

VIPKID NEW & INTERESTED TEACHER'S GUIDE

FROM

Teacher

S H A N N A

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VIPKID Interested/New Teacher's Guide (FAQ)

Thank you for using my referral code! This guide is full of questions that I've gotten from potential referrals, as well as a bunch of stuff that I wish I had known when I first started teaching for VIPKID! There's a lot of information, but just take it at your own pace. If you're looking for a specific answer, try using the search function in your pdf viewer. If you would like an answer to a question not listed here, please email me! I'm happy to help you every step of the way! shanna.m.davila@gmail.com

If you haven't started your application process yet, you can add my referral code when you fill out your basic info. If you have started the application process and did not add my referral code, no problem! Just go to My Account > Add Referral Code on the application page. My referral code is **SHANN0227**.

GETTING STARTED

1. Am I qualified to be a VIPKID teacher?

If you have a bachelor's degree in any field, at least a year of experience tutoring/teaching/mentoring in any capacity, and native English-speaking abilities, good news! You are qualified to teach for VIPKID!*

If you have brick-and-mortar teaching experience, a TESOL/TEFL certificate, or a teaching license/degree, even better! You will probably get offered a higher base pay rate when you apply.

**The Chinese government recently changed their regulations and now requires teachers to have some form of official teaching credentials in addition to a bachelor's degree. Luckily, VIPKID has a special partnership with TESOL that will allow you to get certified during the application process!*

2. What is the application/hiring process like?

First of all, bear with me if I get anything wrong here; this process has changed a little since I got hired, but this is my understanding of the current hiring process.

Basic info. To start off, you will submit your basic information. This is really just a few screening questions to ensure you're qualified and should only take a few minutes. Once you submit the initial application, you should expect to hear back pretty quickly (almost immediately, as I believe it's automated).

Demo lesson. You will then be prompted to set up an interview/demo lesson. You will be provided with a schedule of available time slots if you choose to do a one-on-one interview. If you opt for the recorded demo, you can submit it at your own convenience.

What is the difference between the two interview methods?

One-on-one interview: The one-on-one interview takes place with a member of the VIPKID Beijing staff—so it will most likely be a Chinese man or woman. It will take place in the same platform that all of your real classes will take place, which is similar to Skype. The

main reason I recommend this method is that you get feedback (and your base pay offer, if you pass) immediately.

Recorded demo: This is the less nerve-wracking option, but also the trickier one. You record a video of yourself “teaching” the lesson . . . to a blank screen. So while you don’t have to worry about whether the Chinese staff member is secretly laughing at you, you do have to pretend that you’re teaching a real student—and it can be tricky to anticipate how a student might respond without a real example. You also have to wait for the hiring staff to review your demo before you receive feedback. The upside is that this is more convenient and you can record multiple takes if you mess up.

You will be provided with the teaching materials before your interview, and there are plenty of examples on YouTube if you need inspiration. The best way to avoid being nervous for your interview is to **prepare!** Look over the materials, watch a few example videos, and make sure you have your props ready before the time comes.

After your interview, you will receive feedback and be scored in a variety of areas. This will tell you what to improve on for your certification class!

Teaching prep and online coaching. At this point in the process, you will get to choose which level(s) to certify for. I highly recommend Interactive Level 2! According to a recent webinar I attended, **70%** of VIPKID students are Level 2—this means that if you are certified for Level 2 classes, you have the highest chance of being booked. You will receive access to six modules that you can then use to prepare for your certification class. You will need to prepare two lessons for your mock class.

You should also receive an invitation to participate in online coaching. This is an opportunity to talk with a team of trained coaches about the specific level you’re certifying for. Take advantage of this opportunity!

Mock/certification class. The next step is certification. After you have been through the teaching prep and online coaching, you should be plenty prepared for this! The certification class will be a lot like the one-on-one interview (if that’s the option you chose). You will enter the classroom with another live person and teach them the two lessons you have prepared and receive feedback for each one. IF you fail your mock class, PLEASE try again! I had to complete two mock classes before getting hired, and I’ve heard of people doing as many as four! So don’t be discouraged. They just want to make sure you are well prepared to teach the students. 😊

TESOL certification. Chinese government regulations require all teachers (including VIPKID teachers) to have some sort of teaching certification in addition to a bachelor’s degree. To accomplish this, you will be required to pass two certification quizzes to get the VIPKID TESOL certificate that qualifies you to teach. This is the last step in your application process before you sign your contract!

Note: This does not qualify you for TESOL outside of VIPKID. It is a specific partnership for us teachers who do not already have a teaching or ESL certificate.

Contract/background check. Congratulations! All that's left is to sign your contract, submit proof of your qualifications (bachelor's degree, work eligibility, teaching license, etc.), and complete a background check. VIPKID will do the background check for you—all you have to do is sign your consent.

3. What do I need to apply/get started?

In order to do your interview/demo lesson, you will need the following: a tablet or computer to teach from; headphones, which can either be earbuds with a microphone or a full headset; and a strong internet connection.

In addition, VIPKID expects to see some sort of "educational" background during your interview process. As my referral, you will receive a FREE classroom starter kit from me that you can get printed at your local Sam's Club, Office Depot, FedEx, etc. This includes a personalized name tag, an alphabet poster, and number strips. Alternatively, you can also pick up some dollar store posters (that's what I did when I first started), or just use whatever you have lying around! You definitely don't HAVE to invest anything for the interview if you don't want to.

You will also likely do better on your interview if you have some props to use. When I did my interview, I DIYed some animal faces, feelings faces (happy, sad, angry), and an ice cream reward. I also picked up a white board and some alphabet flash cards from the dollar store. Seriously, just get creative! Do NOT invest a ton of money in the application process—unless you want to, of course. You will have plenty of time (and money) to invest in your classroom after you get your first paycheck. 😊

COMPENSATION/INVESTMENT

1. How does the compensation REALLY work?

Buckle up, because this is perhaps the most complex question of all—but it's worth knowing this information.

As a VIPKID teacher, you will be offered a **base pay rate** that ranges from **\$7-9 per class**. Classes are 25-28 minutes long, so your base pay will come out to **\$14-18 per hour**.

Additionally, VIPKID offers \$1 per class (**\$2 per hour**) for the following:

- Every class that you actually show up to teach (y'know, do what you contracted to do), you will get an extra \$1.
- If you complete 35 or more classes in a month, you will get an extra \$0.50 per class taught. Once you hit 45 classes in a single month, it will jump up to \$1 per class.

Check out this handy chart for a breakdown of this information:

Successful classes taught in a month	Pay per class	Pay per hour
<35	\$8-10	\$16-20
35-44	\$8.50-10.50	\$17-21
≥45	\$9-11	\$18-22

So basically, in order to get your maximum payment, all you have to do is teach at least 45 classes (or 22.5 hours) **per month**, or approximately 6 hours per week.

But wait, there's more! If a class gets booked less than 24 hours before the scheduled start time, you will get an additional \$2 for that class as well.

Annnnd, if a trial student signs up for VIPKID after taking your class, you will also get an extra \$5 for that class. Pretty cool! (I usually get an extra \$10-20 per month just from trial conversions. So not a ton—but hey, extra money!)

BONUSES: In addition, VIPKID regularly offers additional incentives or bonuses for various accomplishments. You will get emails from them detailing these opportunities.

The "fine print":

- (a) VIPKID does not take out taxes for you, so be sure to account for that when you're admiring your first paycheck. You will either need to set aside a percentage of your check for when you file your annual taxes, or pay quarterly taxes at IRS.gov (this is what I've seen recommended by other teachers). However, this doesn't mean that the pay rate you're being offered is a lie. Just like with any job, the pay rate they offer you is your **gross pay**—pay before taxes.
- (b) If a **trial** student does not show up for class or has IT issues that prevent the class from being taught, you will only get half of your **base pay** for that class. BUT you will still get the

incentives! This means that if you have 45 or more booked classes in a month, even if **every single one** is a no-show, you will still get paid **\$5.50-7.50** per class, or **\$11-15 per hour**. This is for **just sitting there**—not doing anything (or browsing Facebook, etc.). Not bad, IMO. (And seriously, the chances of EVERY CLASS being a no-show are so slim.) See the appendix at the end for more info about trial classes and what to expect when you're first getting started.

- (c) Due to bank transferring fees and some other stuff that I don't understand fully, you will not get paid until you have earned a minimum of \$80 (this is about 8 classes for most people). Additionally, VIPKID pays either monthly or semi-monthly, depending on which option you select. You DO have the option to elect to be paid at the end of the month even if you haven't reached the \$80 minimum, but they will deduct the transfer fees from your paycheck, which means you'll get paid even less. But really . . . it's not hard to make \$80 in a month, even when you first start.
- (d) If you cancel a class less than 24 hours in advance, VIPKID will deduct \$2 from your paycheck—you also won't get paid for the class, obviously. If you neglect to show up for a class altogether or cancel a class less than 2 hours in advance, VIPKID will deduct \$10 from your check, in addition to not getting paid for the class. Point being, if you really need to cancel a class, make sure to do it more than 24 hours in advance to avoid facing a payment penalty.

2. Are there any hidden fees for being a VIPKID teacher?

None. Zip. Nada. VIPKID does not charge us anything for being teachers. We are hired as independent contractors and treated as such. Other than the initial investments mentioned in the first section, you do not have to spend ANY MONEY to teach for VIPKID.

3. How much of a time/money investment is this long-term?

This is a complicated question! Because the truth is, it can be as much or as little of an investment as you want. Over my VIPKID career, I have personally invested a few hundred dollars into classroom supplies/props and dozens of "out-of-class" hours talking to potential referrals, doing workshops provided by VIPKID, getting extra certifications, and DIYing décor/props/rewards for my students. But I still feel like the time spent has been worth it—and I've definitely profited much more money from this than I've put into it. So there's that.

Some teachers teach a few hours every weekend, use primarily digital props, and don't refer a single person—and they still get paid. So like I said, it's up to you. My opinion is that just like with most things in life, you get out of it what you put into it.

Oh, and what about prep time? VIPKID provides the lessons for you in the form of PowerPoints. In the beginning (the first 2-3 months), I usually spent about 5 minutes looking over EACH PowerPoint before class. (Unfortunately, there is no way to access the PowerPoints unless you already have a class booked for a particular lesson.) But over time, you will become much more comfortable with how the curriculum is structured. A few months in, I started winging it! I hardly ever look at the PowerPoints before class now, and I always feel like my lessons run smoothly.

4. What about referring people?

I know what you're thinking: There's got to be a reason you're bribing people to use your referral code, right?

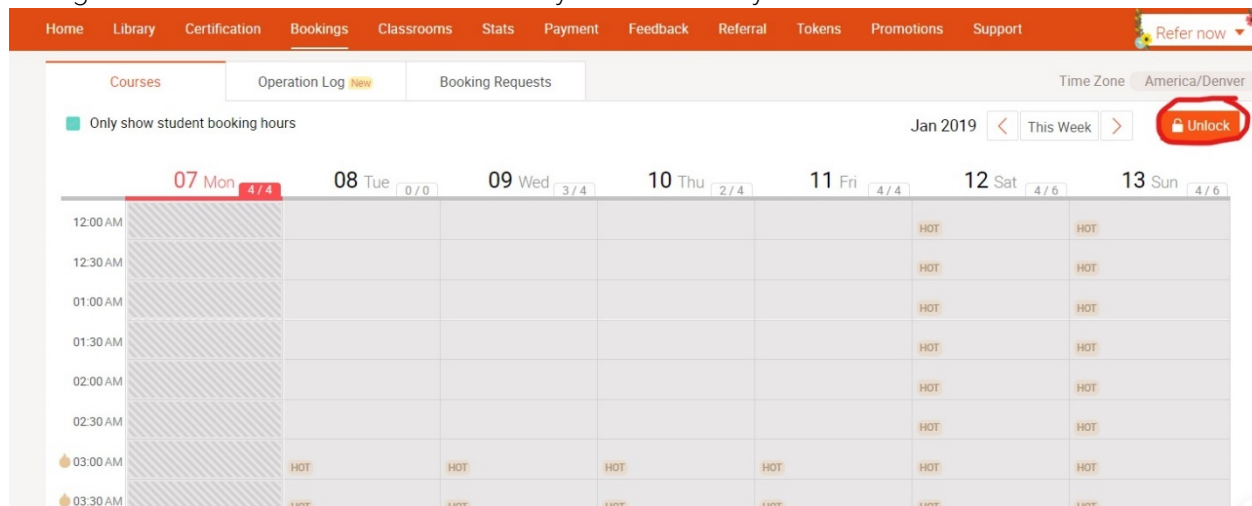
VIPKID has an awesome referral program! You get \$100 every time you refer just one teacher. If you refer multiple people in a single quarter (Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun, Jul-Sep, Oct-Dec), you can get some awesome bonuses on top of that!

And in case you're wondering, this is NOT like an MLM company where I'll get compensated for your referrals, and their referrals, etc., etc. I ONLY get the \$100 bonus for people I refer personally, and it's only a one-time bonus. Referring absolutely isn't necessary, but it's a great way to make even more money while helping other teachers get hired!

BOOKINGS/SCHEDULING

1. How do I open my schedule?

Once you've been officially hired with VIPKID, you'll be given access to your Teacher Portal. When you log in to your Teacher Portal, click on the Bookings tab. This will give you a calendar of available time slots in **your time zone**. First, click the padlock icon in the upper-right corner to unlock your bookings page, and then simply click on the slots that you want to teach! Parents and/or VIPKID Learning Partners (staff members that work directly with students and parents) will then go in and select the time slots that they want to book your class.



2. How many hours should I expect to work?

This is 100% up to you! There is no minimum hour requirement for VIPKID. Some teachers opt to work only a few hours on the weekends. I do consistent part time (10-14 hours per week). And some teachers do full time.

3. Do I have to commit to a set schedule?

Nope! This is one thing I love about this job. If you want to work nights one week and mornings the next, go for it! Do your other work/life commitments change from week to week? That's just fine! VIPKID does recommend opening up slots a few weeks in advance to show consistency, but it is not a requirement. I usually open slots 1-2 weeks in advance.

4. What are the hours like? Do I have to wake up early?

This depends on a couple of factors—namely, your time zone and daylight savings time.

In my time zone (Mountain Time), the Peak-Peak Time slots (PPT for short) are 5-7 a.m. during daylight savings time and 4-6 a.m. during standard time. These are the time slots that are most likely to be booked, and these are the time slots I teach.

However, the time slots available to me are 5:30 p.m.-7 a.m. So, theoretically, I could work nightly from 6-10 p.m., assuming I could get bookings during that time. I recommend opening primarily PPT slots when you're first starting (but see the appendix at the end for more info).

5. How do I take time off?

There are two ways to go about this.

- (a) Just don't open your schedule for the days that you want to take off. Especially in the beginning, if you don't have any regular students, this is the easiest option (and really, you don't need to do anything else).
- (b) Submit a support ticket informing VIPKID that you will be taking time off. I don't believe this is ever necessary, but some teachers opt to do this. I'm not entirely sure what it accomplishes (for instance, maybe VIPKID will let parents know you're on vacation if they want to book your class?). In any case, this is probably the safest option, but not mandatory by any means.

6. What if I don't get bookings?

Ah, the bookings question. The short answer? Be patient. The bookings will come eventually. Most teachers get their first class within a couple days, but it can take 1-2 months (sometimes longer) to get **steady, consistent** bookings.

For a more (much more) detailed answer, see the appendix at the end. 😊

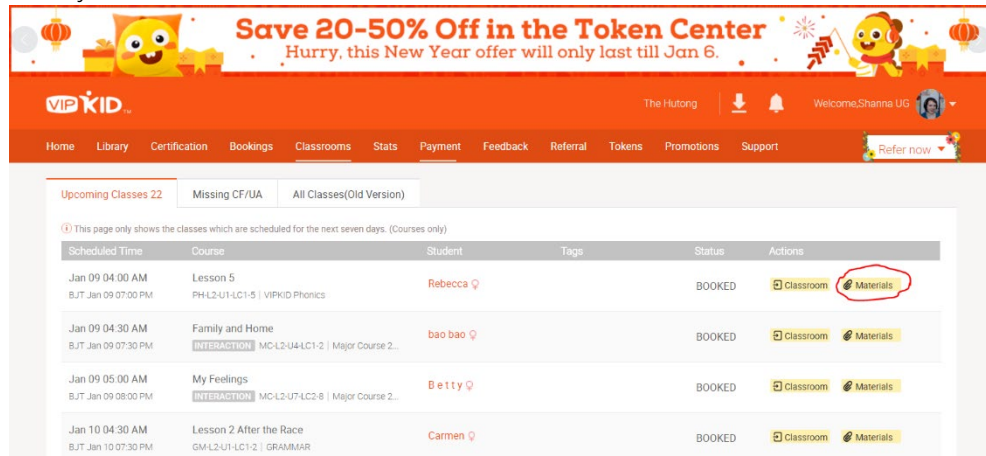
MISCELLANEOUS

1. What is it like to teach for VIPKID?

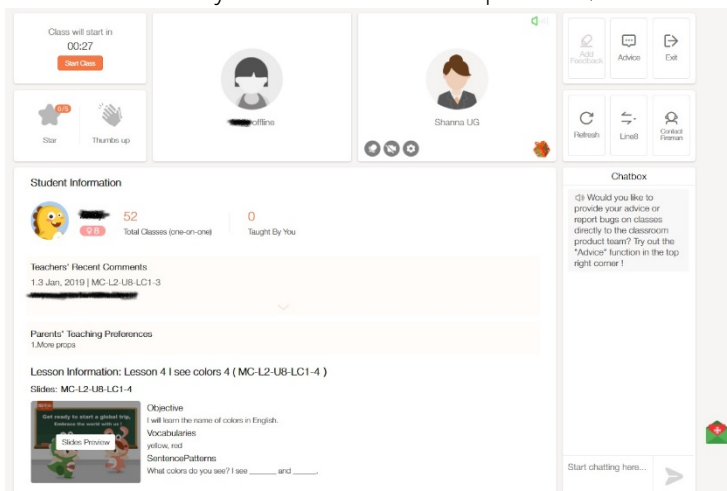
Um, first of all . . . it's awesome!

But as far as the logistics go, here are the basics of what you can expect:

- You will start opening up your schedule once you're hired. Most teachers will get their first booked class within a day or two, but don't be discouraged if that doesn't happen! I think it took me about 5 days to get my first class. Then it takes a few weeks, or up to a few months, to start getting regular, consistent bookings.
- Once your first class is booked, click on the Classrooms tab of your Teacher Portal. It will show you any classes that you have booked (or have already taught). Then click on Materials to view the PowerPoint lesson. In the beginning, you will probably be doing this a lot to get comfortable with the curriculum, but after a while you probably won't have to do it at all anymore!



- A few minutes before your class starts, click Classroom next to the specific class you're about to teach. This will take you to the classroom platform, which will look like this :



Make sure that your headset/microphone and camera are working properly.

(d) You will notice that there is a timer counting down to when your class starts. When it gets close (about 5-10 seconds before the scheduled time), click Start Class. Your camera might open automatically. If it does not, click on the Open Camera icon. The lesson should also load automatically.

(e) Hopefully your student is present and ready for class! If not, just wait patiently.

If you are actually teaching a class (fingers crossed!), you must teach until at least 25 minutes and no longer than 28 minutes. Pacing is difficult at first, but it will get easier! Aim to spend about 1 minute on each slide. (There is no penalty that I'm aware of for occasionally going over or under time, but it is important to get in the habit of staying in the allotted time frame.)

If a trial student does not arrive by the 15-minute mark, you are free to end class and leave the classroom. You do not need to submit feedback for any no-show classes.

If it is a major course, you must stay in the classroom until the 25-minute mark regardless of whether the student shows up or not. You can tell whether it is a trial class or a major course by looking at the class code. (If it says MC, it is a Major Course; if it says T, it is a trial.)



(f) Congratulations! You've just taught your first class (or your fourth, or your fifth, or your hundredth...). Make sure to leave feedback for the class within 12 hours to avoid a pay deduction (I like doing it in between classes if I have time).

2. What is class feedback? How do I submit it?

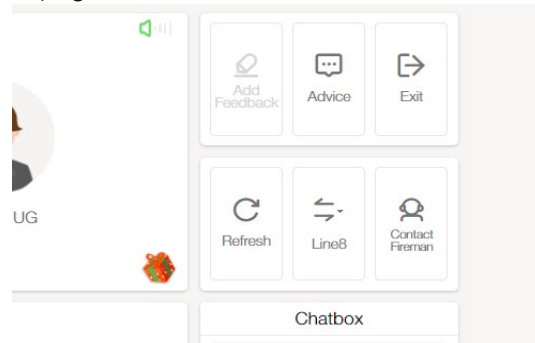
For every class you teach, you are expected to leave class feedback, which tells the parents how the student did in class and what they can improve on. I prefer to write feedback from scratch in the few minutes between classes.

Some teachers take notes during class (which can get tricky, as you should avoid looking down as much as possible) and wait until all of their classes are over for the day, and then submit feedback all at once. Other teachers pay for Feedback Panda or similar services and create templates to make the feedback process smoother.

Regardless of the process you choose, I highly recommend the book "Loud and Clear" by Ed Nace! (FYI, this is not sponsored by or affiliated with him in any way. I just really like this book.) You can go to ednace.com to purchase it as a digital download. It has immensely improved both the way I write feedback and the way I teach!

I also recommend [this](#) video by David Yee. This is a quicker and free way to learn some great feedback principles right away, so at the very least WATCH THIS before you leave any class feedback.

To submit feedback, simply click Add Feedback in the classroom before exiting, or click the Missing CF/UA tab in your Classrooms page.



3. How can I be a good teacher?

The simple answer is, just be yourself! We all know that everybody is unique—some are more energetic than others, some are goofier, etc. This applies to students as well as teachers. If you are worried that you're not outgoing or "crazy" enough for this job, don't worry! I promise I am probably one of the most reserved teachers in the VIPKID universe—but I still have several regular students and have even converted several trial students! Some parents are looking for crazy, goofy teachers that will keep their crazy, goofy kid entertained for 25 minutes; other parents are looking for a serious, reserved teacher that won't intimidate their serious, reserved child.

Really, the only things you need to do be a good VIPKID teacher are (1) be genuine, smile, and have fun; and (2) get really good at pacing—if you consistently cut class short or go over time, it will not reflect well on you.

4. What is this "classroom starter pack" that you've mentioned?

As a thank-you for using my referral code (remember, I get \$100 once you teach a class), I supply you with (1) this new teacher's guide, and (2) a classroom décor starter pack. The starter pack includes a name tag (with your name, obviously), an alphabet poster, and a number strip to hang in your classroom. You can get these printed at your local Sam's Club, FedEx, Office Depot, etc. I will send these as JPGs in a separate email with my recommended instructions for printing them.



5. What if I decide VIPKID isn't for me?

That's fine! If you decide it isn't for you before getting hired, I'll be sad—but you have to do what's best for you.

If you decide after teaching a few classes (or several) that you want to stop, simply stop opening time slots. It's really that simple. And then, of course, don't renew your contract. VIPKID does not police every teacher and will not penalize you for "quitting."

Additional notes:

Although you can teach using a web browser, I highly recommend downloading the teacher PC app once you start teaching classes. It is super convenient and has several fun features that the web version doesn't have.

Also, download the VIPKID Teach mobile app once you're hired! This makes it super convenient to check your bookings, and they'll even send you notifications 15 minutes before your class starts in case you forgot to check your schedule. (This is useful in the beginning but becomes unnecessary the longer you've taught and the more regular your schedule is).

Check out my YouTube channel ([VIPKID Teacher Shanna](#)) for more useful tips and tricks, including DIY rewards, most-used props, and how to stay awake during those early-morning/late-night classes!

Thank you again for being my referral! I hope you have a smooth and painless hiring experience and that you love teaching for VIPKID as much as I do! Please reach out with any additional questions or comments!

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APPENDIX: ALL ABOUT BOOKINGS

One of the biggest gripes from new VIPKID teachers is lack of bookings. Unfortunately, this is **very common** in the beginning. This is really one of the only downfalls I've experienced with this job—at first you may not get many classes, which translates to not much pay, either. 😞

BUT IT GETS BETTER! I promise! Read on for some of my tips to get more bookings in the beginning, as well as what you can expect when you first start.

1. Trial classes. In the beginning, expect most of your classes to be trials. This means you may have quite a few no-shows. But there are a few upsides to this. First of all, if you convert a trial student, you'll get a \$5 bonus for that class. Second, you have the opportunity to pick up a regular student if the trial student signs up and then continues taking your class.

2. The booking frenzy. Every Monday at noon (Beijing time), parents have the opportunity to book classes for the **following** week. (So on Monday, January 7, parents are able to book classes for the week of January 14-20.) This is referred to as the “booking frenzy” because many teachers get lots of bookings during this time. When you first start, you probably won't have a frenzy. After you start picking up regular students or even teaching many successful trial classes, you will probably get most of your bookings around this time.

3. The “crazy week.” Disclaimer: I don't know if this is really a thing for most teachers, but it was for me, and I've heard of it happening to a few other teachers.

A few weeks after I started teaching, when I'd had hardly any bookings, I suddenly had a week where I got TONS of bookings. Like, I had averaged maybe 5 bookings a week and suddenly got about 40 for the following week. My theory is that the Learning Partners “spotlight” new teachers every week to give them more exposure to parents and encourage parents to book with them to try their class . . . or something like that.

Anyway, after that week my bookings went back down, but then they went back up, and eventually they leveled out at 20-28 per week (which is right where I want to be). If you are suddenly fully booked without an explanation, think of it as awesome practice and a good opportunity to pick up regulars, but don't necessarily expect it to continue right away (although it certainly could).

4. Chinese New Year. Chinese students have school off for about a week for Chinese New Year. Many students also take this time off from VIPKID classes, which means low or even non-existent bookings. Especially if you are starting around beginning-mid February, don't be surprised if you get off to a **really** slow start. However, I have also heard that many students like taking daytime classes during this week (which is nighttime in the U.S. and Canada), so maybe try opening night slots during the week of CNY and see if you get more bookings that way. Either way, don't be discouraged; it's normal.

5. Tips for getting more bookings. There is no magic formula for getting bookings, but here are some things that can help:

- (a) **Open PPT slots.** Peak-Peak Time slots are the most likely to get booked. Plain and simple.
- (b) **Certify for level 2** . . . but get as many certifications as possible. I recently watched a webinar from VIPKID staff in which they said that **70%** of VIPKID students are in level 2. So if you want exposure to as many parents as possible, get your level 2 certificate first. Then work on getting as many other certificates as possible. The more certifications you have, the more parents will have the option of booking you.
- (c) **Pull all-nighters.** This sounds crazy, right? Why should you have to stay up all night to make money? Well, you don't HAVE to. But many students love taking VIPKID classes on Saturdays and Sundays, which converts to Friday and Saturday nights in the U.S. and Canada. Therefore, if you open middle-of-the-night slots on Friday and Saturday nights, you could very likely be booked. There's a high demand for these slots and not as many teachers who are willing to open them.
- (d) **Open slots right before the booking frenzy.** This one is highly debated. Some teachers swear by it; others say it makes no difference. I have noticed a slight difference when I do it. Supposedly, if you open your time slots right before the booking frenzy (for example, at 8:30 p.m. if the frenzy is at 9 p.m. your time), parents can see your time slots before other teachers' and will be more likely to book you. It's worth a shot. *shrug*

Please, please, please don't be discouraged! I know it can be frustrating at first, but I promise it's worth it! I love this job and the students that I teach . . . and the money is nice too. 😊