

Start of term, results week and the continuation of bullet-tip vs chisel tip!

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1. All good things come to an end

After seven months of shiny book goodness, it is the time of the year when the John Catt Book Voucher scheme comes to a close. Nooooo! 📖📖

But, let's not be upset for what is no more and instead be grateful for what we had 📖📖 Since February John Catt have given over 32,000 vouchers to Teacher Tappers, worth over £300,000. It is the third year of running the scheme and is a HUGE commitment from them in terms of supporting education research and teacher professional development. We can't thank them enough for their work on this, but here's a virtual round of applause to show appreciation.

<https://giphy.com/gifs/obama-barack-obama-president-l4q8cJzGdR9J8w3hS>

In practical terms, this means that from September 1st you will cease to receive new vouchers on the app. (If you're very close to getting your first voucher we might still sneak you one after this date, but only if you're lucky).

Also, don't panic. You can still spend your voucher after the close date. HOWEVER, note down your voucher code somewhere safe. There is a planned app update in the autumn and

they might disappear at that point. So write them down now! (Those of you who gave us permission to use your email address will also receive a copy of the codes in your inbox).

At Teacher Tapp towers we are working on a whole new strategy for providing exciting rewards and we can't wait to reveal our plans to you very soon.

2. What's the best kind of marker pen?

Towards the end of August each year we love to cause a bit of stir on social media, asking people what their favourite kind of board marker is. This year, you told us of another controversy: which way around do you prefer your timetable? Who even knew there was opinions on this?!

Board markers

Over the years your thoughts have remained fairly consistent on pens, with roughly 1-in-3 of you preferring chisel tip markers to bullet tip. However, fans of bullet tip markers seem to chip away each year at the chisel tip fans, with the percentage of teachers preferring chisel tips dropping a percentage point every year!

What is the best type of board marker?



Teacher responses vary from 1,196 to 4,859, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

■ Chisel tip ■ Bullet tip

Timetables

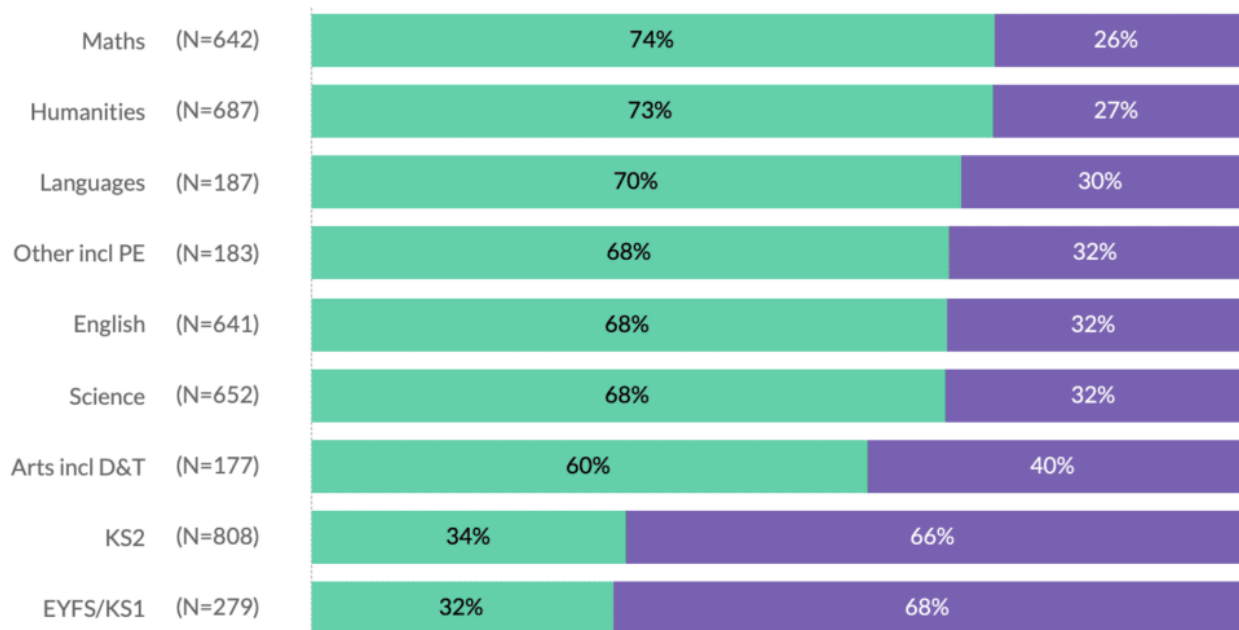
Our new opinion-splitter question this year was about timetables: do you prefer days or periods along the top? Unexpectedly, two-thirds of primary teachers preferring periods along the top. The opposite is true for secondary teachers, however, where the majority prefer days along the top.

We took to [Twitter](#) to try and understand the differences. Primary teachers told us that they don't use timetables in quite the same way as secondary teachers, as they often stay in the same room with the same class each day. There is also likely to be similarities between days, which might be easier to see when timetables are vertical.

Secondary teachers told us that certain timetabling software (cough, SIMs) automatically displays days across the top, hence that's why they like it. But then... why don't more Arts

teachers prefer that approach too? ■■

When you're given your timetable, in which format would you prefer it?



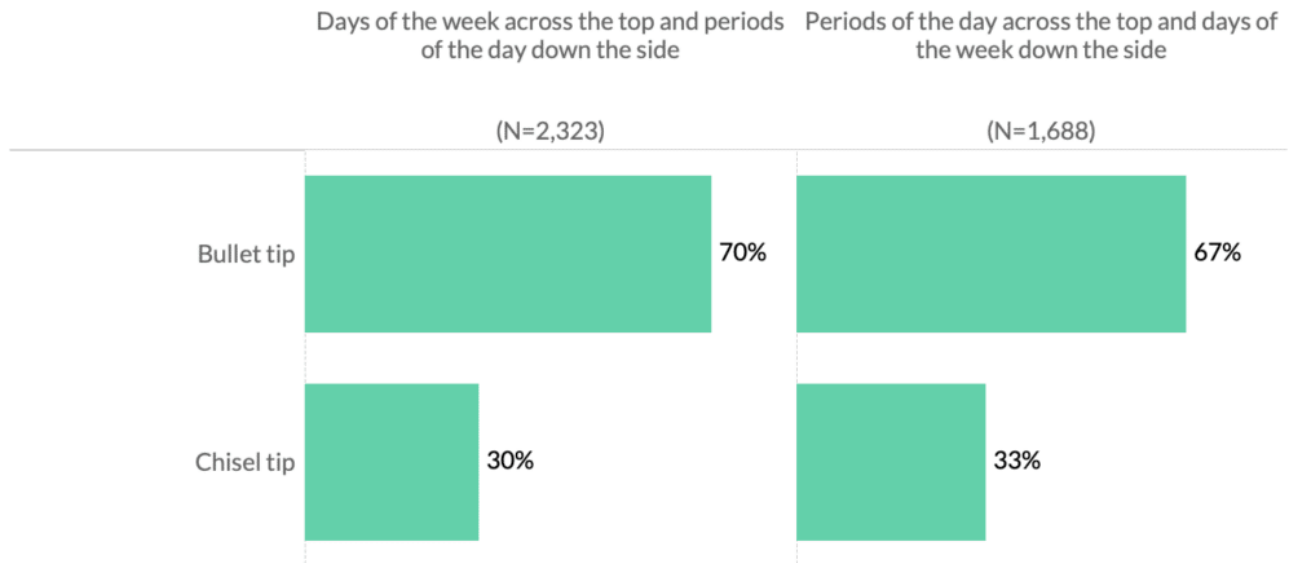
Question answered by 4,615 teachers on 16/08/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

- Periods of the day across the top and days of the week down the side
- Days of the week across the top and periods of the day down the side

Board markers and timetables?

What about both? Does your preference for board markers also relate to your preference for timetables? If controversial in one are you controversial in the other? Yeah, turns out that's not a real thing. There's little relationship between board marker preference and timetable preference. Oh well.

**What is the best type of board marker? (down) versus
When you're given your timetable, in which format would you prefer it? (across)**



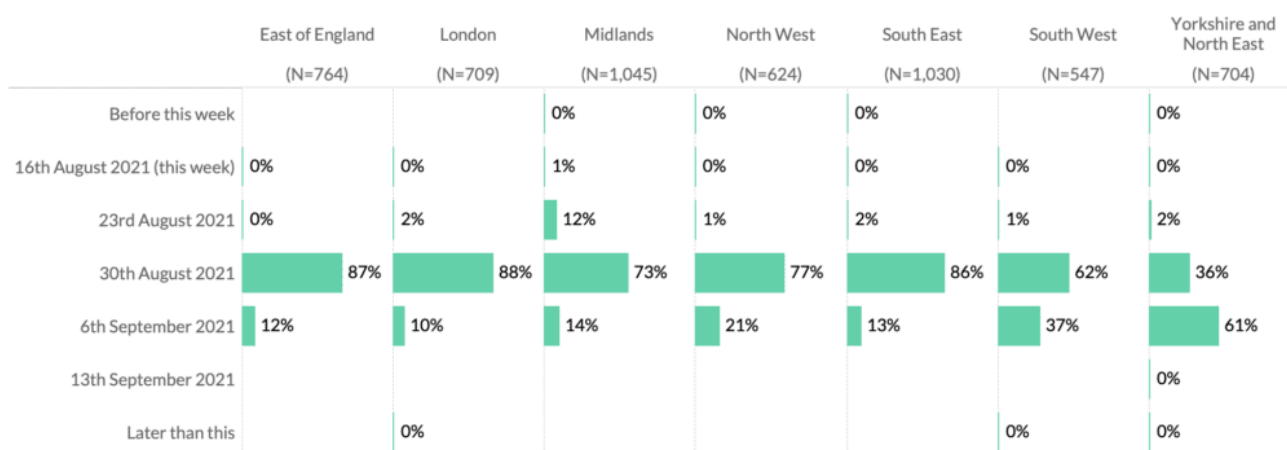
3. Back-to-school

It's almost back to school time! Or is it? Depends where you are!

3-in-4 teachers start back at school next week (week commencing 30th August - eesh, early!), with most others starting a week later. Except in Yorkshire and the North East, where a majority of teachers start back in the week of 6th September, a week later than the rest of the country.

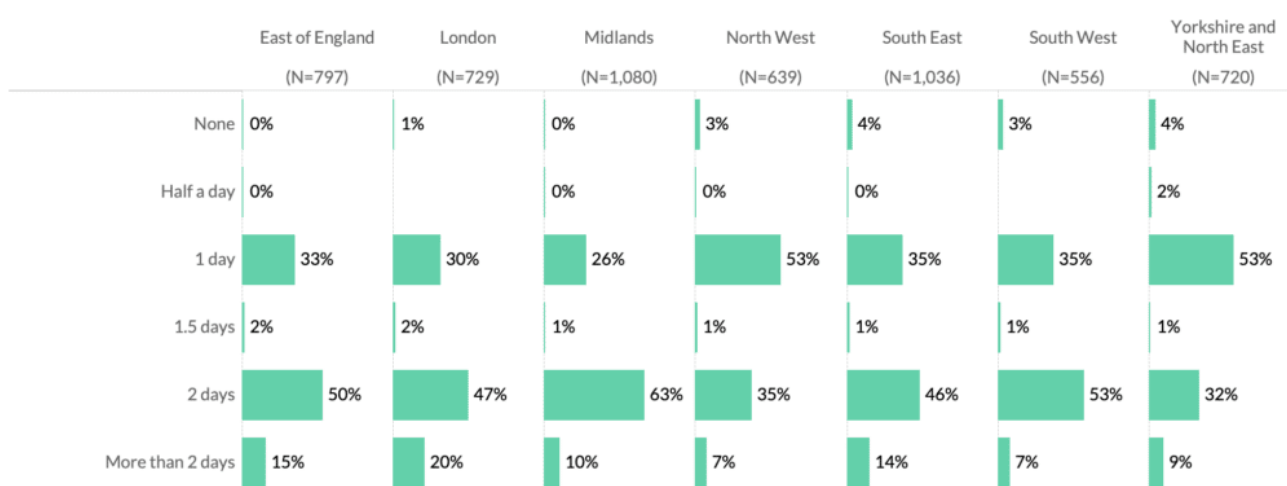
On the other hand, 10% of teachers in the Midlands (mainly, those in Leicester), have already started back at school, having broken up for summer a week earlier than others. Why do Leicestershire schools break up earlier than others? Allegedly it's due to the [July fortnight](#), a ballot that was held in the 1960s to prevent overcrowding of local seaside resorts. So there you go!

When do teachers start back at your school after the summer break?



Just over a third of teachers have one INSET day before pupils arrive back at the start of the academic year, with half of teachers having two. Regional differences are once again visible in this data too. The North West and Yorkshire and the North East buck the above trend, with half of their teachers only having one INSET day.

How many INSET days does your school have before pupils arrive at the start of the academic year?

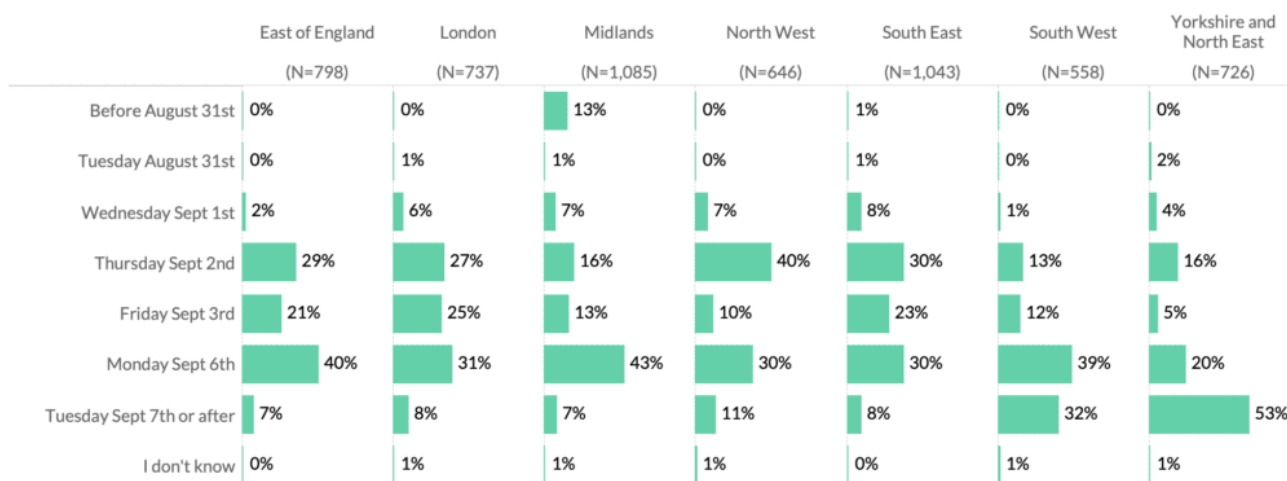


Question answered by 5,980 teachers on 22/08/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

There is a much greater range of starting dates for students than there is for teachers. 15% of students head back for just a single day, Friday 3rd September before a weekend. This happens far more in London than in Yorkshire.

Some of the issue might relate to the plans for testing in secondary schools, which are also delaying things a little.

When is the first day that pupils are back in your school?



Question answered by 6,015 teachers on 22/08/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

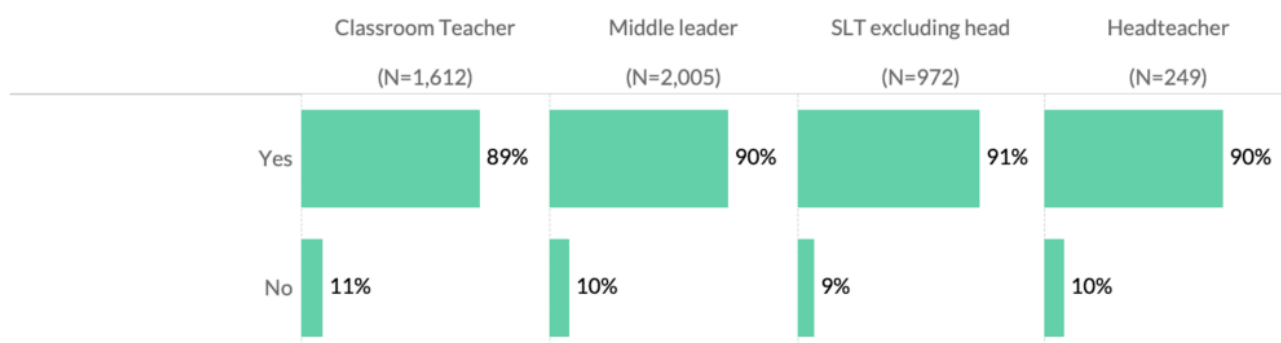
4. Results

After a bumper results week last week, we wondered if you'd like to repeat that in future years - and the answer was an overwhelming yes!

90% of teachers preferred GCSE and A-Level results being released in the same week. This was true among all demographic breakdowns, from headteachers to classroom teachers, among all regions of England, we found that the vast majority of teachers were in favour of this change.

Given this rare break out of agreement among all groups it would be very useful if the education secretary could make it happen!

Results week all happened in 1 week this year. Would you like that to be the case in future years?

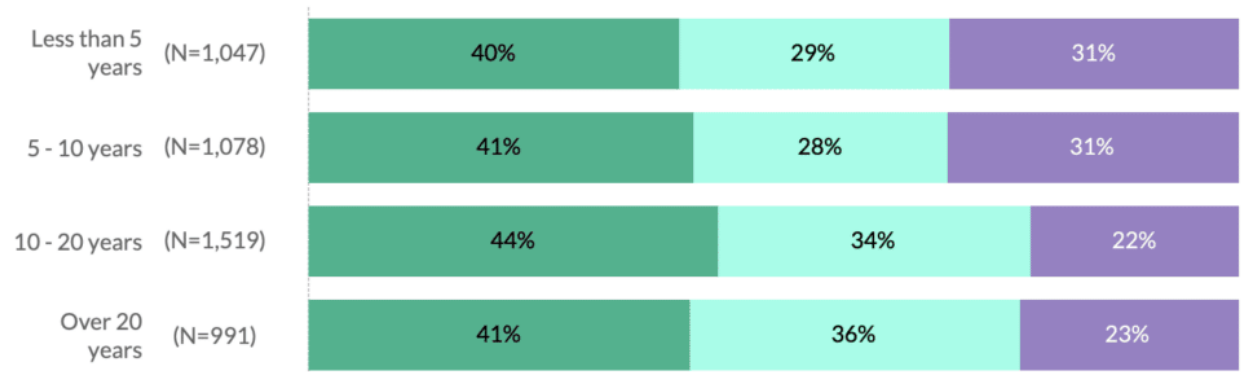


Question answered by 4,989 teachers on 19/08/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

On A-Level results day there's often students who need to re-assess their options if they don't make the grades needed for university. Cue tears, stress and a frantic few days (or weeks) while they navigate clearing.

There's often talk of changing the system to a post-result application process and it appears this would also be a popular move, with only 25% of teachers saying we should stick with the current system. A change is even more favoured by experienced teachers, perhaps because they have more experience dealing with the post-results anxiety experienced by students.

Do you think the UK should move towards a system of post-results university applications or offers?



Question answered by 4,664 teachers on 19/08/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

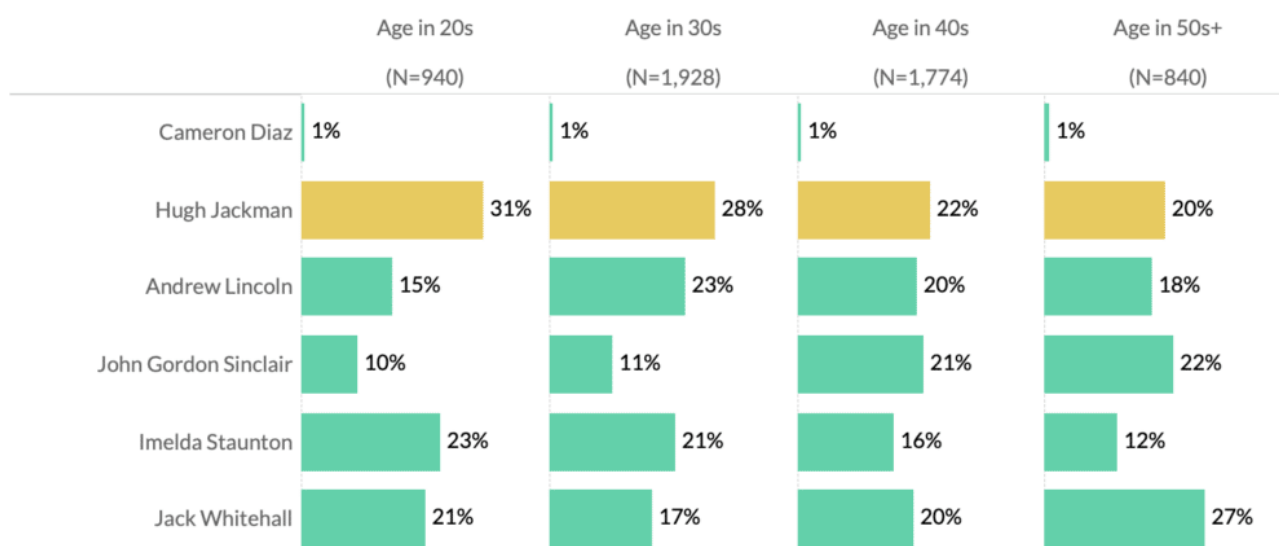
■ Students should get offers after getting their results
 ■ Students should apply after getting their results
 ■ We should continue with the system as it is

5. Teacher Tapp Summer Quiz Olympics!

The past week saw the conclusion of our summer quiz, with our final round: Education in Fiction. We hope that you've enjoyed the quiz over the past month or so - there have been some particularly fiendish questions!

26% of you knew that Hugh Jackman has previously taught in the UK. Did you know that he spent a gap year teaching PE in 1987? It seem like this fact was better known among the younger teachers, with 31% of teachers in their 20s knowing this, compared to just 20% aged 50+.

Which of these famous actors, who have all played teachers, also taught in the UK?



Correct answer highlighted in gold

Five rounds, twenty-five questions and thousands of answers have led to this moment – the crowning of the regional champion of the Teacher Tapp Summer Quiz. With a total of 11 medals, 7 of which are gold, it's London who sit top of the medal table! It was a tricky quiz and to come out with 7 gold medals is a great achievement.

Just pipping their nearest rivals to second place was the South West, with a single silver medal more than Yorkshire and the North East, who finished in third. The South West finished with the most medals overall, which they can take as their consolation prize and build on for the next quiz!

Region	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
London	7	1	3	11
South West	4	5	4	13
Yorkshire and North East	4	4	4	12
South East	4	2	4	10
Midlands	2	6	3	11
North West	2	4	1	7
East of England	2	3	6	11

Finally, we know you love the daily read, so here are the ones from last week

The most read tip this week was: [Ever get the sneaky feeling others are better at things than you?](#)

And here are the rest for your reference:

- ["Students want to impress their peers, not their teachers."](#)
- [How can we deal with the past two years of grade inflation?](#)

- [How to make a school visit as successful as possible](#)
- [How CPD sessions go wrong and some possible improvements...](#)
- [Could your school never do written marking?](#)