

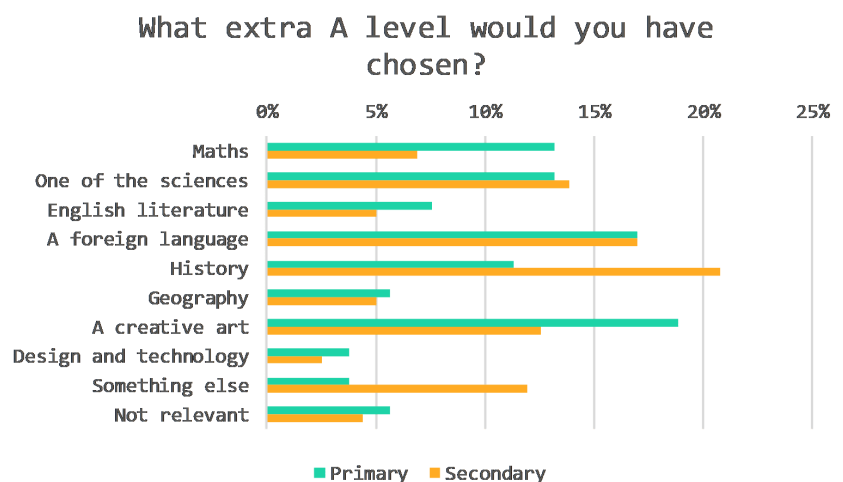
What data shows about how we might solve the teacher recruitment crisis

In the four days since the [launch of Teacher Tapp](#) we've already learned a few weird things we didn't know before. We know that:

- far [more primary teachers wish they had studied maths for A-level](#) than secondary school teachers
- over [half of you](#) had a welcome back speech from your headteacher and you found it inspirational
- 4 in 10 teachers want to keep the six week summer holiday - but the rest would prefer to cut it down to five or four weeks

But the coolest thing so far is we are getting clues about how schools might solve the teacher recruitment crisis.

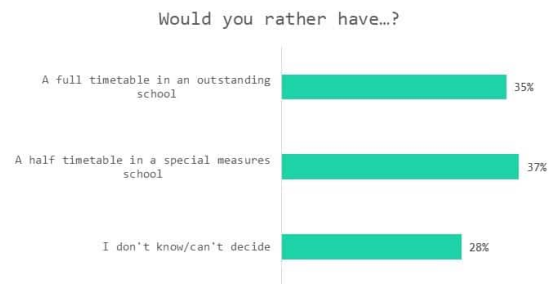
When we asked teachers which extra A-level would they have chosen if they could go back in time, the second most popular response was a foreign language. This was true for both primary and secondary teachers.



At the same time, modern foreign languages is one of the subjects secondary schools most struggle to hire into. Imagine the possibilities if we were to find a way to help these teachers build on their latent language desire! Could the government offer to pay for night classes? Or for online tuition for teachers wishing to learn a second language, in return for them teaching some MFL classes in future? What about a programme that continues paying the wages of a non-MFL teacher to go abroad for a year and work as a teaching assistant in France or Spain (or China) to improve their language - as long as they teach MFL on their return?

And what is the data telling us about recruiting teachers into the most challenging schools?

Yesterday we asked a difficult forced-choice question:



Special measures schools typically struggle to recruit and retain staff, even though they are most in need of stable, dedicated teachers. That's because behaviour in failing schools is often poor and the workload high -- two factors teachers say put them off. Yet, when we asked, 37% of teachers said they would prefer to work in a special measures school over an outstanding one, if their timetabled hours were cut in half. Some teachers would have chosen the special measures school even without the differing timetable. That's true. But given the difficulties such schools have in teacher recruitment, the proportion is likely to be low. Hence, what the data suggests is that teachers value non-teaching time. Having fewer classes seems to mean fewer concerns about dealing with the challenging behaviour and high workload. Reduced timetables are expensive and they would need to be planned carefully, but this (very tentative) outcome suggests it could be useful for special measures schools to offer reduced timetables to fantastic teachers in order to encourage them in before starting to increase hours as the school gets back on-track.

Is there yet more to find out on this topic? Oh, absolutely...

At the moment our panel size is small and our conclusions are wildly tentative. Education ministers: please give us a few weeks before making teacher recruitment decisions based on our blogs! But these quick findings show how simple questions answered by a large number of people could start giving us better insights than we have ever had before about teachers' lives and what they want from their work. To us here at Teacher Tapp, that's enormously exciting -- we hope you agree. If you're not already on-board, sign up for Teacher Tapp via the [iPhone App Store](#) or the [Android App Store](#). You can also check out more at www.teachertapp.com * If you liked this post, you also might enjoy reading about the [nerdy things we can learn from data about your school](#).