

Anxiety, Alcohol and Teacher Stress Levels Just Before Christmas!

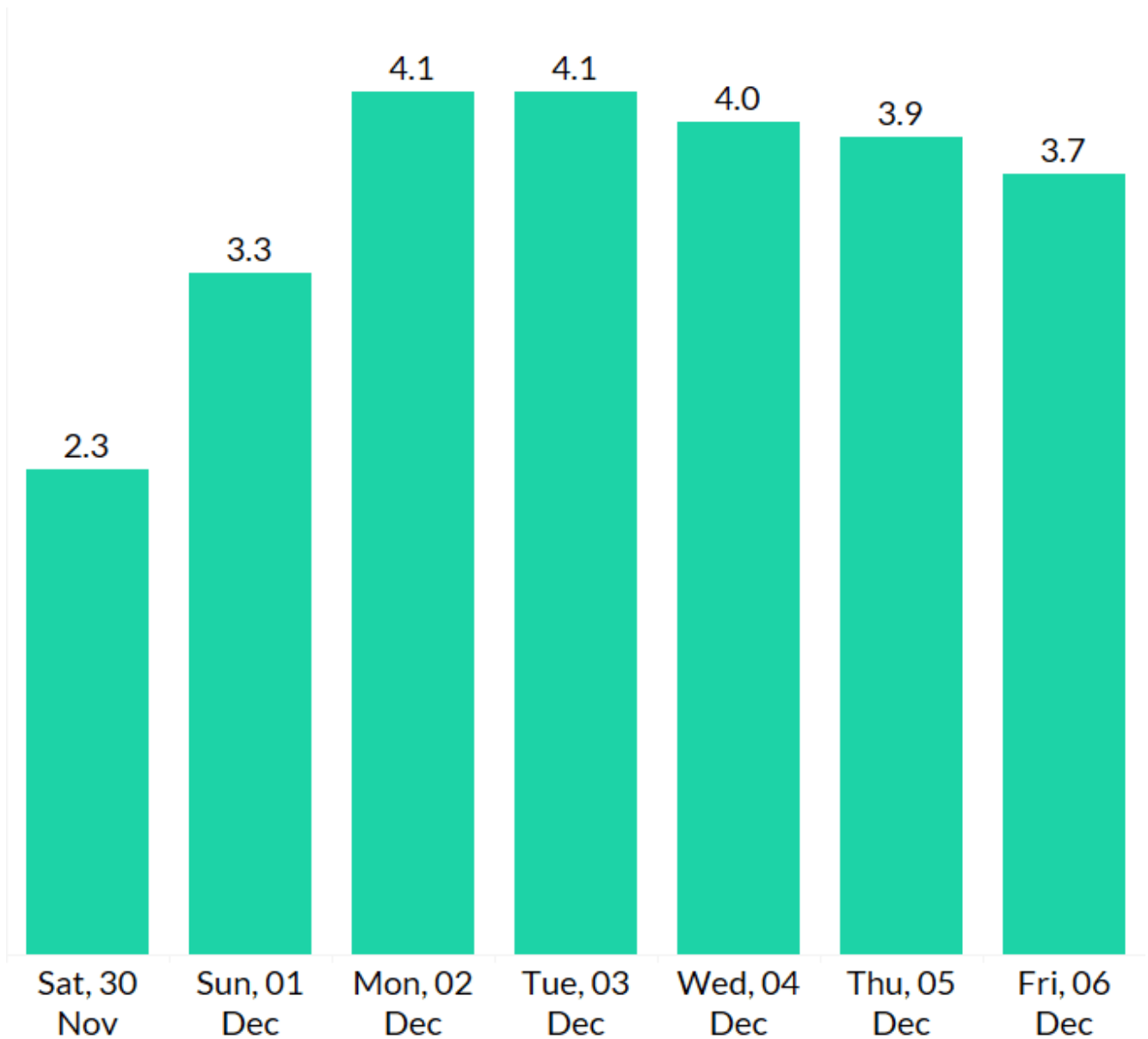
1. Which day of the week has the highest teacher anxiety?

Did you notice that we asked a question about anxiety TWICE last week? All of these anxiety questions we've been asking over the past few months are part of a project we're running with the [Nuffield Foundation](#) to better understand teachers' mental health.

Last week, we were interested in how work-related anxiety levels vary over the course of a working week. To do this, we randomly sorted all Tappsters into one of six groups. Everybody answered an anxiety question on Tuesday, and then each group got sent the anxiety question on another day of the week.

And lo, we can now tell you that Monday and Tuesday are the most anxiety-inducing days of the week!

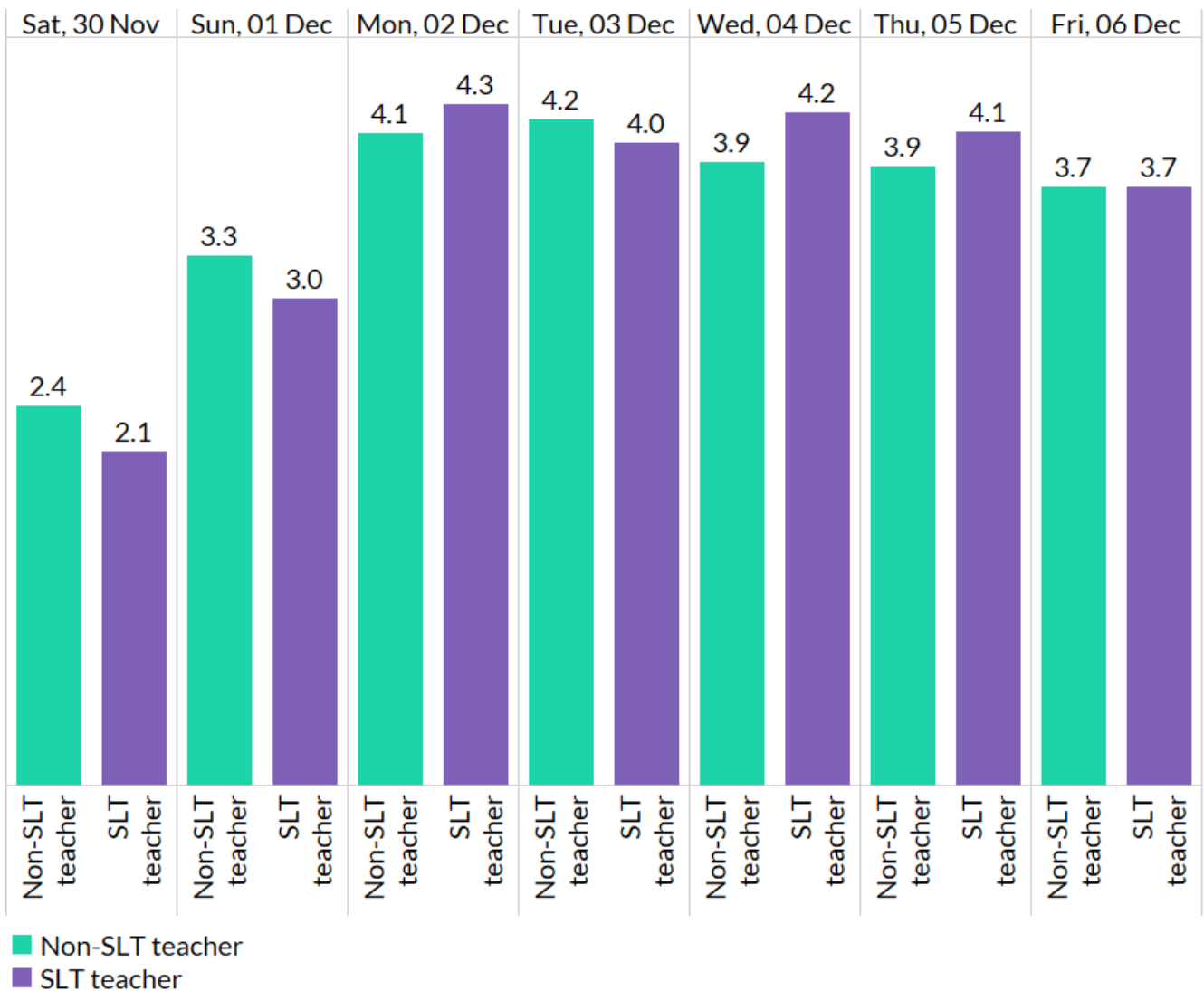
Average anxiety by day of week



Anxiety levels peaked on Monday and Tuesday, and were at their lowest on Saturday. Saturday afternoon is, of course, the time furthest away from the working week.

BUT an even more important finding is how anxiety across the week changes depending on your job role.

Average anxiety by day of week



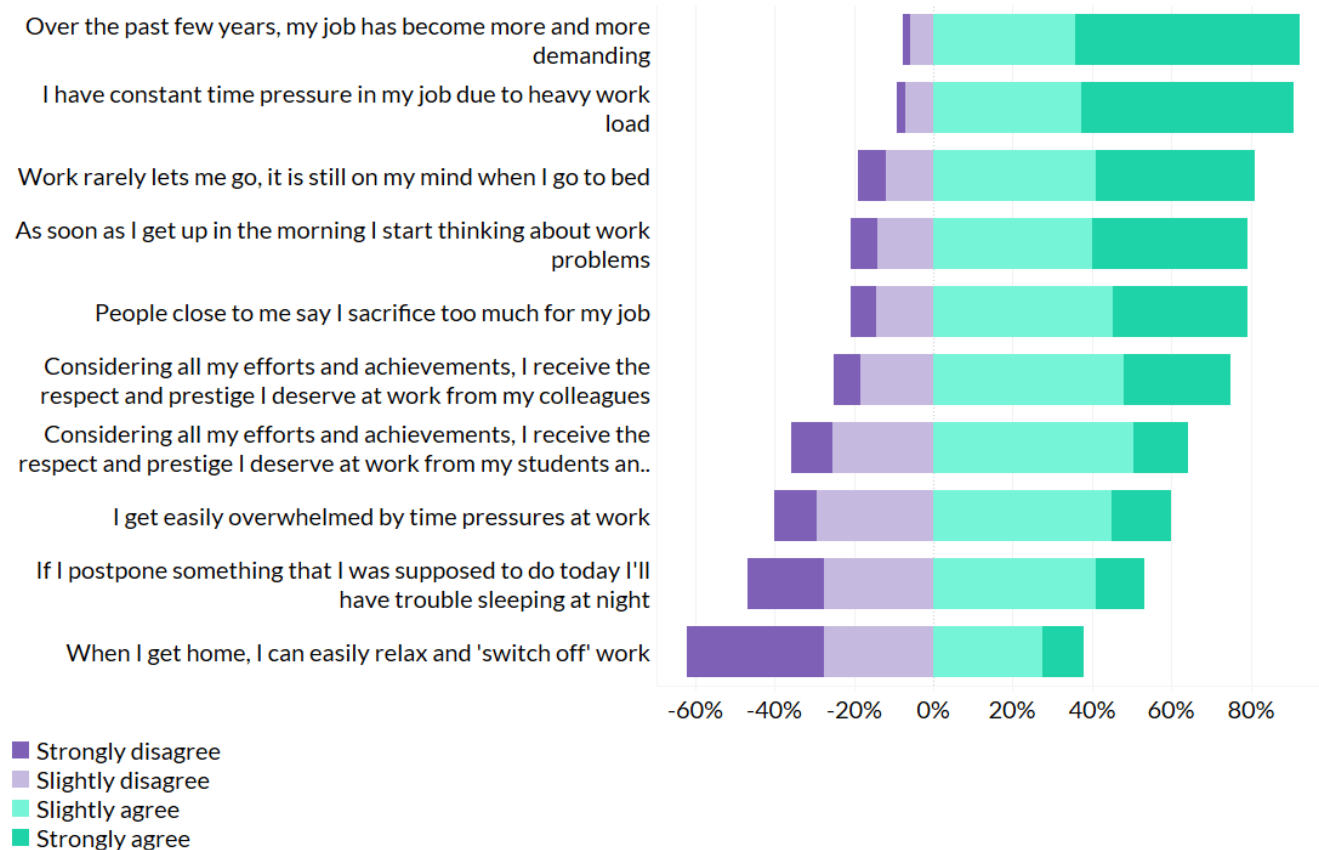
Classroom teachers start out the week more anxious, then dip mid-week and continuously decrease until the weekend. By contrast, senior leaders have an increase in anxiety levels around midweek which then remains fairly stable until that last bell on Friday. Why? It could be due to the more reactive aspects of leadership, which means work piles up mid-week, or it may be due to more meetings happening later in the week (including governor and leadership meetings).

2. Primary teachers suffer the most stress

Beyond anxiety, we have also been looking at stress over the past couple of weeks using questions from the Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey. That's a serious-sounding name but it's a reliable and well-validated survey that will eventually enable us to compare teachers' results with those of people working in other sectors.

For now, here are the scores for teachers...

Workplace stress questions



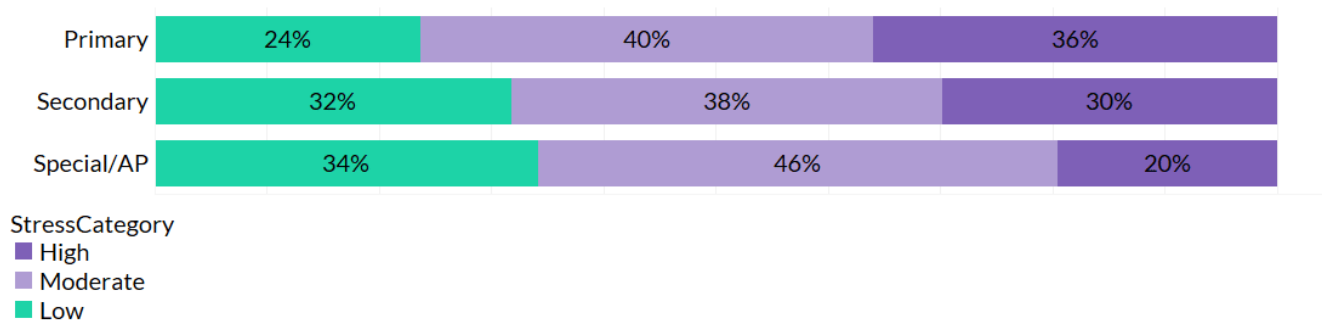
A clear finding is that work dominates thoughts for many teachers. Around 40% of strongly agreed that you go to bed thinking about working and a similar proportion wakes up thinking about it. Only 10% of teachers strongly agreed they can easily relax and switch off from work once home. On a more positive note, the majority of teachers do feel your efforts are appreciated by your colleagues, suggesting a strong camaraderie.

Measuring your stress level

Pooling your responses, we produced a scale for classifying teachers as having either High, Low or Moderate stress levels, and then we separated these between different school types.

Primary teachers are the most likely to be High stress. Whereas those in special and alternative provision are most likely to be Low stress in their responses.

Work-related stress

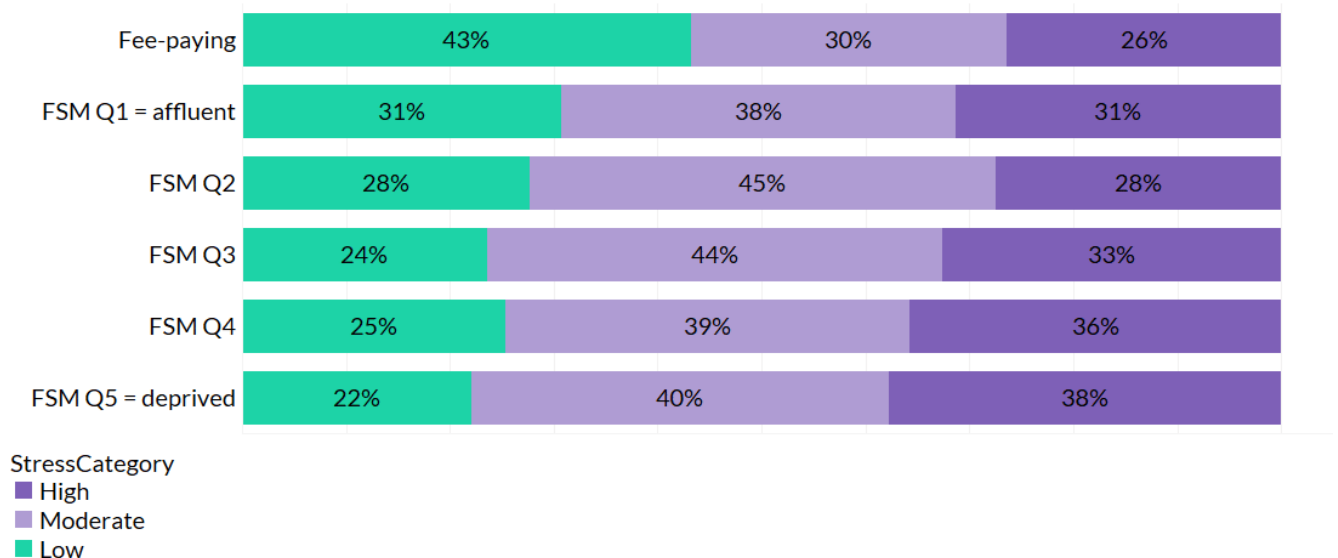


Does economic advantage affect stress?

There is sometimes a tussle between the private and state sector over the stresses of their respective jobs. Private schools may seem to be bastions of privilege, but they often struggle economically (not all of them charge sky-high fees) and the expectations from parents can be very high.

Nevertheless, we found that 43% of teachers in fee-paying schools came out as Low Stress on the work-related stress questions. This was way above any of the state schools and twice the rate of teachers in the poorest areas.

Work-related stress

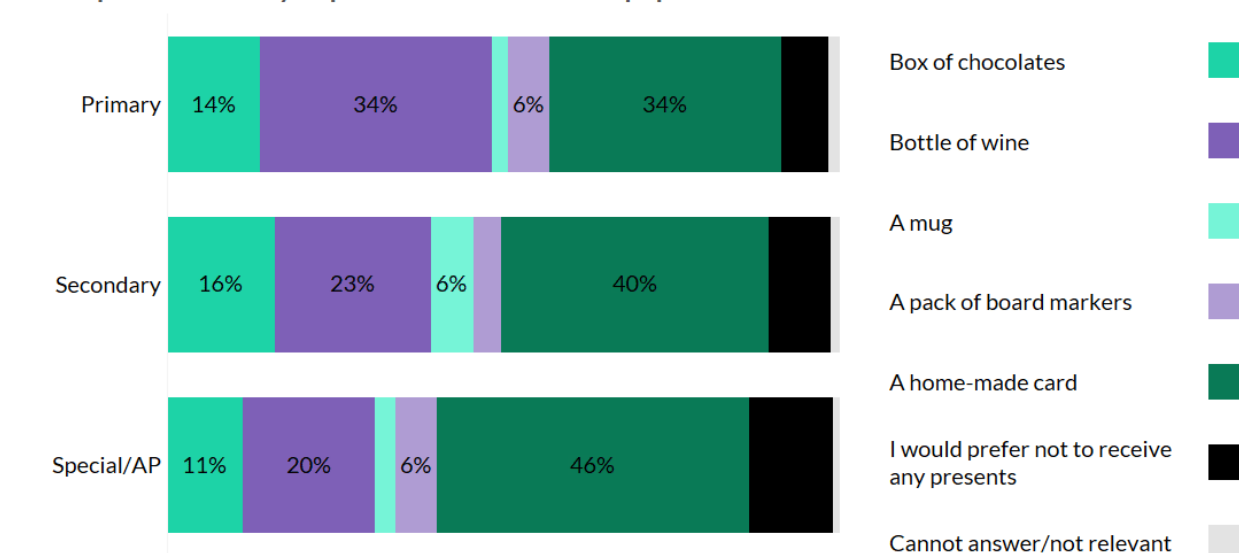


Nonetheless, over a quarter of teachers in fee-paying schools qualified as High stress, so it's not a case of complete immunity.

3. [You've been caught Tapping under the influence!](#)

For the third year in a row ALCOHOL is the christmas present that primary teachers most want from their pupils, though a home-made card came in joint first place this year too. (Secondary and special schools have always been more card-based).

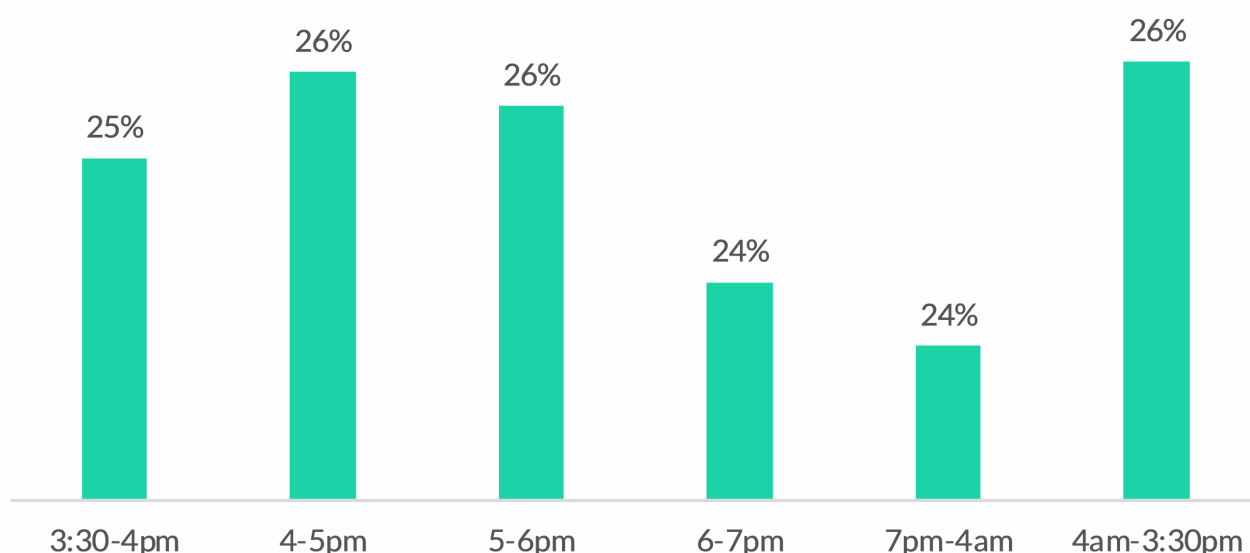
Which present would you prefer to receive from a pupil?



Question answered by 5,020 teachers on 06/12/2019
(results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

BUT, a Teacher Tapp user wrote in and wondered if people might be more inclined to vote alcohol if they'd already had a Christmas tippie that evening? We don't have a breath-o-meter on our app, but on the basis that you're more likely to have drunk something in the evening than in the day, we looked at whether teachers who answered at different times had different answers.

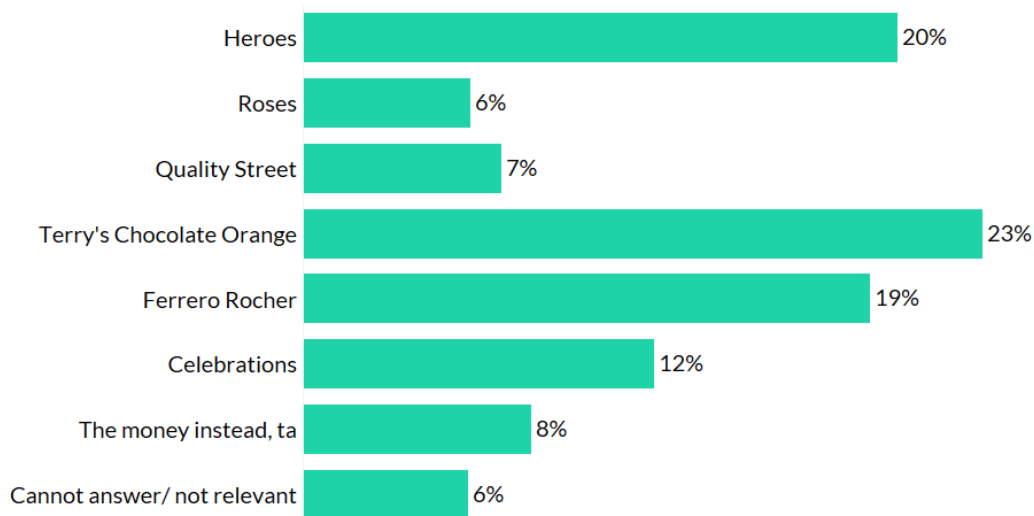
Percentage selecting wine from present list



Time of day made no real difference to your responses which means it's unlikely any of you have been caught Tapping under the influence. We'll let you off with a warning this time...

With alcohol out of the way we can turn to the important matter of... chocolate!

If a pupil gives you chocolate for Christmas, what you really want is...

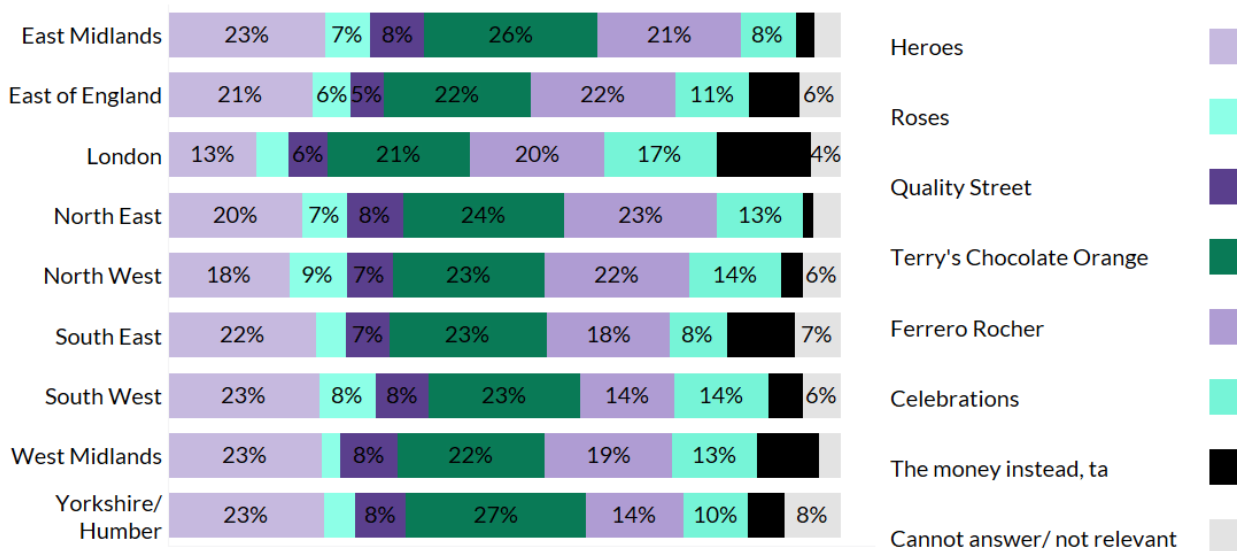


Question answered by **4,851** teachers on **07/12/2019**
(results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

For the **THIRD** year in a row Terry's Chocolate Orange takes the title of Most Loved Teacher Christmas Chocolate! Least popular were old school sweeties: Roses and Quality Street.

Rejecting sweet gifts entirely, 8% of you said you'd rather have the money spent on the chocolates instead - especially in London! Is this a dietary-related thing, or is it because you're all cash-strapped in the capital?!

If a pupil gives you chocolate for Christmas, what you really want is...



Question answered by **4,851** teachers on **07/12/2019**
(results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

4. Finally, we know you love the tips so now is a good time to catch up on any you missed last week...

- [PISA results day](#)
- [The secrets to a happy school...](#)
- [Antisocial behaviour and early life](#)
- [Girls versus boys writing](#)
- [Developing task explanation routines](#)
- [Learning to like a difficult class](#)