

Who Won October Half-term? What Is An 'Extreme Hairstyle'? (and other findings this week)

Attention Tappers! If you're looking for the latest findings from November 2019, please click [here](#) to be redirected!

If you're here to learn more about Behaviour, Multiplication checks and avoiding Observations, read on below.

1. Are you on holiday this week? #winning!

Half-term this week? Your school or local authority has definitely got things the right way round. Well over 90% of you would prefer a longer first half of a term compared to a longer second half of term. Sure, last week might have been painful, but you'll have the easier to ride to Christmas now.

What about those of you who are back at school today? It looks like you might have a noisy week. Though that is as much down to your colleagues as it is the students!

Fewer than 1-in-5 classroom teachers have somewhere they work where they know it'll be quiet. No wonder so many of you take your work home with you. Given that teachers mark for at least 3 hours each week (with the average closer to 5 hours), as well as planning upwards of 20 lessons, there is a substantial issue with not having a place to work during PPA time.

2. Extreme haircuts

One of the most baffling lines in most school uniform policies is the explanation of what counts as acceptable versus 'extreme' hair. If you track newspaper articles related to school uniforms, you'll soon learn these rules not only trip up some families, but they are also angry when they do. Many a local newspaper has delighted in a picture of an angry mum whose child recently got a beaded hair wrap while on holiday but found, upon return, the school demanding it must go.

Hence, we decided to ask, what counts as 'extreme' hair? After all, one person's extreme hair is another's non-threatening fashion statement.

We created the list of 'extreme' hairstyles based on actual news stories collected over the past year. (Laura does actually collect British school uniform stories via a google news alert. In 18 months she collected over 170 of them).

So what did teachers think?

Bright hair dye and shaved logos were almost universally considered extreme. Which might explain why one girl was banned from school "[for being too ginger](#)". [Spoiler: her hair is dyed fire-engine red].

It's noticeable that subtle-coloured hair dye is rarely labelled as 'extreme' by teachers (less than 10%). This suggests it's not so much the act of dying hair which is considered extreme but the bright colour. Yet, children can naturally have bright red or bright white hair. Would teachers think of those as 'extreme'?

Shaved heads were less controversial than newspaper stories might have you believe – though still around a third of teachers felt they were extreme.

Respondents seldomly labelled the two hairstyles associated with afro-textured hair as extreme. This is good news as schools can be slapped with a lawsuit if acting otherwise. In 2011, a school in north London was [told by a judge](#) that its policy of a "short back and sides" amounted to "indirect racial discrimination" when it would not allow the wearing of cornrows (a form of close braiding) for boys with afro-textured hair.

Can teachers have 'extreme' hairstyles?

It's not just pupils who are policed on their follicles. Students and teachers are covered by hairstyle policies in 9% of primary schools and 21% of secondary schools. Note that 5% of special/AP school teachers also said they have policies that cover teachers but not pupils.

Why does this matter?

Given the amount of media and legal attention on this matter, it's worth schools knowing what is typically considered 'extreme' elsewhere so decisions can have context. In the end, the matter has to be up to individual discretion. But here's hoping this information might help save you from the angry news story file!

3. First Teacher Tapp Hackathon: a big success!

On Saturday, over 50 teachers gathered at a school in North London to take part in the first ever Teacher Tapp Hackathon. Teachers were looking at data charts, stats, and controlled data sets to help us get richer findings from them. Several blogs are now in the pipeline looking at topics as diverse as why mini-whiteboard use is different across subjects or why teachers are using Macs at home, but not at school (where the PC still rules).

The Hackathon Final Trophy Ceremony - Because Trophies > Badges

Prizes were given out for various activities on the day, including for 'wittiest caption for a graph'...

And best suggestion for a new user feature. (This one stoked the competitive juices of the crowd).

This weekend's questions were also all written by teachers including the new Teacher Tapp Genie question ■■ Results will be out today on the app.

We are planning to run the Hackathon again in the future so keep your eyes peeled for future invitations.

4. Finally, we know you love the daily tips so here are the suggested reads from last week...

- [Windy days, bad weather and student behaviour](#)
- [Deep learning, flexible knowledge and transfer](#)
- [Writing essays as indicators of progress](#)
- [How to get students to enjoy self-quizzing](#)
- [Practical steps you can take to support and control your own day and mental health.](#)
- [What counts as a 'piece' of information?](#)