

# How This Teacher Makes \$4 Million per Year

Teachers in America frequently complain that they are underpaid. But that is not a complaint you will hear from South Korean teacher, Andrew Kim, who made \$4 million in 2010.

Profiled in Amanda Ripley's bestseller *The Smartest Kids in the World*, Kim is known in South Korea as a "rock-star teacher." For over twenty years, he has taught in the country's "hagwons"—private, afterschool tutoring programs. In recent years, the internet had allowed him to cash in on his teaching ability:

*"Kim explained that he worked about sixty hours per week, although he only taught three in-person lectures. The Internet had turned his classes into commodities. Each lecture he did went online, where kids could purchase his teaching services at the rate of \$3.50 per hour. The rest of the time, he responded to students' online requests for help, developed lesson plans, and wrote textbooks and workbooks. He'd written about two hundred books. 'The harder I work, the more I make,' he said, 'I like that.'"*

Most of Kim's earnings come from students watching his online lectures. As of the time the book was written, "He employed thirty people to help him manage his teaching empire" and "ran a publishing company to produce his books."



South Korean students consistently outperform American students on international standardized tests, and many attribute it to the hagwons that employ superteachers such as Kim. Those who run the hagwons are able to recruit top teachers, incentivize them with rewards for student test-score

growth, and quickly fire underperforming teachers. By contrast, according to Kim and a director of another hagwon (Lee Chae-yun), the public school teachers lack such incentives and [are inefficient](#) as a result.

Many Americans would balk at the competitiveness of education in South Korea as described above. But do you think more competitiveness will be needed if America is to remain powerful in an increasingly crowded global economy? [Should America](#) apply more free market principles to its education system?

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