

What Teachers Tapped This Week #3 – 1st October 2017

Another week, another set of questions – thank you to the 900 of you taking part. We hope you are learning lots!

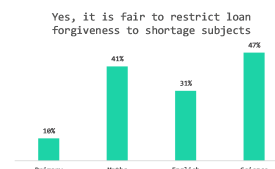
Right, onto what we learned this week...

1. Theo-Who? You don't care for the new Academies Minister!

On Thursday, the government [announced](#) Theodore Agnew, chair of Inspiration Trust, as the new Academies Minister. But did teachers think this was a good idea? It turns out, most people just didn't know! A cracking 88% of teachers said they knew nothing about him. Among those who did know about his past -- he was once a brothel cleaner -- 7% said he was not suitable, while just 3% gave him the thumbs up. So what? Agnew can get on with the job without people prejudging him too much. Let's hope he does well!

2. You like (and dislike) Greening's student loan 'forgiveness' idea

Because we Teacher Tappsters are sneaky, we put a question out in advance of the education secretaries speech on Sunday in which she announced a pilot of student loan repayments in certain parts of the country. First, we asked teachers if they thought loan forgiveness for new teachers was a good idea -- and 77% of teachers said they agreed or strongly agreed. BUT, we also asked whether people thought it was fair if the forgiveness only went to teachers in particular subjects. A whopping 69% of teachers felt subject specific loan forgiveness was unfair. BUT HERE'S THE MAGIC. We did some further analysis and found that how teachers feel about targeted loan forgiveness depends on their subject ?

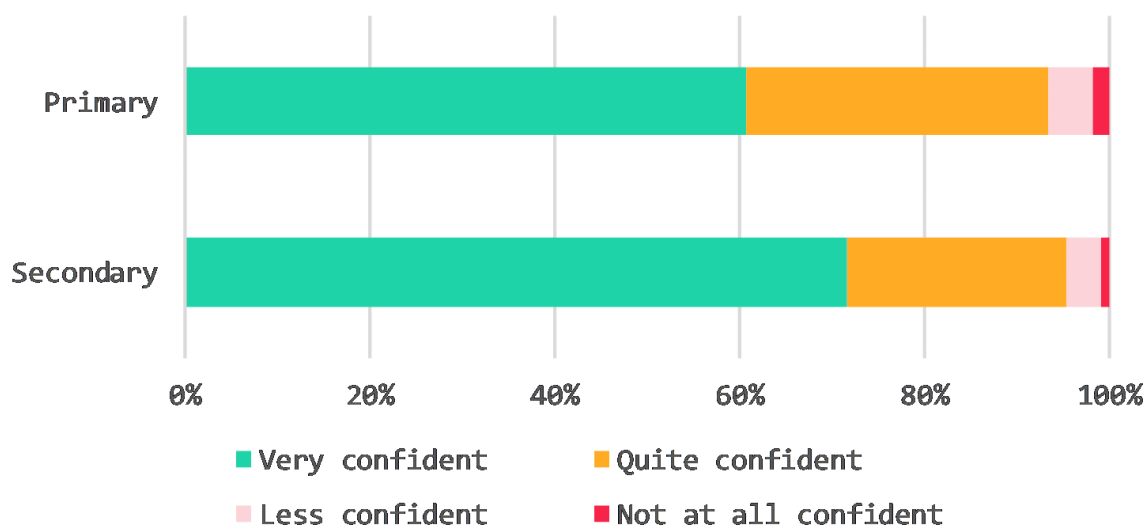


Primary teachers tend to think subject-based loan forgiveness is daft -- Presumably because most of them don't have a specific subject focus and so won't be covered. Science and maths teachers had a much higher tolerance of targeted loan forgiveness -- Presumably because they believe it will cover their subject. (We could only include 4 subjects in the analysis as we only had a reasonable number of responses for these). So What? As awkward as it is, this suggests teachers respond to policies in fairly self-interested ways. So a top-level figure such as '69% of teachers disagree', hides the fact that across the profession people in different subjects will often have very different opinions.

3. Teachers are confident on content -- but not so much on SEND

We asked two questions this week about teacher's confidence in their abilities. So far the data shows a high level of confidence in subject-knowledge among both primary and secondary teachers.

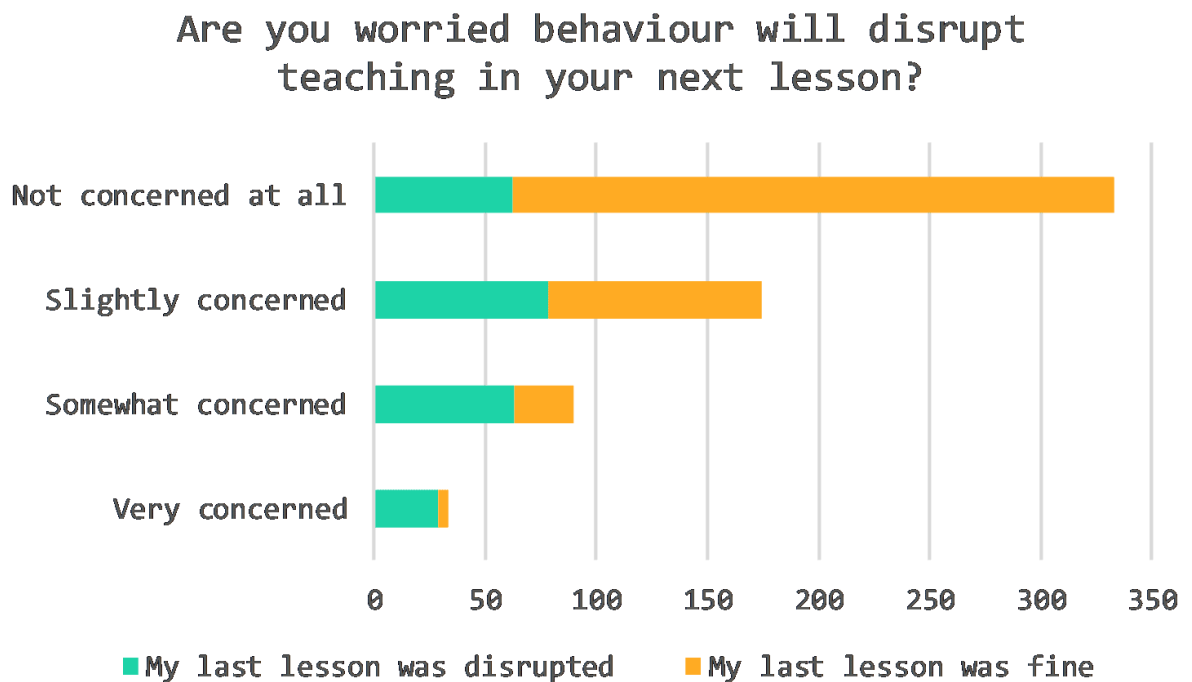
Subject knowledge confidence before preparing for a lesson



But there is much less confidence about meeting the needs of SEND pupils. Over half of respondents felt they only met the needs of SEND pupils 'adequately' or were below adequate in some way. Why? We don't yet know. Keep tapping to help us find out more!

4. A LOT of lessons get disrupted by bad behaviour. (Genuinely, a lot).

This week we asked two questions about behaviour. One asked how worried teachers were about behaviour in their next lesson. A second question, the next day, asked if the previous lesson had been disrupted. The questions tapped into slightly different things. Most teachers answer on the app at around 3.30pm, so when asked to think about a next lesson, teachers most likely thought about the class they were due to teach the next morning. When asked about the class they just taught, teachers were most likely thinking about the class they taught at the end of the day. We'll have a think about how to ask these questions in future to get around this inconsistency. But, in the meantime, the answers are fascinating. Here's what we found:



Teachers who were very concerned about behaviour in their next lesson were right to do so! The majority did experience disruptions. More surprising is that around a third of teachers who were only slightly concerned about behaviour also experienced disruption in their lesson at the end of the next day. Secondary school teachers reported a higher proportion of disrupted lessons (40%) than in primary (32%). But this gap was a lot smaller than we expected!

Is behaviour better in some schools than others? Yes, it is

When we looked, we found lessons were more likely to be disrupted in a Requires Improvement or Inadequate school and least likely to be disrupted in an Outstanding one. This isn't causal, of course! We aren't saying that because a school is Outstanding then the behaviour is better. But it shows a relationship between the two. Ultimately, if you teach in an Outstanding school, it seems you have less chance of your lesson being disrupted.



BUT THERE'S A BIGGER POINT HERE. This data shows that even in an outstanding school, 30% of teachers said bad behaviour disrupted the last lesson they taught. In failing schools, over half of teachers said behaviour disrupted their last lesson. This is a LOT of disruption. Anyone who thinks behaviour in schools is already sorted needs to find a way to explain this data.

5. A lot of teachers say they work more than 12 hours a day

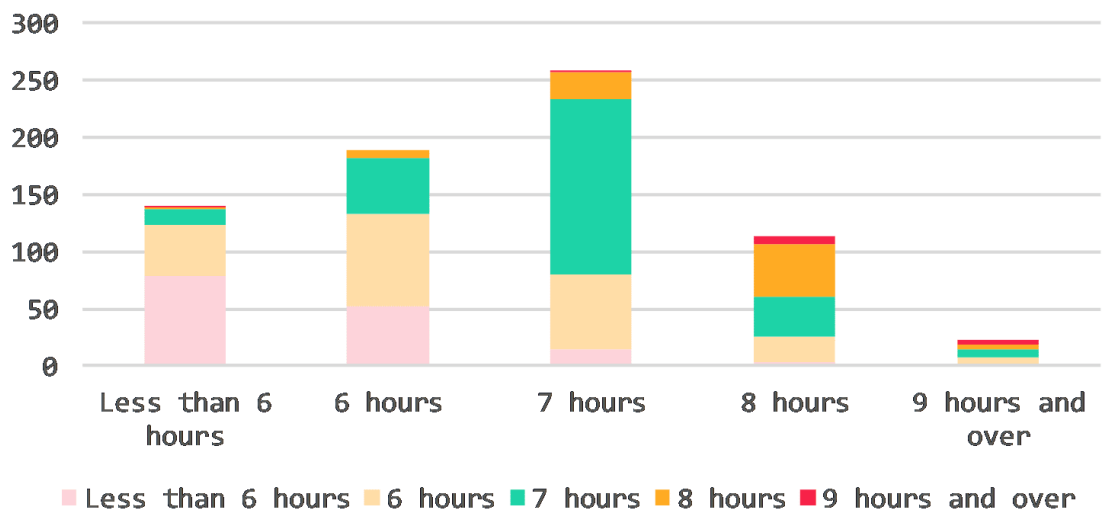
On Wednesday, we asked people how many hours they had worked the day before (Tuesday). Answers don't seem to vary by primary/secondary, though they do appear to vary by years of experience. But - here's the crazy thing -- when asked 69% of teachers say they worked more than 10 hours, and 22% worked for more than 12 hours. This seems like a lot!

So what? A key question is: what are teachers doing in this time?! Our hunch is that other activities -- such as eating, breaks, commuting -- were also added in. It seems unlikely, though not impossible, that this many tappsters did focused work for 12 solid hours. That said, we also asked during a week when many teachers had open days or parents' evening. Did this contribute to the high number? We will rerun this data, plus some other questions, to try and round out an accurate picture of what is going on.

6. Teachers vary wildly in their sleep habits

Sleeping is important. Scientifically, it's one of those annoying things, like eating well and exercising, that genuinely makes a big difference to your performance levels and overall wellbeing. But how good are teachers at sleeping? We asked twice this week about the sleep habits of Teacher Tappsters. Why? Because we are interested to find out how frequently we need to ask you certain questions about your job and lives. Some we will only need to ask once because your response should be the same every time (e.g. when you qualified). In the case of sleep, however, we learned we need to ask multiple times, as there isn't a great deal of consistency!

Consistency of sleep on consecutive nights



So what? The fact so many teachers are operating on 6 or fewer hours is a touch worrying. Some people can thrive on less than 6 hours sleep, but for most people it will do damage over time. Plus, does low sleep affect your job satisfaction? Or how you perceive behaviour in your classes? Those are questions we will soon be able to answer... if you keep Tapping!

7. Finally, we learned again this week how much you really like Teacher Tapp

The encouraging tweets; the great emails; the helpful suggestions of questions. It's all going towards building a product that is starting to get into the nitty-gritty of teachers' lives. It is also helping us get ready for our new updated app, built in response to your ideas. It's not quite ready yet, but we are working on it, and you'll be the first to know when it goes live. Thanks for working with us for another week. **

Here are the links to last week's tips:

- [Episodic and semantic memory](#)
- [Reducing workload](#)
- [Lesson planning](#)
- [Risk-taking in teenagers](#)
- [Story-telling and cognitive science](#)
- [Boys in the Middle East](#)

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