

Teachers or politicians: who is better at maths? Plus, 4 findings on which teachers have the most fun at Christmas!

Happy holidays everyone! Here's a seasonal update to see you through the next week:

■ Christmas update to lifelines on the app ■

For 12 days over the holidays (between Christmas Eve and 6th January) we're relaxing the Teacher Tapp rules! If you miss a day, at any point during this time, you will receive a lifeline the next day to reclaim your streak. Lifelines ONLY work for one day's worth of questions. If you miss two, the streak won't be saved. Happy Tapping!

[1. Are you making the right choices in the classroom?](#)

A problem of education research is that you sometimes come away from reading it unsure about how it relates to your everyday work in the classroom.

The Education Endowment Foundation are attempting to help teachers cross this gulf in their new research project, Teacher Choices. The project will study the educational choices that teachers routinely make as part of the planning and delivery of their lessons, and then compare for effectiveness.

For example, one project is assessing the relative merits of starting a lesson with a discussion versus a quiz.

Because Teacher Choices depends on, well, the choices teacher make, we've been working with the EEF to find out the sorts of teaching and learning methods you're using in the classroom and which one you want more research into.

You've already been a huge help, but if you fancy getting more involved in steering the direction of educational research then visit the [Teacher Choices](#) website to find out more. Remember, your voice matters!

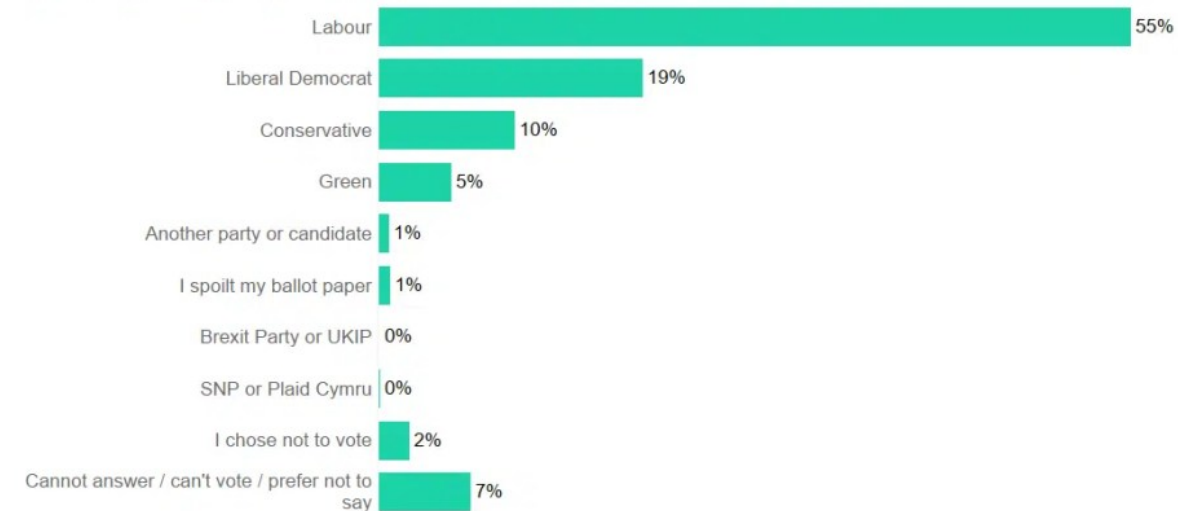
[2. Last word on the election \(we promise!\)](#)

After talking a lot about politics, we know many of you are bored of the topic, but it would be remiss if we didn't sum up with one final look at what actually happened during the polls.

So here's a quick summary of how teachers say they voted and one niche finding.

As expected from earlier polls, Labour came out in the lead, followed by the Lib Dems and then the Conservatives. But we found that some political parties are stickier than others. That is, some parties were better at holding onto your votes than others

Another general election is out of the way. How did you decide to vote in the end?



Question answered by **4,798** teachers on **19/12/2019**
(results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

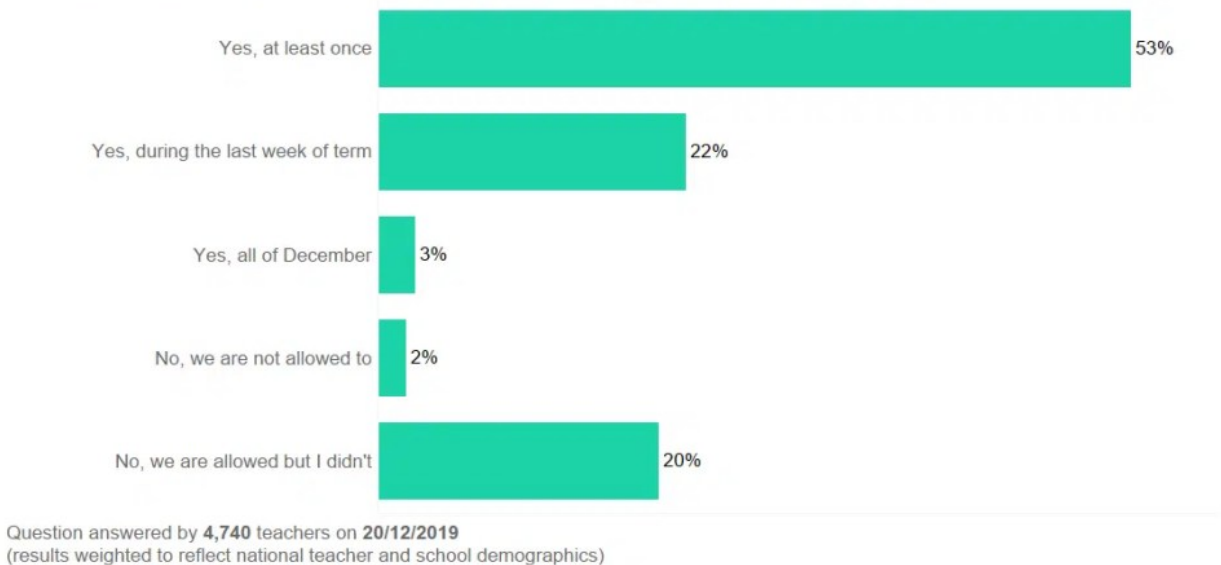
Comparing voting intentions over the last few months, we found that 92% of you who said you'd vote Labour on October 31st went on to do so. Same goes for 82% of those who said they'd vote Conservative. The least sticky parties were the Lib Dems, with just 49% seeing through their intention to vote for them, alongside the Greens who only held onto 35%.

What about the undecideds? About half (50%) of them ended up voting for Labour, 20% for the Lib Dems and 10% for the Conservatives. What swung their votes? We'll leave that one to the political commentators to answer...

[3. Which schools have the most fun at Christmas?](#)

Over the past couple of weeks we've been polling you about the Christmas activities at your school. So, who amongst you has been getting the most merry?

Have you worn a Christmas jumper to school recently? Pick the answer that best fits



75% of you rocked a Christmas jumper at least once during end-of-term festivities, although 3% of you are festive enough to wear one for the whole of December!

62% of you also participated in a staff Secret Santa. The figures here were slightly skewed towards teachers in primary and Special/Alternative Provision schools being more likely to run one. Could it be that the smaller faculty size makes them easier to facilitate?

Have you taken part in a Secret Santa activity at work this year?



Question answered by **4,755** teachers on **19/12/2019**
(results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

As for fun lessons, we found out that the older you get the less likely the kids are to harangue you about them.

34% of teachers in their 20s had requests for fun throughout the day, compared to just 25% of teachers in their 50s. Do students try it on more with younger teachers? Do older teachers make their expectations more clear? Let us know your thoughts!

Have you heard "Are we doing a fun lesson today (because it's nearly Christmas)?" or a very close equivalent from any of your students today?



Question answered by **4,726** teachers on **18/12/2019**
(results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Who voluntarily lets their pupils do fun-only activities on the last day of term? **MOST OF YOU!** Overall, 75% of teachers indulged students with a fun send-off. Teachers in Primary and Special/AP schools were much more likely to do a fun lesson than Secondary teachers.

But when it came to progress rates – which also tend to tell us something about disadvantage – we didn't see any big differences. If teachers are scroogey, that's just as likely to happen in an affluent area as a poor one, casting doubt onto the idea that disruption at the end-of-term has a wider influence on outcomes.

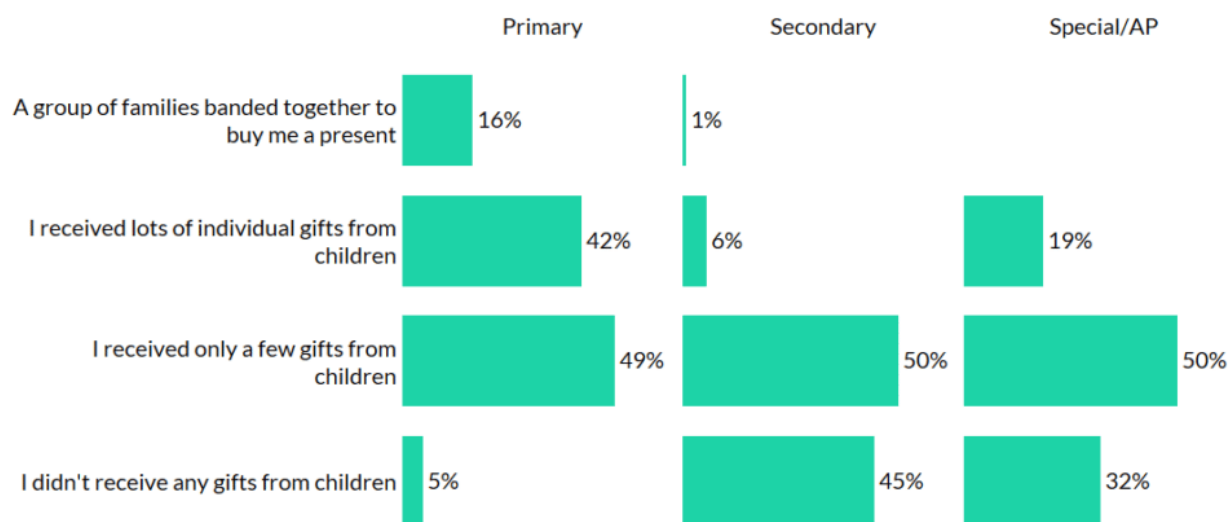
Did you let your pupils do an out-of-the-ordinary fun-only activity on the last day of term this year. (We'll let you decide how to interpret that one!)



Question answered by 3,710 teachers on 20/12/2019
(results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

With term at an end, who headed off with the most Christmas presents from students? Primary teachers headed home with the biggest bounty; Secondary teachers the least likely.

It's nearly Christmas, a time when some pupils give their teachers a gift. Tell us about any gifts you received. Tick as many boxes as relevant.



Question answered by 4,744 teachers on 20/12/2019

We also found that teachers in their 20s were about 10% more likely to say they'd received a lot of gifts from students.

So, with Secret Santas, Christmas jumpers and gift hauls added up, it looks like younger Primary Teachers are having the Merriest Christmas!

4. Teachers are better than politicians...at maths!

There was some twitter chat this week about [the time that only 40% of MPs knew the chances of spinning two consecutive heads on a coin was 1-in-4 or 25%](#).

We suspected teachers would do a bit better than MPs on this kind of question, and you did! Two-thirds of teachers got it correct, which is great given that most of you won't ever teach probability. And you'll be relieved to hear that almost every single maths teacher got the answer correct. Phew! Science teachers did well too, though I must admit we thought you'd do a little better than you did.

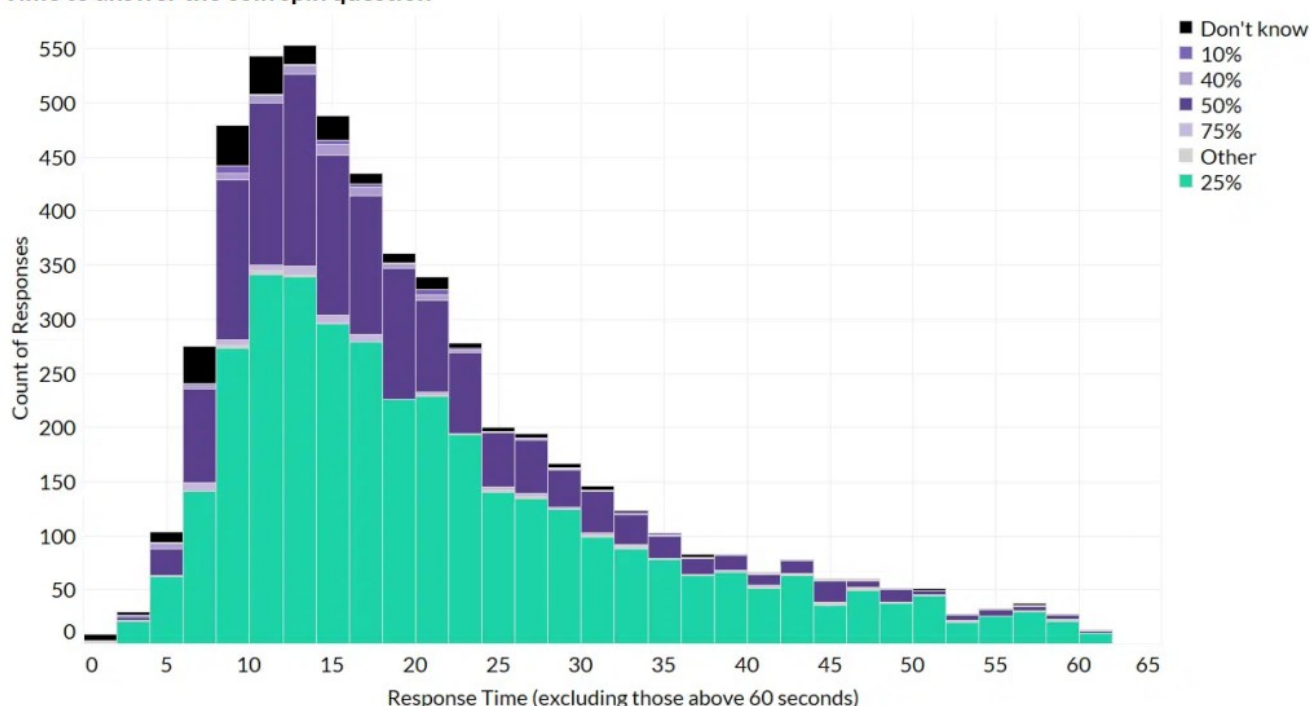
If you spin a coin twice, what is the probability of getting two heads?



But... was this because you were *gasp* cheating?

Our database has information about WHEN you submit responses on our app and, for the first time ever, we decided to check out HOW LONG you took to answer! Of course we didn't tell you this was a timed test, and we excluded the results for those of you who clearly got distracted by something before returning to answer over a minute later.

Time to answer the coin spin question



The chart above shows that most of you took 10-15 seconds to read and answer the question. But most importantly there wasn't any relationship between the time you took to answer and whether the answer was correct. (And we're pleased to report that the maths teachers answered far quicker than any other subject grouping.) All of which suggests that you really are smarter than politicians and weren't just "googling it".

On that note, Merry Christmas All!

Finally, we know you love our daily tips, so here are the ones from last week...

- [5 tips to improve behaviour management](#)
- [Should you accept gifts from students?](#)
- [Modelling and stretching students when teaching A Christmas Carol](#)
- [How to switch off and get in holiday mode](#)
- [Can a font improve your memory?](#)
- [Making sense of metacognition](#)

Finally...

■ A very Merry Christmas from the Teacher Tapp team! ■