the morning for brain awakening and last minute planning. After **STANDING** for the King's Song, gathering any last minute ideas/materials, and enjoying the yogurt previously mentioned, at 8:20 I'm stepping into my first class.

This week, I have been teaching the ever-confusing, "this, that, these those," demonstratives. The first thing I do is review our 'this, that, these, those' song. I have learned not to underestimate how helpful a song can be in memorization and livening up a classroom. I then have a review demonstration on the meanings of each word, and then it's activity/game time, everyone's favorite. Today I have decided on a running game where the students follow my commands. "Sit in this chair! Sit in that chair! Give me those books!" and so on. I have one student from

each team come up, one at a time and time how long it takes them to listen and act the commands I'm giving. The anticipation before I write the time of each student is intense, and reactions hilarious and adorable. After a few rounds, we begin their writing assignment, where I write a few questions on the board (usually 'fill in the blank' types) and they do the assignment in their notebooks, which I check weekly. I repeat this same lesson plan in my next IEP class, have a 15 minutes break where I'll grab coffee from the break room or a snack from the canteen. At 10:30 I do my third IEP class and before I know it, it's lunchtime. My next class isn't until 2:40, so I use the time to grade and plan. I plan what we'll do the next day, taking into account what looks like needs more practice, what they're picking up quickly, etc. Some days you have may have one or two additional 'regular' sections that you only see once a week. I teach 4 'regular' sections weekly.

The only grading (hallelujah!) we have to do for IEP classes are simple weekly notebook checks and on Fridays there are oral speaking tests, which are a piece of cake! You should have a Thai teacher to help keep the students under control and sort out any miscommunications. I am very fortunate and really like both of my IEP Thai teachers, I'm very grateful for their help. So far, I've really enjoyed teaching IEP. I feel seeing the students every day is invaluable to their English learning and retention, not to mention the mutual benefit between teacher-student to get to know each other and develop a special rapport.

So there you have it, an average day at school. When 4:00 hits, us SE teachers are free. I usually grab some fruit and chill out for a bit either at home or the nearby park with a book. It's a pretty spot, and when I go to read I lay by the pond area and watch Thai families feed the fish. I included a picture of the pond at sunset. In the States, I was one of those who worked a 9-5 and religiously went to the gym afterwards. I generally still do something of the sort here, just Surat style. I usually go on a run at the park when I'm done reading. It's got a nice .5 mile road around it, and funny colorful workout equipment (see picture), so that makes it even better. Other days I may hit the gym, do yoga, or some other random activity. It's important to note that any sort of physical activity outdoors here will leave you drenching in sweat, so I immediately go home after my work-out, shower, and decide what delicious meal I want for dinner. Then it's back to the house and relaxing until the next morning, when I get to see these adorable faces all over again:

