

# Interactive White Boards, Returning to School, & Other Findings This Week

For many of you this is the last week of summer although we know that some people are already back (in this heatwave ☀️) and some of you aren't back until 7th September or beyond 🌞. Hence, this week's round up has some findings about exams, summer, but also a look at the joys of interactive whiteboards! What do you have in your school?

## 1. Many Happy Returns?

The return to school is looming on the horizon and some of you are happier than others. Once again we find that middle leaders are least looking forward to it. Middle leaders tend to still have a big teaching load, plus curricula or pastoral responsibilities, AND are often at the stage of life where they have young children (and sleepless nights!)

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As obvious as it seems, there's also something slightly depressing about the fact that teachers in the independent sector are most looking forward to returning to their jobs in September, while those who are going to work in schools rated inadequate/requires improvement are looking forward to it the least. What is it that makes private school teachers so happy to be returning - has their super-long holiday meant they've truly run out of things to do at home, or is working in a private school just a more pleasant experience?

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Of course for many of you in secondary schools, 'work' started again with the publication of exam results and the need to go in and help students make decisions on next steps. Many of you asked us for the breakdown of the kind of teachers who go in on exam days so here they are!

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## 2. Come for the data, stay for the Board Marker chat

Right, onto the main thing we want talk about today - the things you write with and the things on write on. This is our second year of surveying teachers about board markers and it is always a huge source of contention on twitter. First up, 6% of you tell us that you have to buy your

own whiteboard markers. And 14% of you have to survive on 6 or fewer markers. At the other end of the scale, 42% of teachers are lucky enough to get UNLIMITED markers throughout the year. And so let's learn something about what sort of school you need to work in to get hold of these UNLIMITED markers. It turns out teachers in private schools are almost twice as likely to have access to unlimited markers than those in the most disadvantaged schools. Is this why they are so happy?!?

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### 3. What do you write on?

Technologists are always amazed at how much secondary teachers love projectors more than love their interactive whiteboards. However, we were curious to see that in schools with poorer intakes teachers were more likely to favour an interactive whiteboard. Any ideas why this might be? (Our guess is that it might be age-related, as younger teachers cluster in more challenging schools).

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One issue with Interactive White Boards (IWBs) is that they frequently go wrong – more frequently than a simple laptop connected to a projector does. 15% of teachers say board technology frequently lets them down or cannot be relied upon. Technology seems to be more reliable in more disadvantaged schools, which makes sense since they are a little better funded. Is another reason why those teaching in affluent schools dislike IWBs so much simply because they don't work? Let us know what you think.

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Primary school teachers tell us they are much more likely to have the modern touchscreen IWBs. They also like, and make far greater use of their flexibility, than do secondary teachers. However, we also know that maths teachers love IWBs. Yet, when we looked, they are no more likely to have a modern IWB than other subjects. Furthermore, they are also equally let down by their technology. Does this tell us that schools are making inefficient purchasing decisions, where the teachers who would most benefit from something the most aren't always the ones who would get it? Should maths teachers have priority when IWBs are upgraded?

### 4. Talking about our reputation...

A surprising finding was the extent to which, given an even choice between two unknown schools, teachers said they would prefer to work in a local authority school rather than one in a multi-academy trust (also known as 'chains'). Of course, it doesn't mean teachers tend to dislike all MATs – they just seem to perceive going to work at a MAT that isn't familiar to them as risky. Does this matter, given that once they get to know schools better they might feel

differently? Well, we think it might simply because it presents a challenge for recruitment at schools in MATs who need to take care to really explain how the MAT will prescribe aspects of a teachers job to allay fears. What did we find? Three-quarters of teachers would pick a job in the local authority school versus 9% who'd pick the academy with the rest choosing at random. Does that change depending on where a teacher works now? A little... It's worth saying that this doesn't mean those teachers currently working in MATs are unhappy with their school – in fact, those in sponsored academies are MORE LIKELY to say they are looking forward to returning to school than those in local authority schools (mostly because they are more likely to be keen young teachers)!!function(){use strict;window.addEventListener("message",function(a){if(void 0!=a.data["datawrapper-height"])for(var e in a.data["datawrapper-height"]){var t=document.getElementById("datawrapper-chart-"+e)||document.querySelector("iframe[src\*='"+e+"'"]);t&&(t.style.height=a.data["datawrapper-height"][e]+"px")}})}();

Finally, finally, we know you love our tips!

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