

## Marking matters (or does it)?

Do you like podcasts? Of course you do. So we thought we'd try something a little different this week.

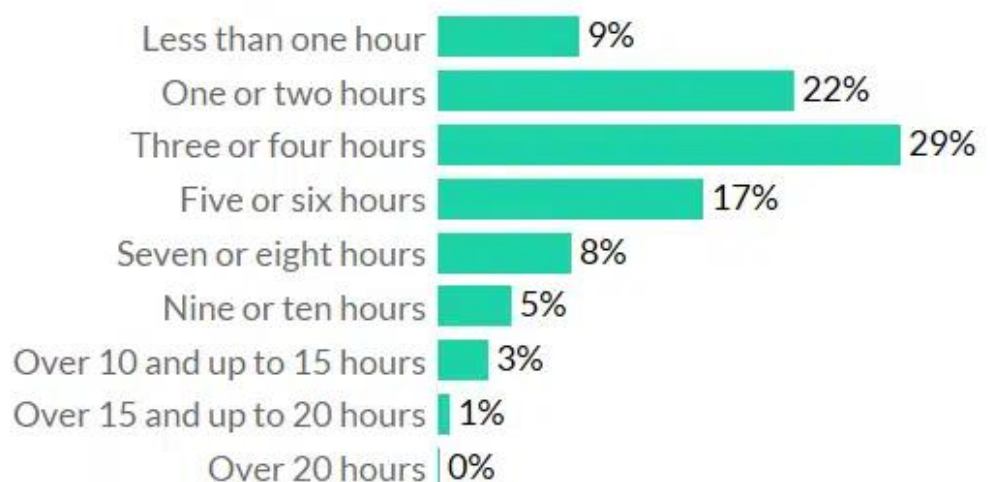
Click below if you want to listen to Becky and Laura chat about marking. Or, otherwise, you can carry on and read the blog in the usual way!

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Marking – love it (like Laura) or loathe it (like Becky) – it is an important part of the daily lives of teachers.

Almost 1-in-5 of you are marking more than seven hours a week – that's a whole day's extra work each week! How on earth do you squeeze it in?

### How much time do you spend marking student's work (outside classroom hours) each WEEK?



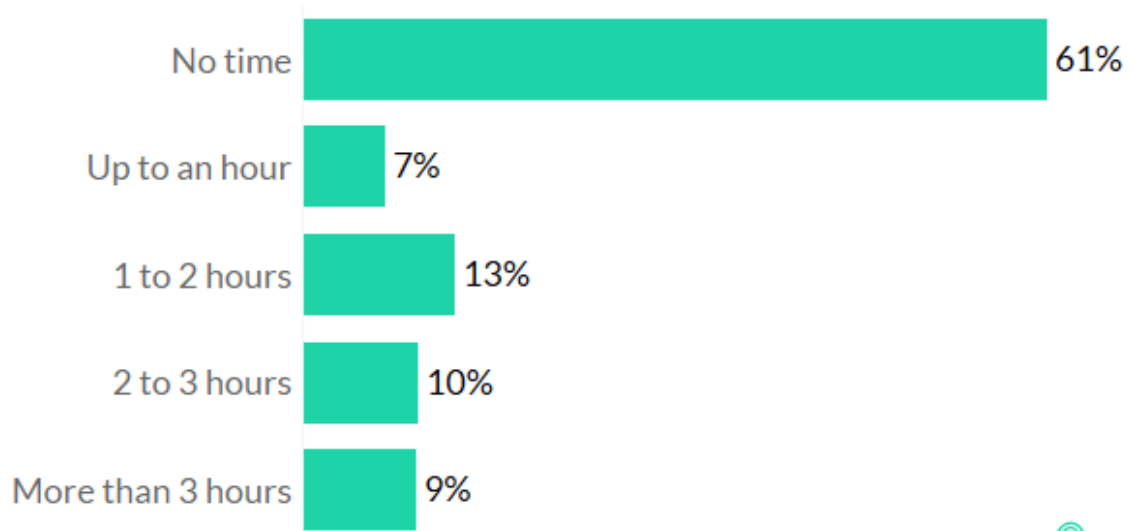
Not relevant - my job doesn't involve giving pupi.. 5%

6,134 responders between 30/10/2017 and 22/03/2019



On any particular weekend, we find that about 4-in-10 of you are marking...

## Think back to the weekend. Approximately how long did you spend on marking?



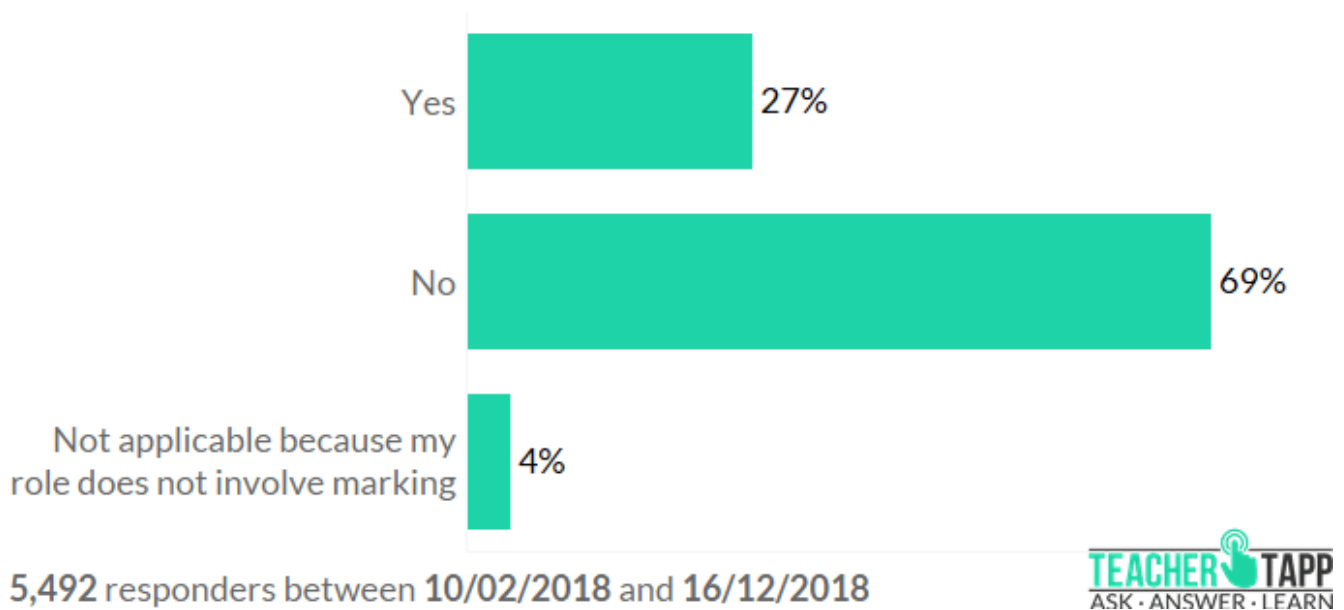
3,613 responders between 29/01/2018 and 21/05/2018



...and even on school holidays many of you are marking, marking, marking!

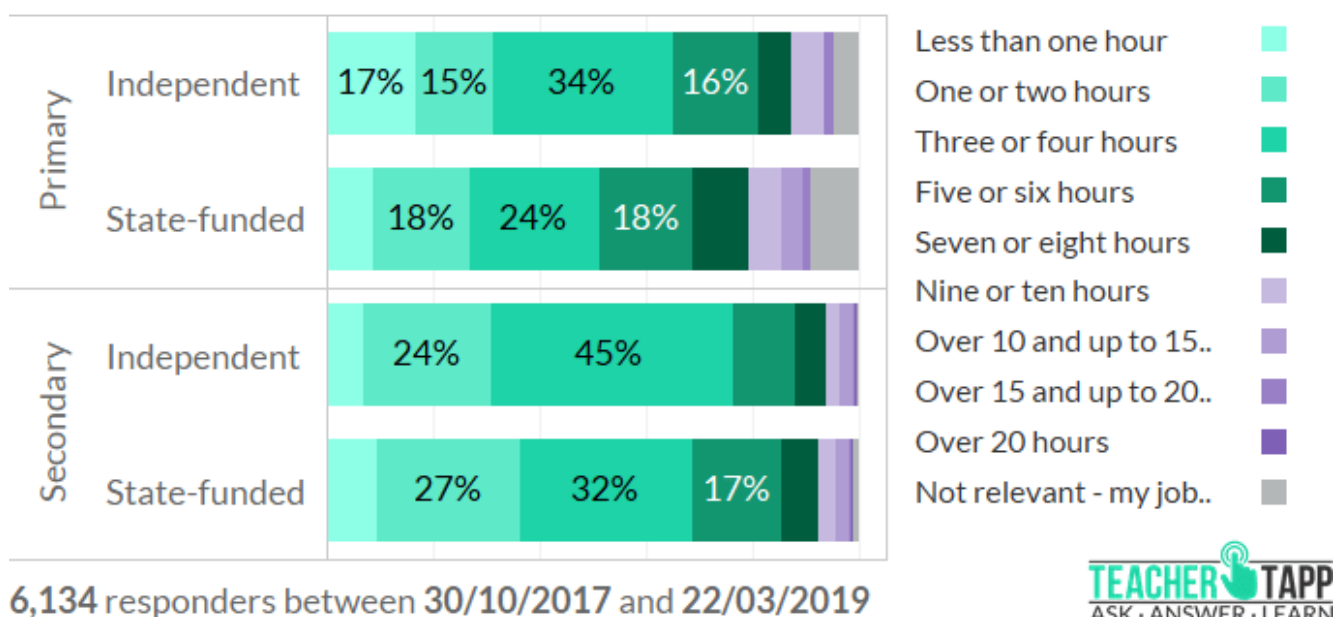
This is from the February Half-Term:

## Have you, or will you at any point today, be marking books?



Primary teachers in state-funded schools are losing the marking game – doing far more than anyone else. Private school teachers come off a little better than their state colleagues – this is one of those areas where having smaller class sizes really does help!

## How much time do you spend marking student's work (outside classroom hours) each WEEK?



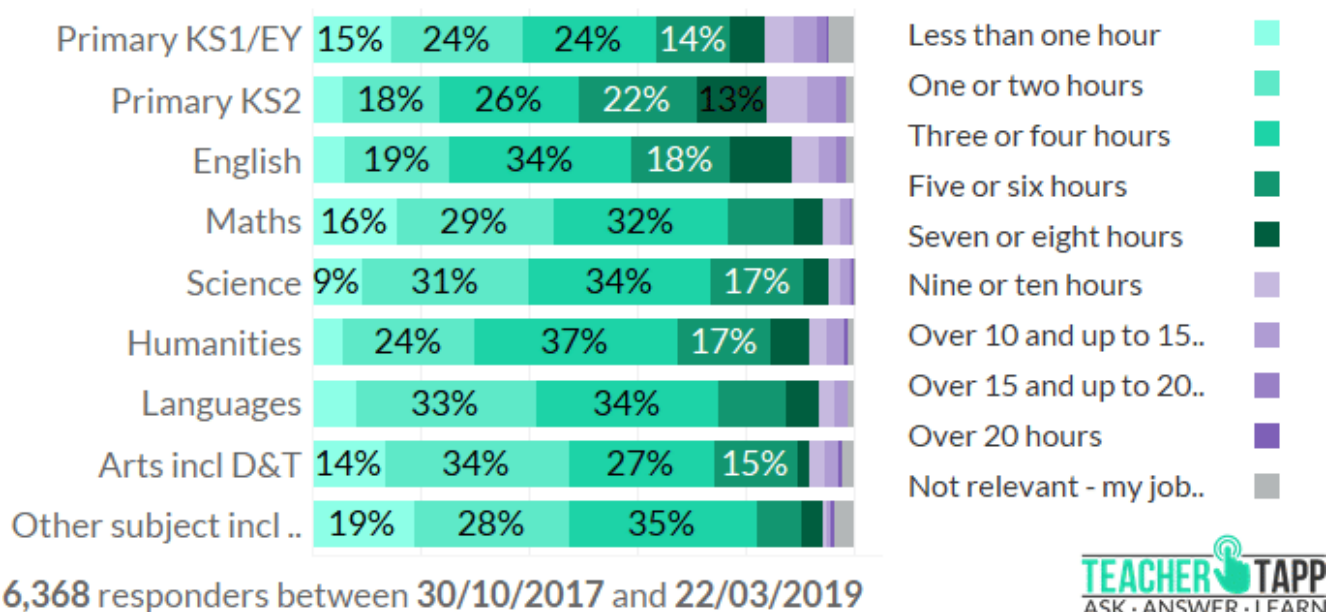
Want to avoid a heavy marking load?

Don't become an English or juniors teachers then!

Maths is a good choice, presumably because sums are quick to mark.

The smaller secondary subjects including art and PE are also good bets.

## How much time do you spend marking student's work (outside classroom hours) each WEEK?

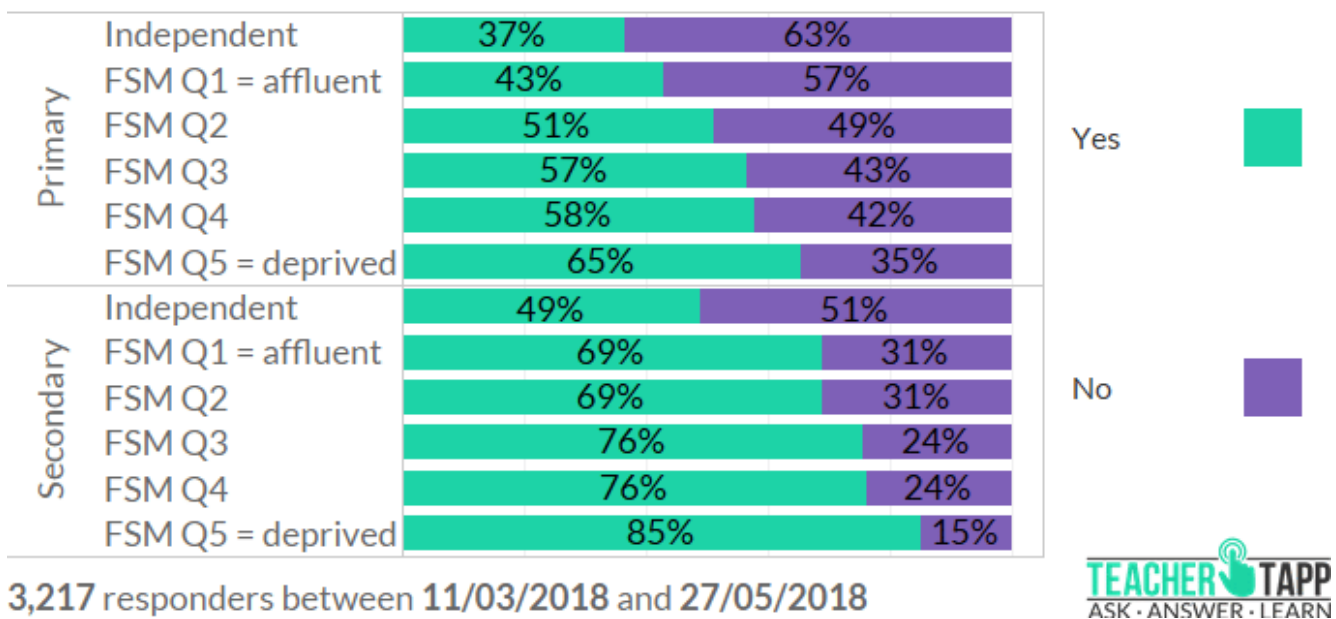


## Rules around marking

Why are you marking? A lot of you have to because your school has a marking policy.

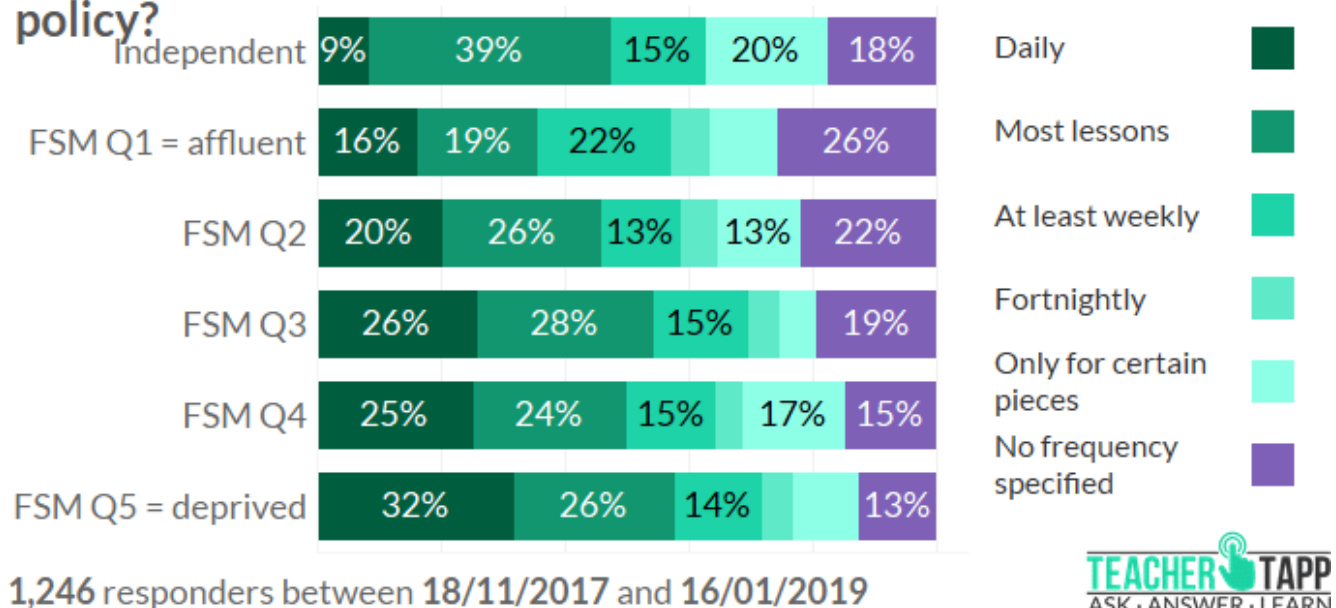
Private schools are far less likely to tell you how often to mark. Teachers in secondary schools serving more disadvantaged communities have the least choice!

## Does your school's feedback/marking policy specify how often books should be marked by a teacher?



In primary schools, only 1-in-5 of you have no frequency of required marking for your English/literacy books. Again, it is those of you teaching in the highest free school meals schools that have to live with the most prescriptive policies.

## How often are you expected to provide written feedback (marking) in English/Literacy books, according to your school's policy?

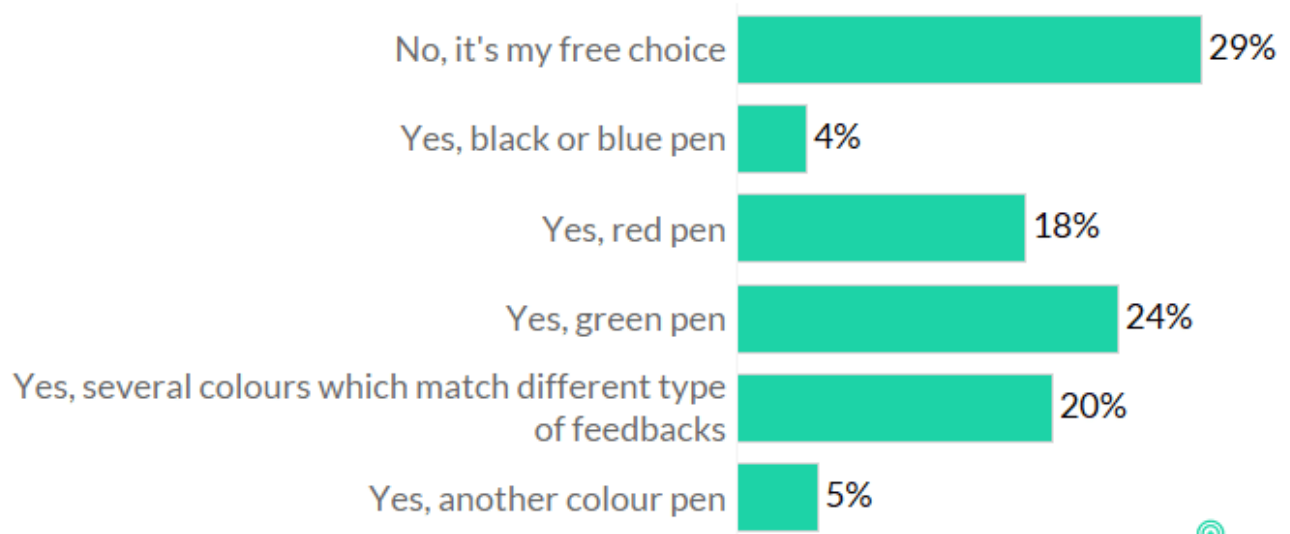


## What colour pen is in your marking policy?

Perhaps the strangest aspect of school marking policies is the part where THEY TELL YOU WHAT PEN COLOUR TO USE! Less than a third of you get to choose your own pen colour.

Overall, green is the most popular colour for marking policies.

### Are you required to mark with particular colour pens? Tick the response that most closely applies.

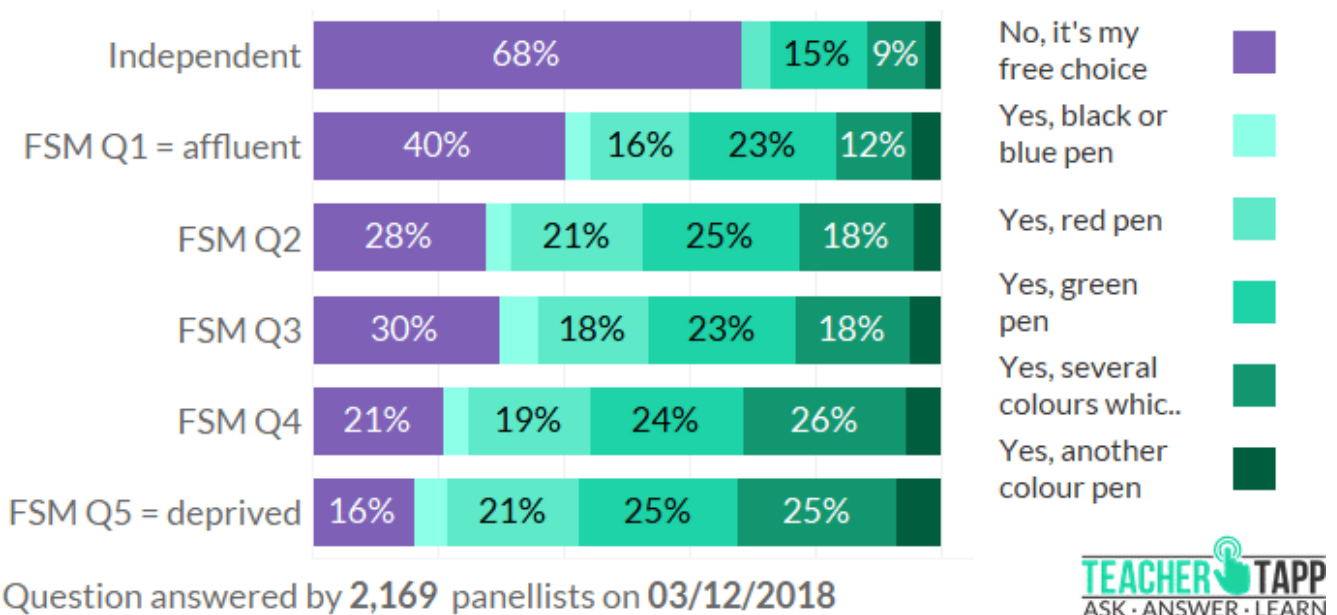


Question answered by 2,567 panellists on 03/12/2018



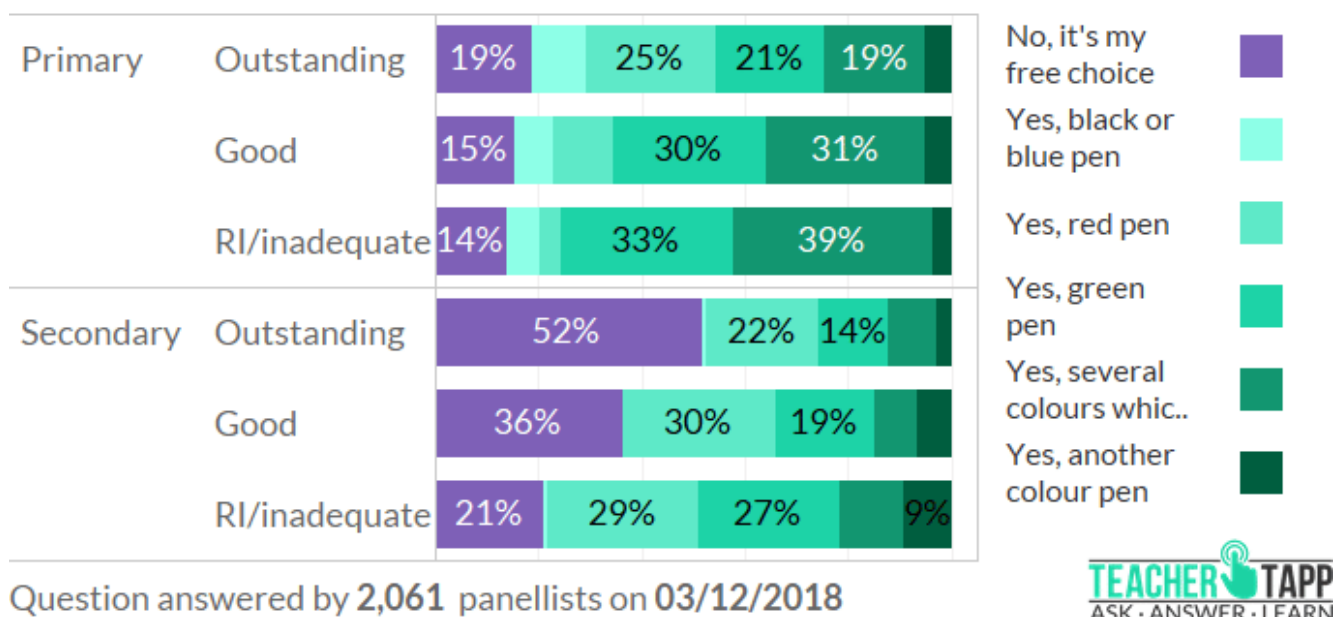
If you really want to pick your own pen colours then you should find a private school to work in...

Are you required to mark with particular colour pens? Tick the response that most closely applies.



Or find an outstanding secondary school:

Are you required to mark with particular colour pens? Tick the response that most closely applies.



Mark like no one is watching

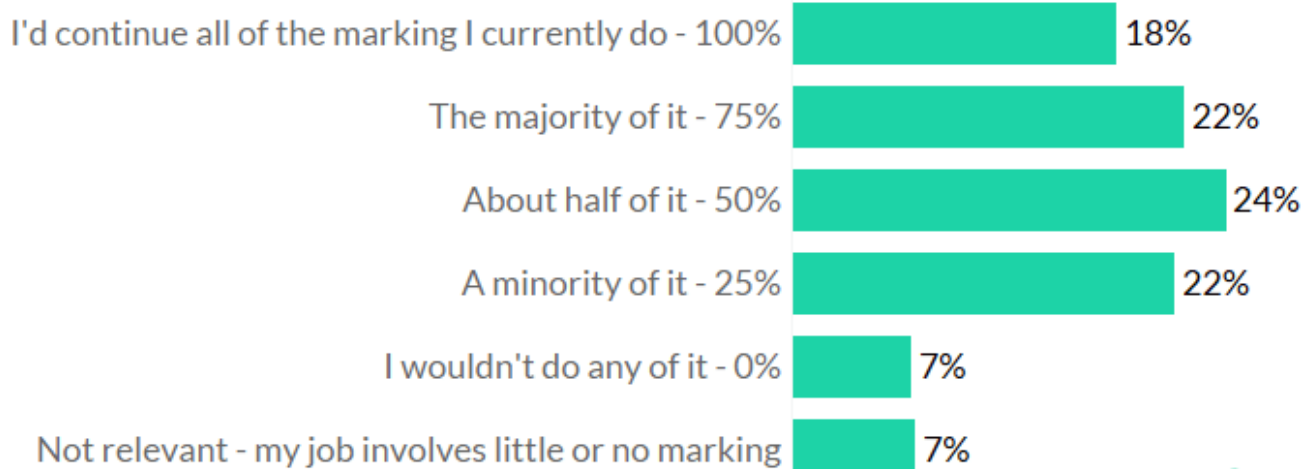
Teachers could mark for hours every day, but it necessarily displaces other activities – planning, reading around the subject, watching television, hanging out with friends.



We wanted to figure out HOW IMPORTANT to learning you felt that the marking you did was. So we came up with two of our favourite questions that we've ever asked on Teacher Tapp so far.

In the first question we ask you how much you would mark if no one was watching (thanks to a different 'mark', Mark Enser, for providing us with the perfect tagline via his [forthcoming book](#)). Well over half of you would slash your marking in half or more – and almost one-in-ten wouldn't do any at all!

## How much would you mark if you knew that no one would be monitoring and if all that mattered was balancing pupil learning and workload



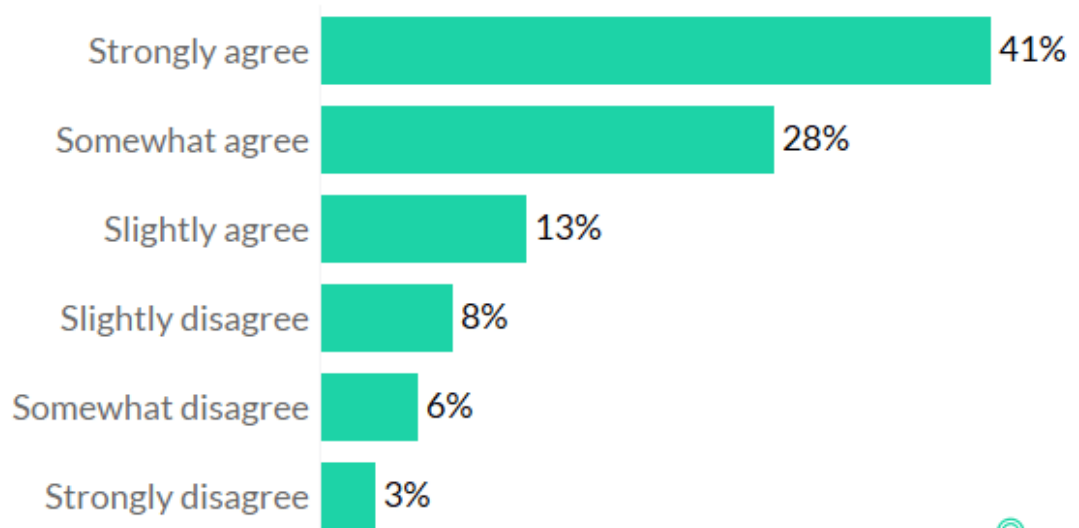
3,710 responders between 22/03/2019 and 22/03/2019



In the second question, we asked whether it would matter to pupil learning if you wrote NOTHING in their books by way of feedback. Amazingly, almost half of you feel that even if you stopped it wouldn't make a difference.



## If I wrote no written comments in my students books, they would learn as much as they do at the moment

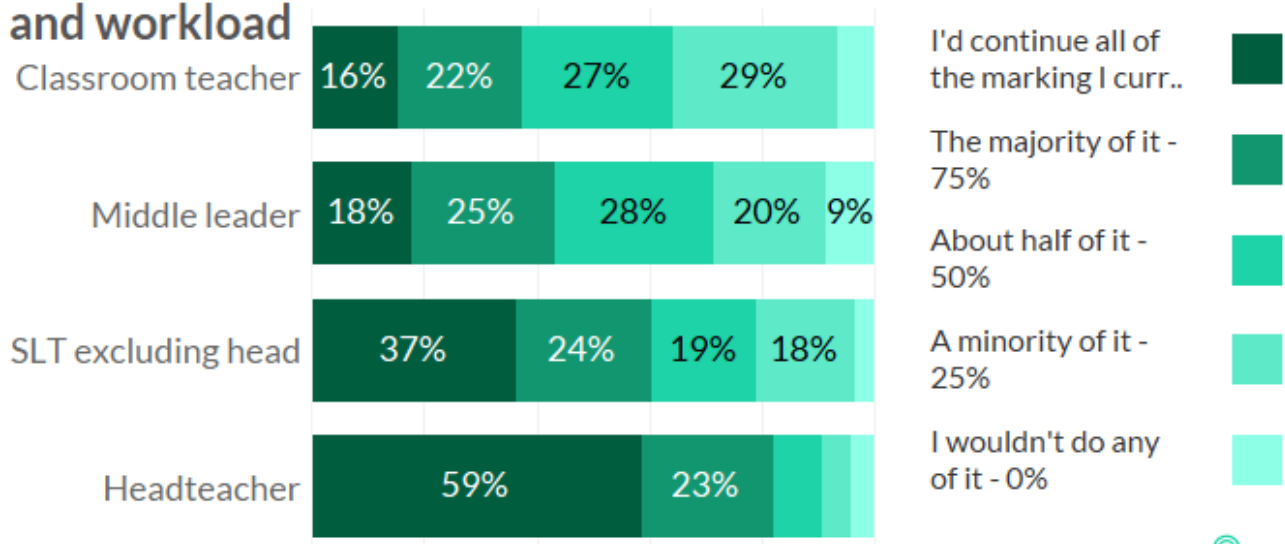


4,751 responders between 20/04/2018 and 05/03/2019



And the less you have to mark, the more you feel it is valuable to pupil learning!

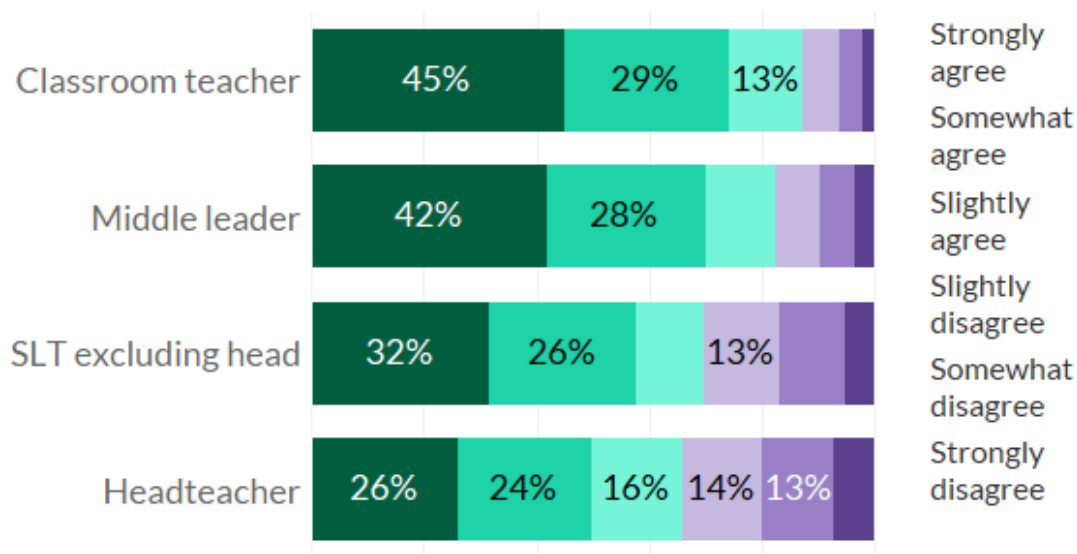
## How much would you mark if you knew that no one would be monitoring and if all that mattered was balancing pupil learning and workload



3,316 responders between 22/03/2019 and 22/03/2019



## If I wrote no written comments in my students books, they would learn as much as they do at the moment



4,751 responders between 20/04/2018 and 05/03/2019

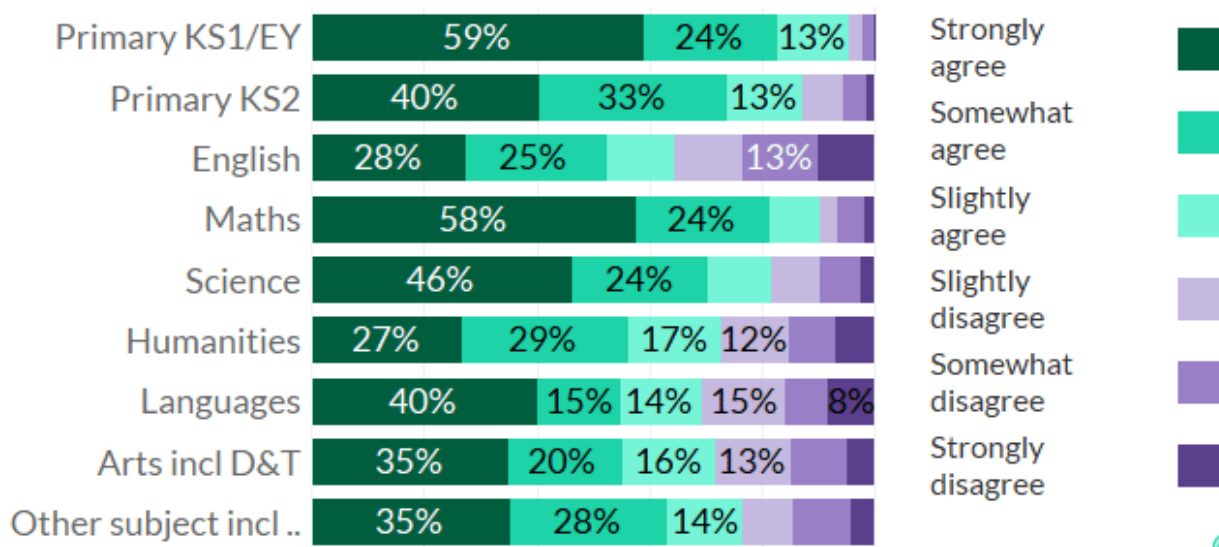


## Switching marking into something more productive

Marking seems to be really important in some subjects, particularly English and humanities.

Others, such as mathematicians reckon they could teach effectively without doing any of it. So, why do we make mathematicians mark books? One theory is that headteachers feel it would be unfair to have some subjects marking a lot whilst others weren't. We are not so sure – there are loads of ways in which teacher's work varies... music and PE teachers run clubs, language teachers run complex school trips.

## If I wrote no written comments in my students books, they would learn as much as they do at the moment



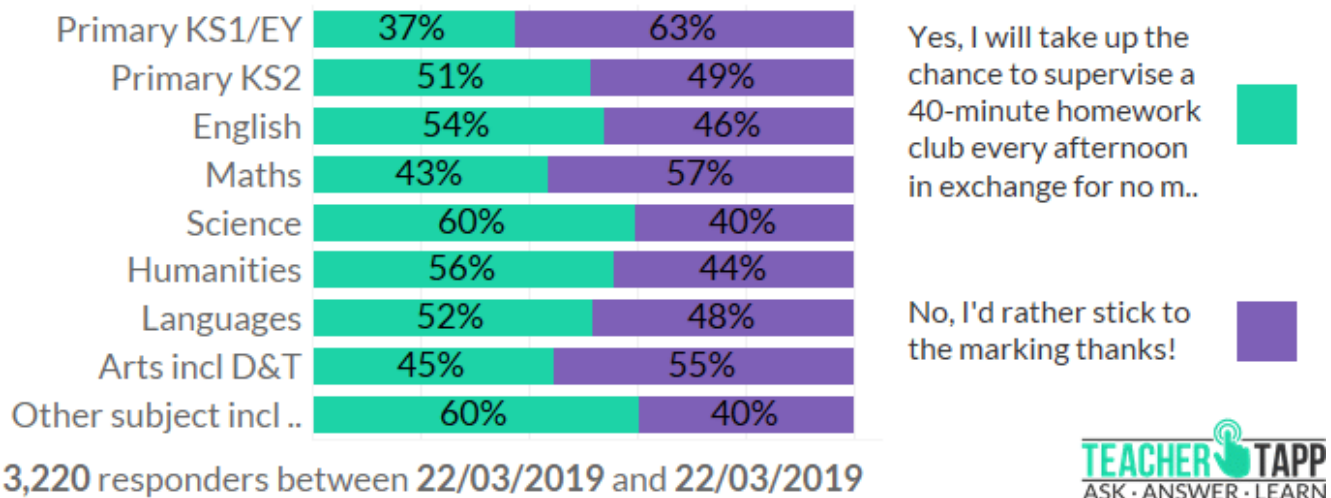
4,751 responders between 20/04/2018 and 05/03/2019



How about we get the maths teachers doing something more productive in place of marking?!

Wouldn't it be wonderful if students could go to the maths department EVERY DAY after school to get homework stuff? We asked whether teachers would be happy to trade in their marking in exchange for running a homework club every day. Now, the bad news is the 6-in-10 maths teachers would rather keep their marking, presumably because it isn't so taxing. However, that still leaves 4-in-10 maths teachers who'd happily supervise homework clubs instead. Surely that's enough maths teachers to make this work!

**Your headteacher offers you the chance to give up doing any marking outside class time if you wish, but in return you must supervise a 40 minute homework club each afternoon. Will you take the offer?**



Marking... like it or loathe it... let's remember that when we ask teachers to do a lot of it, it means we are asking them not to do something else that could be a lot more valuable to them... or to the school!

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Once again, here is a chance to hear Becky and Laura chat about marking!

Finally, we know you love the tips, so here they are for last week...

- [The differences between learning and performance](#)
  - [Modern languages and shy students](#)
  - [Cramming the curriculum in at the end of the year](#)
  - [The problem with book scrutiny](#)
  - [What is 'comprehension'?](#)
  - [Motivation in students who cannot keep up](#)
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reflection



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