





# DIALS Survey Report Data

Schools/K-12 DIALS Research Team

Sept 2023



Assessment for Learning & Sustainability

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# School and Teacher Information



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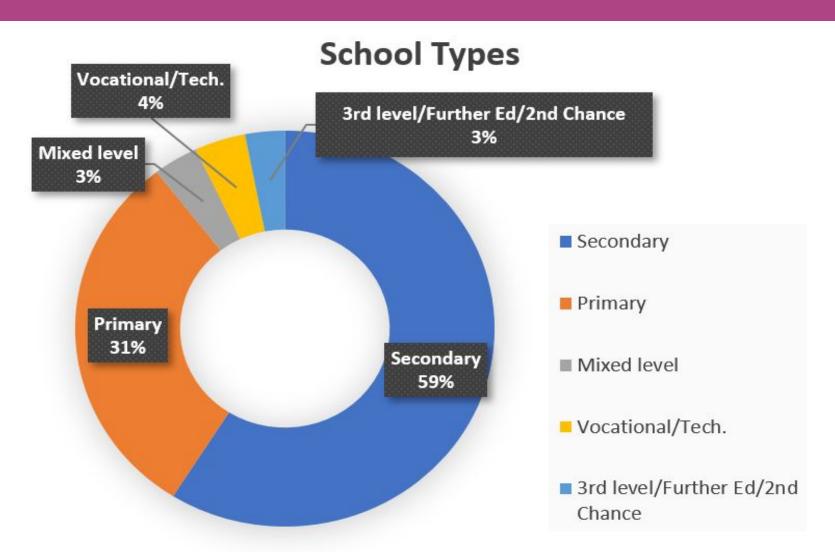
#### Response Rate

#### In total there were **229** Responses to the survey:

- 229 responses was the greatest number of responses to any one question (all the required & multiple-choice questions).
- The lowest response rate to any question was question 26 (86 responses), which was an optional, open-ended question relating to which technology teachers find least useful/effective for assessment.



#### **Schools Location**



**Ireland - 183** 

**USA - 24** 

**Spain - 13** 

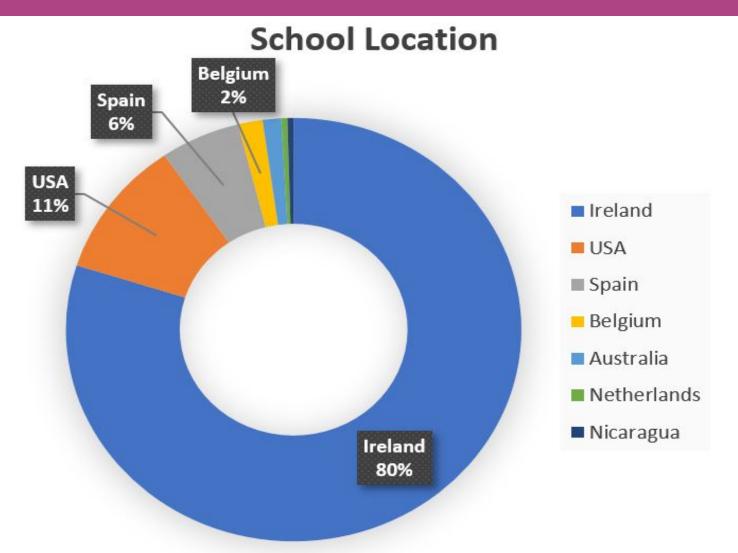
Belgium - 4

Australia - 3

Netherlands - 1

Nicaragua - 1

#### School Type



Secondary school - 135

**Primary - 70** 

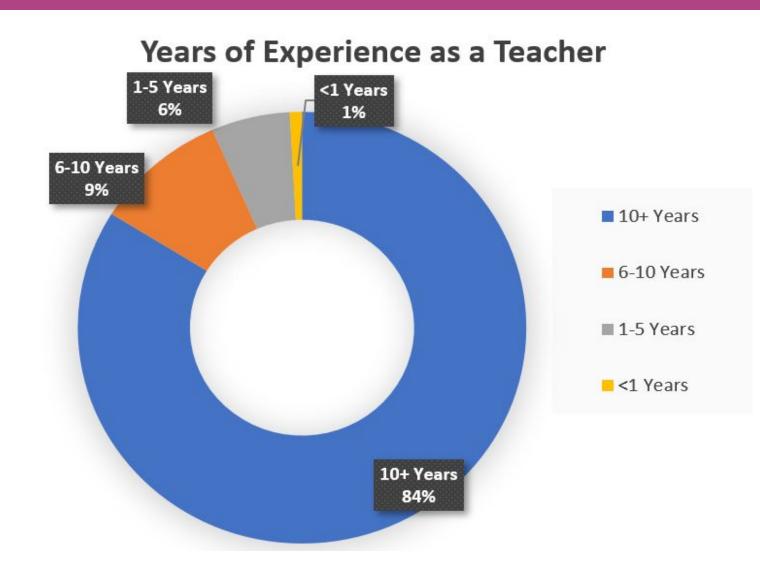
Vocational Technical - 9

Mixed level - 8

3rd level/Further Education/Second Chance - **7** 

Our primary focus for this project is on K-12 schools.

#### Teaching Experience



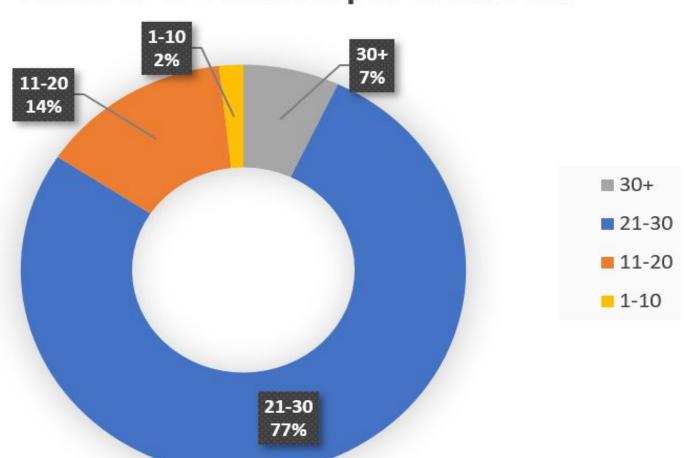
192 respondents have been teaching for >10 years.

2 respondents have less than 1 year of teaching.

This indicates that this is a very experienced cohort of teachers, which may mean that they have had time to evolve and explore the use of technology and different assessment approaches significantly. Or it could also mean that they are unwilling to try to adopt new technology!

#### Classroom Size

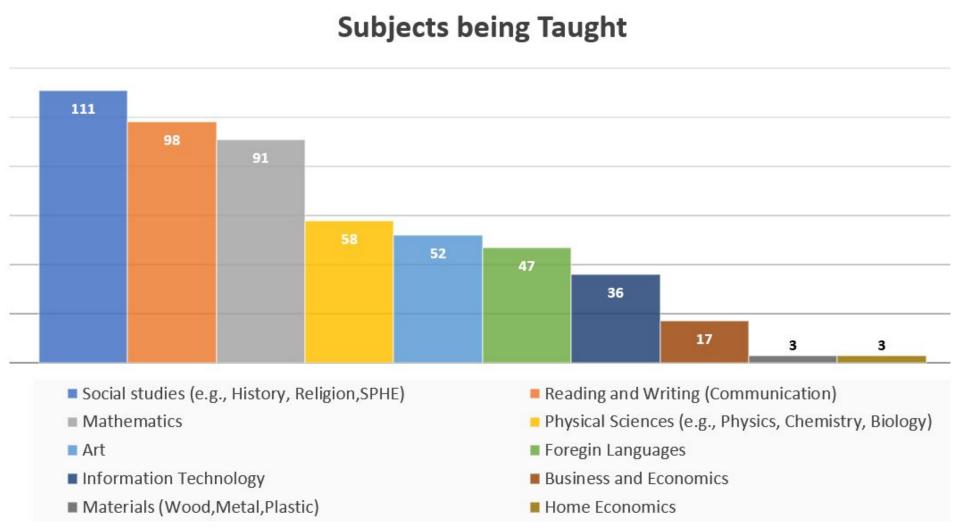
#### **Number of Students per Classroom**



177 respondents teach in classrooms of 21-30 students, while 16 teachers have class sizes of greater than 30. Therefore, 84% of teachers are managing at least 21 students at any one time (we acknowledge that some teachers may have support from TAs, SNAs, etc.).

4 teachers have a class of 1-10 students.

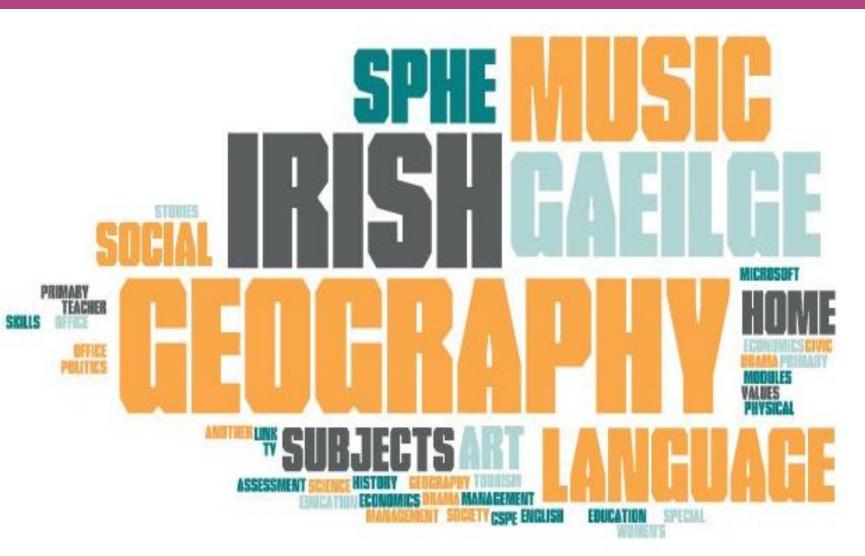
#### Main Subjects being Taught



Most popular subject areas were social studies, reading & writing, & mathematics.

Teachers could select multiple subjects and it must be noted that in most primary schools, teachers will teach all subjects. In secondary schools teachers will often teach multiple subjects with common intersections between languages, sciences etc.

Other Subjects being Taught



Teachers also specified a range of other subjects, some of which are related to the offered options.

It is useful to capture these to see if there is any specific assessment approaches that are used for these subjects.

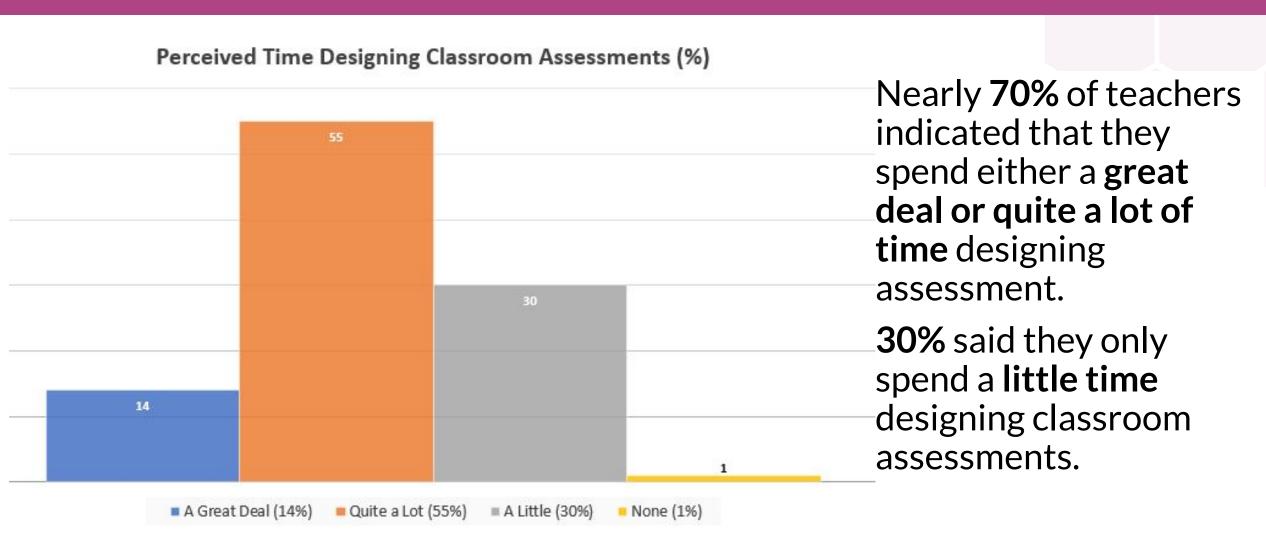
# Assessment Methods & Approaches



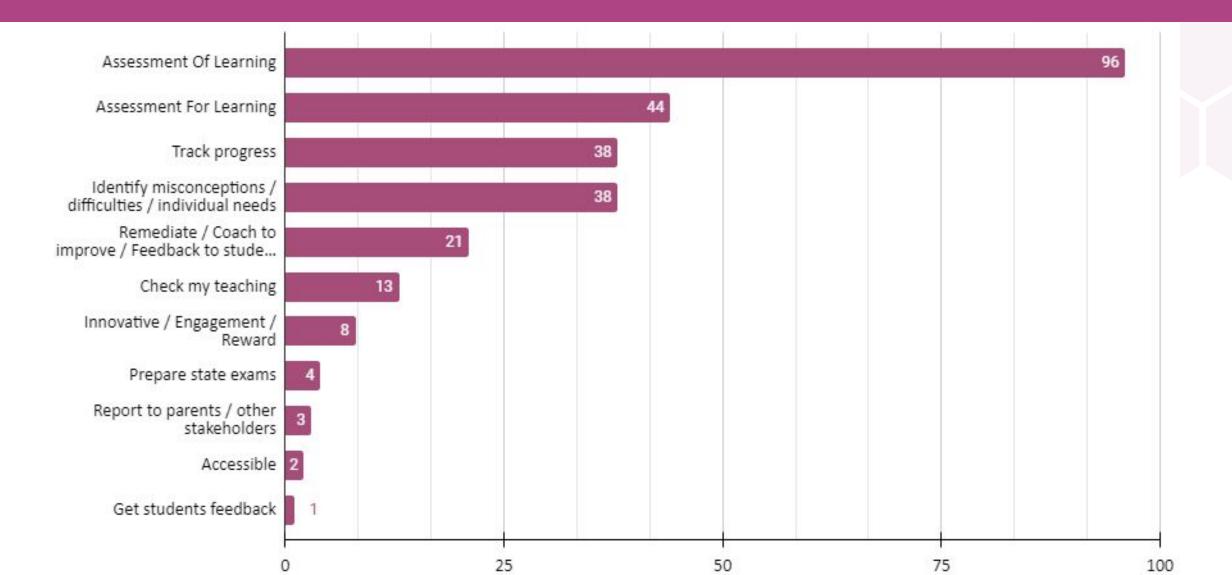
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#### Time spent designing classroom assessment



What do you feel it is the most important reason for conducting assessment in class?



#### What do you feel it is the most important reason for conducting assessment in class? (229 responses)

This was an open ended question where teachers could state whatever reason they wanted, or multiple reasons:

• 40% of teachers indicated a focus on the need to check levels of understanding, how students apply new knowledge or skills and retention levels. These reasons were strongly focused on **Assessment Of Learning.** 

"To give students the chance to put into practice what they have learned in class and give them an additional sense of achievement on top of what activities we do in class."

"Allow students to show potential outside of formal exams"

"To give students the chance to put into practice what they have learned in class and give them an additional sense of achievement on top of what activities we do in class"

• 20% of teachers indicated a focus on the need to use assessment such that they can plan further steps and design future learning strategies by capturing results. Also, as a way to explain back to students what is happening in classroom and how they progress. Some teachers would use results to evaluate their teaching methods too. These reasons were strongly focused on **Assessment For Learning**.

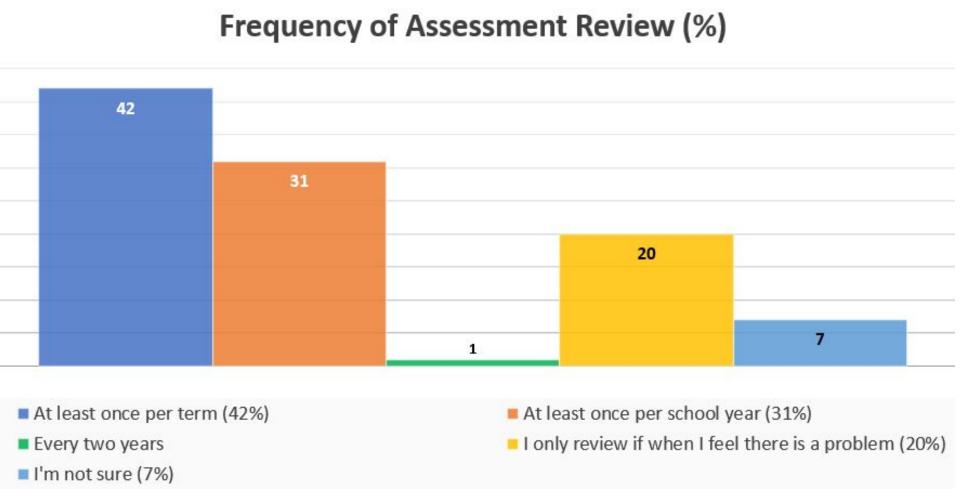
"To gauge where children are at, so as to better understand how we can help them to realise their full potential. To find out what type of learner they are so we can differentiate our lessons to suit their needs. To show children how much they already know."

What do you feel it is the most important reason for conducting assessment in class? (229 responses)

- Teachers will use the Assessment for Learning approach also when they give tracking students progress as a reason. This seems important too and formative assessments can help in this sense.
- Also, teachers would use assessments to highlight students difficulties, where they struggle so they can help back and personalise learning.

"It is important to me to get a picture of student understanding of content and their skill level. I do not give multiple choice tests at all in my class. Instead, I focus a lot on performance assessments. While many are group assessments, I make sure to incorporate at least one individual assessment each quarter so I can assess the needs of each student and build lessons based on those needs." "To find out what type of learner they are so we can differentiate our lessons to suit their needs."

How often do you review your assessment strategy or process?

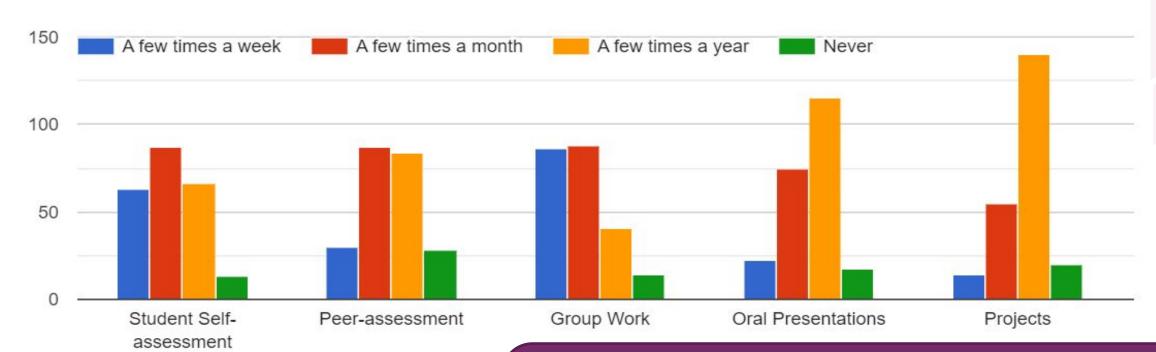


97 teachers (42%) said at least once per term, with 71 teachers (31%) indicating at least once per school year

43 teachers (20%) noted that they do only when there may be a problem. This does not indicate that they review less frequently than once per term, but indicates that they are not as periodic in terms of review.

17 teachers (7%) indicated they were Not Sure, which may point to a lack of awareness of the overall assessment strategy or may just indicate that they don't conduct a 'formal' review.

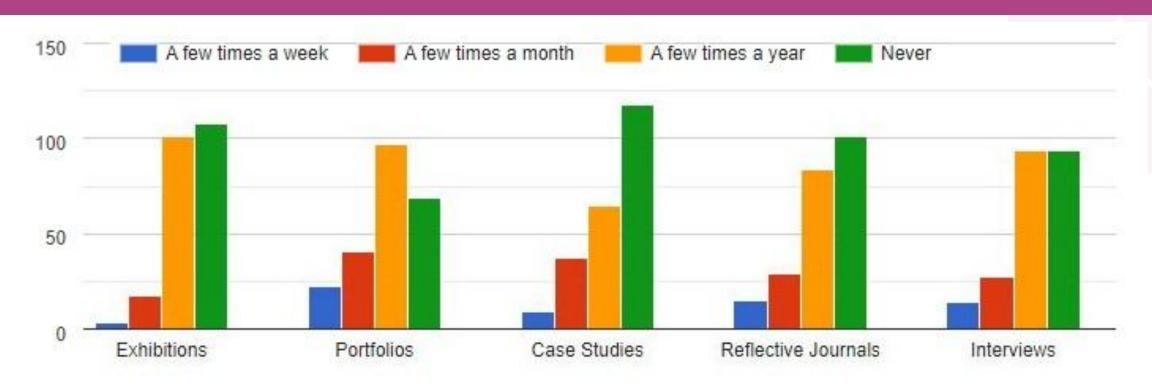
#### How often do you use the following assessment methods in class?



- Group work is used very regularly
- Student self-assessment and peer assessment are also used quite regularly
- Projects and oral presentations are used less often (mostly a few times a year)

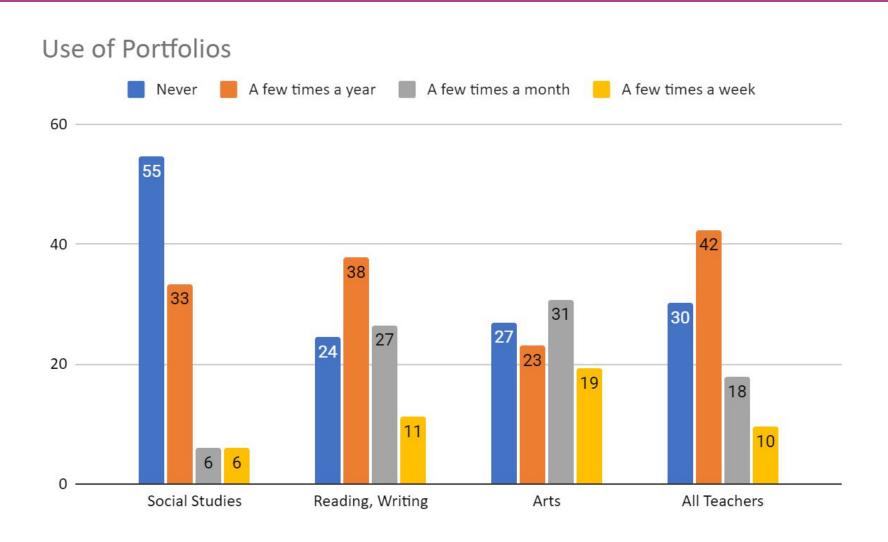
"Oral presentations are a great assessment tool, but also teaching (flipped classroom). Students deliver mini presentations to each other where I can observe their depth of knowledge, and at the same time, they are teaching their peers about what they learned. This is done formally and informally (summatives and formatives)."

How often do you use the following assessment methods in class?



Exhibitions, Portfolios, reflective journals, case studies and interviews seem to be used very infrequently in classrooms. However, it is interesting to note that there are some teachers use these methods quite frequently, at least multiple times per month.

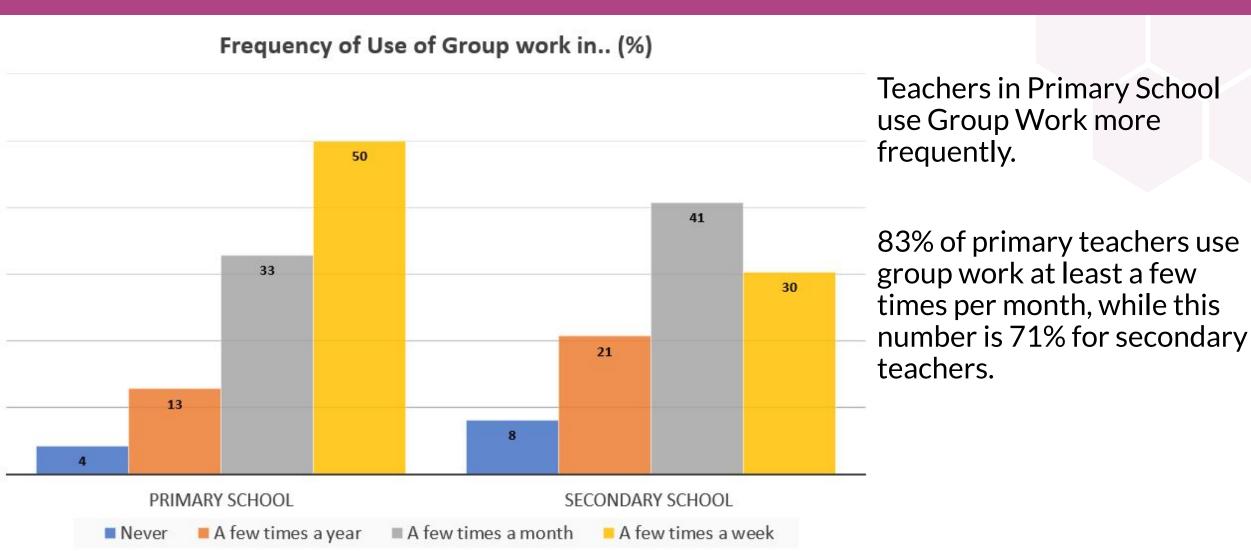
#### **Use of Portfolios**



It is significant that teachers in Social studies would be most unlikely to use Portfolios.

On the opposite side, Arts teachers regularly use Portfolios (50% at least a few times a month).

#### Use of Group Work in Primary vs Secondary School



#### Are there any other assessment methods not listed that you use?

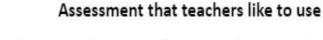
Teachers mentioned many other forms of assessment (as expected). They include, exams, essays, standardized tests, cloze tests (fill in the blanks), games or simple quizzes.

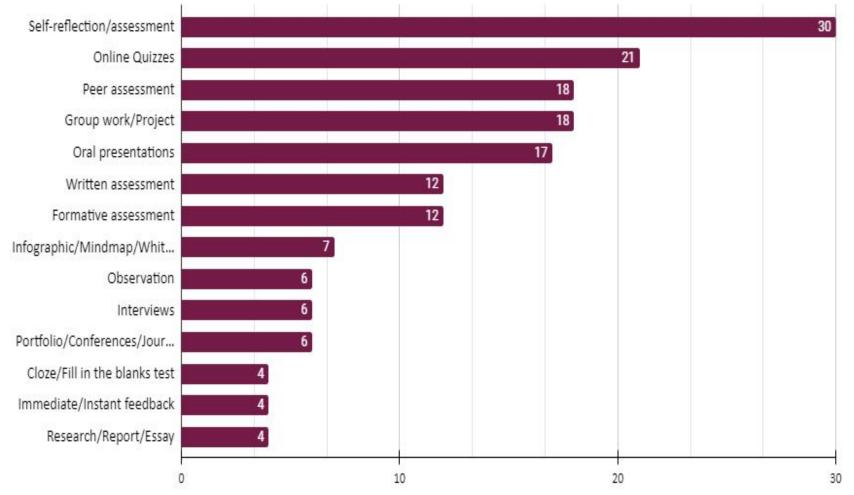
They also named other methods such as diagnostics, checklists, pure direct observation and class discussion.

Teachers also mentioned the use of online quiz platforms such as Kahoot, Plickers or Quizlet where gamification is present in the assessment delivery.



#### Are there any assessment methods that you like to use? If so, why?





Teachers provided insights into their favourite assessment methods and why they like them... (see next slide).

#### Are there any assessment methods that you like to use? If so, why?

"It is important for the children to **reflect** on their own work and critically assess it. This should be done from a young age."

"By working in **group projects,** they improve social relationships, cooperation, creativity and critical thinking among others."

"Portfolios allow students the opportunity to take ownership over their learning as they assemble evidence to show what they have learned."

"I think **interviewing** is a great way to assess learning. Why can't students just tell you what they learned? **Interviews** work best if students have already had a chance to **self-assess**."

"Peer assessment is my favorite, but it can take a lot of time to "get them there." It is a large investment of class time and training if it is really going to work."

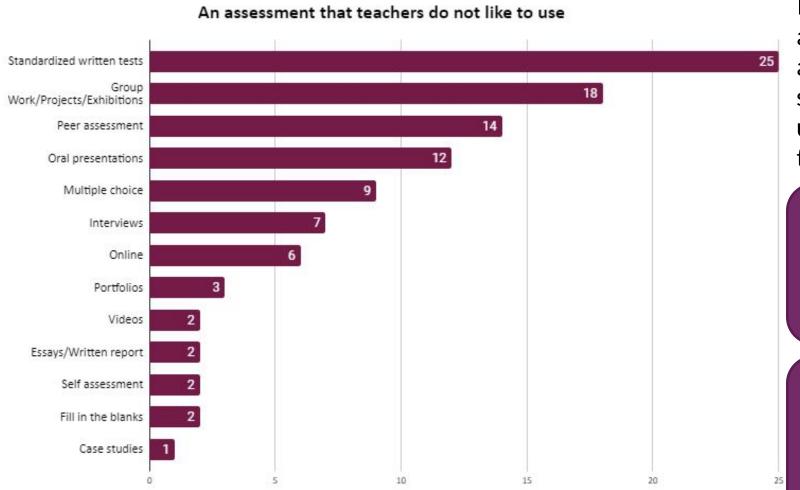
"Sharing the rubric gives clear information to students in advance of project/ written work etc. of what they should be doing and then gives clear feedback on areas they could work on next time after grading."

"If you can link theory to practise by using real life case studies students tend to get more involved and they usually realise the importance of the theory/knowledge they need to talk about or solve the cases."

#### Are there any assessment methods that you like to use? If so, why?

- It appears that teachers are very positive about letting students assess themselves and reflect on their work as they gain ownership of their learning. Peer assessment is also a method that some teachers embrace, however one teacher pointed out that peer assessment takes training and takes time to implement properly, although once implemented it is perceived as very effective.
- Another teacher talked about sharing rubrics with students such that they could understand what they are being assessed on. This also allows for students to take ownership over their learning.
- Teachers apply a lot of creatively in their use of assessment. It was interesting to see teachers talking enthusiastically about some lesser used assessment methods such as interviews and case studies. Teacher who used these methods provided robust reasons for their perceived effectiveness.
- While teachers can find group work demanding in terms of time and resources, they find it is a very useful way to assess and develop transferable skills such as collaboration, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, etc.
- Oral presentations and written exams remain valuable methods for some of the teachers despite the challenges that these methods present to some students.

Are there any assessment methods in particular that you do **not** like to use? If so, why? (152 responses)



It appears that teachers would appreciate a move away from standardized written assessment and MCQs as they believe summative assessments such as these are unauthentic, unfair and add pressure to the students.

"I do not think that this (MCQs) should be to 'go to' method of assessment. It is sterile; it does not give the student a chance to generate a response; and it limits the exhibition of student learning."

"Standardised state assessments are not reflective of the child's ability and they don't cater for children with dyslexia, ADHD, etc. They cause stress for small children."

#### Are there any assessment methods in particular that you do **not** like to use? If so, why? (152 responses)

Alternatives to more traditional summative assessments have been also recognised as complex. For
example, teachers have highlighted how group work is hard to organise and it can be difficult to assess
individuals.

"I find it (group work) an inefficient use of time - it's unproductive with teenagers from my experience"

- Peer assessment can also cause embarrassment for some students, bring some tension, be unreliable, and can be difficult to monitor.
- Several teachers spoke about how certain assessment methods can cause anxiety and stress for some children
  - -"Peer assessment. Student get extremely anxious if they think a fellow student is assessing them"
  - -"Oral presentations are very stressful for some students, preparation not always well done or done using Google translate)"
  - -"In a SEN setting, oral presentations as they often cause significant anxiety."

#### Are there any assessment methods in particular that you do **not** like to use? If so, why? (152 responses)

 One teacher also pointed out that despite the power of technology, they feel that assessments involving technology can be difficult in their school.

"Any assessment using technology. It 'won't work' for all students and internet speed can be slow."

 Ultimately, the responses to this question show how teachers have preferences for certain types of assessment and are focused on using methods that work best for their class. One teacher probably summed this up best:

"I think they can all beneficial depending on context and requirements."

• One teacher also spoke of their focus on the development of critical skills and how their own competence can affect the type of assessment they can deliver:

"In a world where information is everywhere, I like to focus on critical thinking skills so that students can decipher information from misinformation. While this can be assessed using a multiple choice test, I do not have the skill set to write some tests. That is why I focus more on performance tasks. Also, these types of tasks lead to higher engagement in my class."

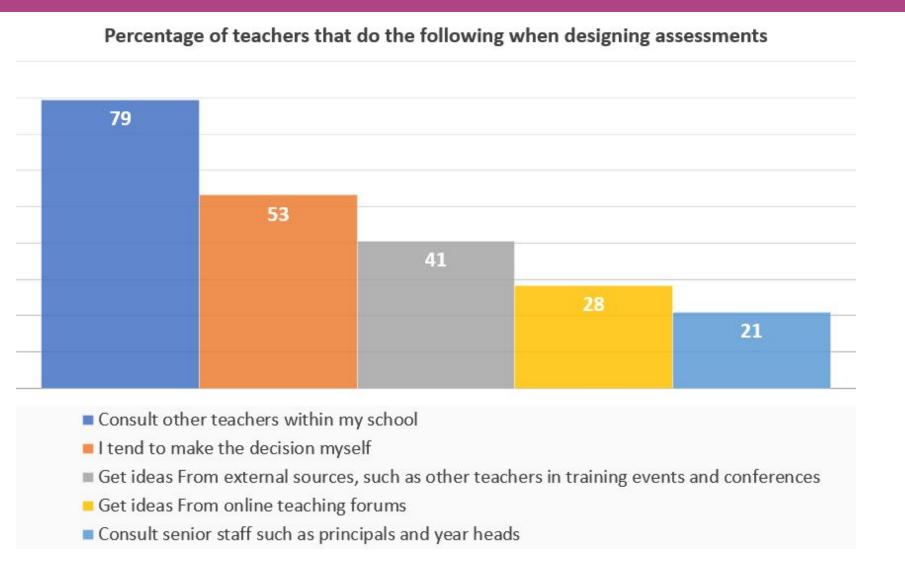
# Consultation & Real-World Tasks



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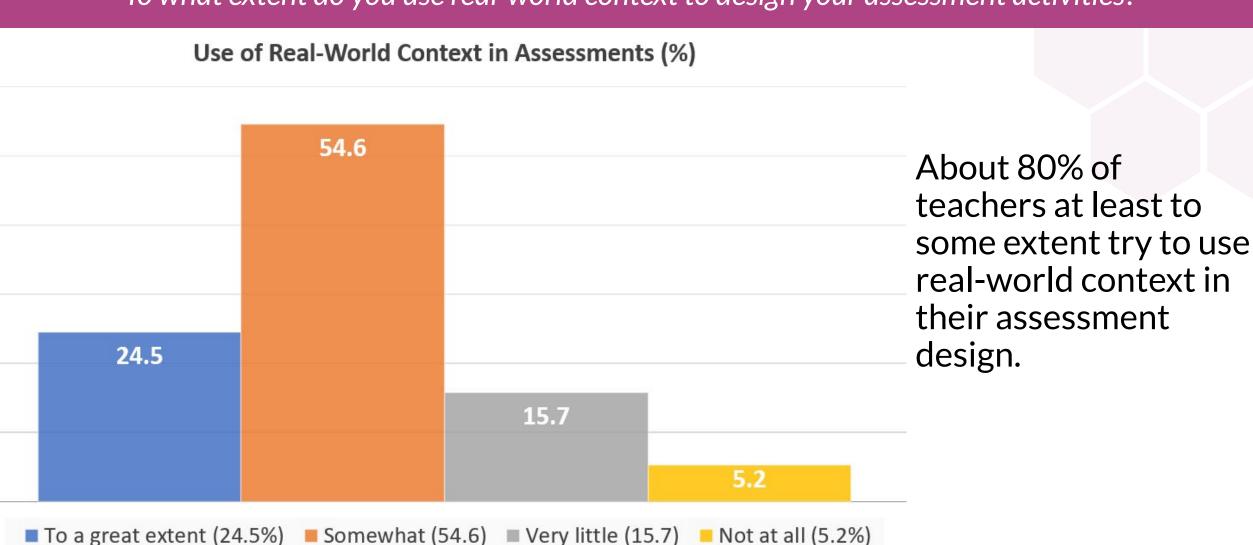
Who do you consult with when defining the type of assessment that you use?



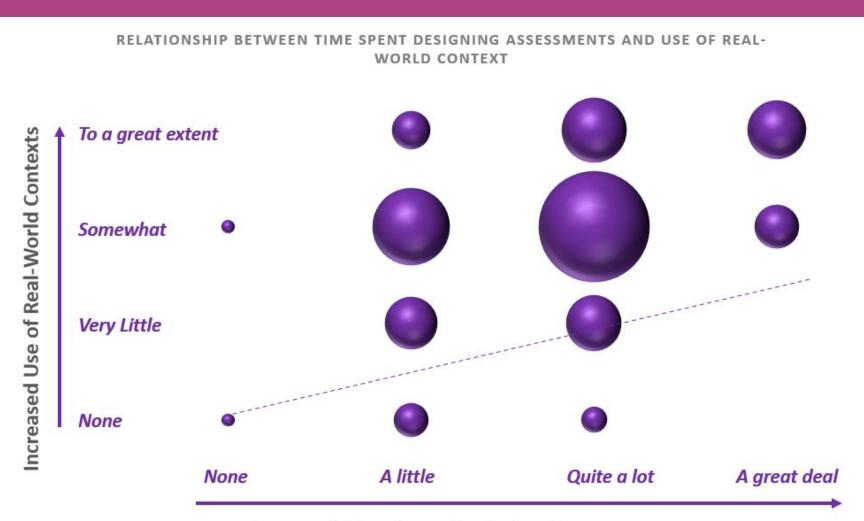
Respondents mostly consulted with other teachers but half of the respondents make final decision.

65 stated that they use online forums & 48 consult senior staff

To what extent do you use real-world context to design your assessment activities?



#### Real-world context vs Assessment Design



In this bubble chart, we can see that as teachers increase their time designing assessments, they are more likely to incorporate real-life examples in their design.

**Increased Time Spent Designing Assessments** 

#### Example of how teachers use real-world context

75% of the participants regularly use real-world context in their assessments. With this outcome, it is expected that teachers would find ways to describe situations for the students to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in class. Examples can be seen in World history, Social Studies, Maths, Business Studies, Foreign Languages, etc.

"Students ponder and respond to current events or scenarios as part of a social studies lesson. They would explore reasons that they would have to know who their representatives are, not just list who they are. They watch videos in addition to reading so that they can see context for new information. They write to an authentic audience instead of writing a formulaic essay."

Teachers use the school grounds, real materials and case studies to assess students' capabilities and the use of current events helps to stimulate students when resolving tasks. Also, when a personal story or interest is involved, students engage more with the task, with the artefacts that students produce looking and feeling close to something that they can find in the real world (a documentary plot, a diet plan, a travel brochure, a museum panel or a meal order).

"When assessing science, I try to use real data about planets to help students choose the best planet to attempt to colonise."

#### Example of how teachers use real-world context

Role-play is the format of the activity that teachers propose to students in various situations and subjects: Literature, Foreign Language, Social Studies.

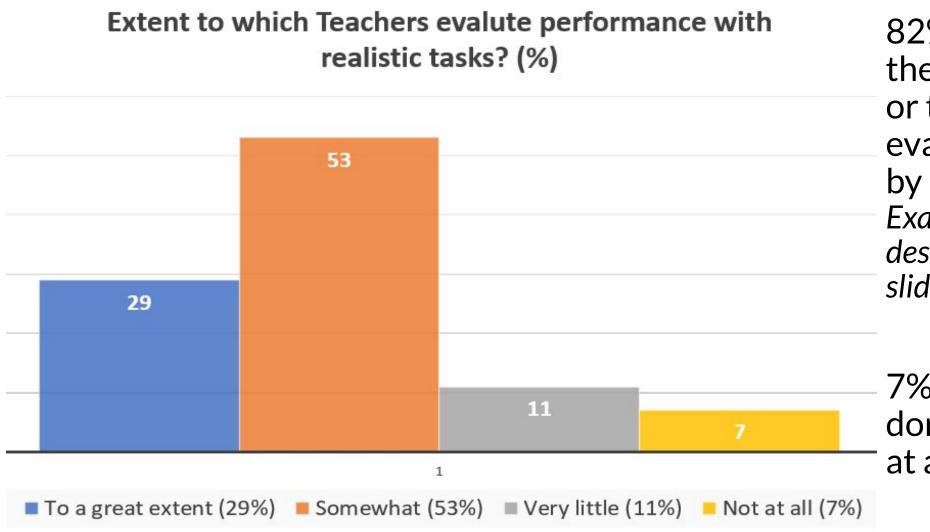
"To see a kid say to another what they know is more powerful than a written essay, and more accessible for all students. Collaborative arguments have become a great tactic for assessment."

Some teachers give prompts, use appropriate language and use brainstorming to help students understand the assessment purpose and resolve effectively.

"I focus on the skills such as determining whether or not a source is reliable or not and apply this to everyday scenarios such as fake news and analysis of internet sites to determine their reliability."

It appears that the assessment would not be a single discrete task but rather a full process or sequence of activities when a real world context frames it.

To what extent do your assessment activities evaluate performance with realistic tasks?



82% of teachers said they either somewhat or to a great extent evaluate performance by using realistic tasks. Examples of these are described in the next two slides.

7% replied that they don't use realistic tasks at all.

#### Please provide an example of how you assess performance with realistic tasks

Almost half of our participants have been able to describe concrete examples of a realistic task in a real-world context. Examples range from simple (present yourself in 3 mins in a Foreign Language) to complex tasks (designing and running workshops with civil society) in the variety of subjects explored in this survey: social studies, maths, history, science, foreign languages, etc.

Teachers try to encourage students to play the role of the person involved in the situation: a historian, an accountant or a dietist. Some will include students' community challenges as part of the task description.

"Collaborative arguments ALWAYS show me who had learned the content, and it's a great way to assess other skills such as speaking, listening, understanding bias, so much. AND, while they are all talking and I'm assessing, kids are still learning because they are listening to each other."

### Please provide an example of how you assess performance with realistic tasks

Materials used will be as close as possible to the ones someone uses in real life: travel leaflets, bar menus, civil right laws, etc. And some fun can be part of the assessment too (a treasure trail for Foreign Language class).

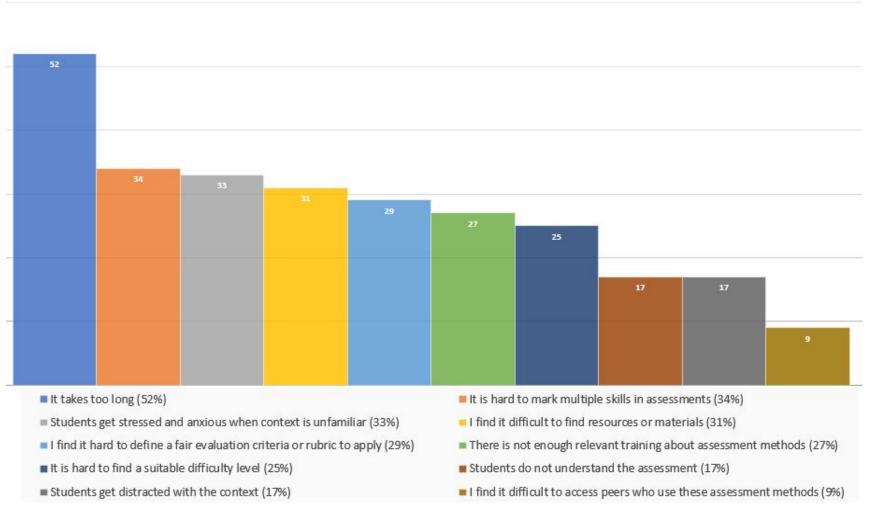
"When assessing business concepts in consumer rights for example I use role play scenarios and see how the students deal with different situations on their consumer rights."

Assessment can be a collaborative effort as some teachers mentioned. With teacher guidance and the appropriate setup, students are able to sufficiently show their understanding.

"The realistic tasks I use focus more on presentation skills and collaboration skills. So, when I assign a project, I have students assess themselves and their peers based on the collaboration standards at my school. These are real-world skills for any job."

### What are the types of challenges you face when conducting classroom assessments?

Challenges that Teachers encounter in conducting classroom assessments (%)



Over 50% of teachers stated that time constraints are a challenge. The main challenges included were marking difficulties and evaluation criteria, stress on students, finding resources and materials, teacher understanding of assessment methods, lack of student understanding, and student distraction.

### What are the types of challenges you face when conducting classroom assessments?

#### **Time constraints**

- -"Subject content so vast and time limited for written exams in classroom"
- -"Time is an issue, can be very busy with normal teaching duties. Generally work on new assessments in the evening."

#### **Grading and Marking**

- -"Difficulty grading is a crucial issue for high school teachers in the USA, who have very little time to prepare"
- -"Time consuming to correct and give feedback"

#### **Lack of Student Understanding**

-"Students don't bother to study for the test and I waste my time correcting it. They don't take feedback into account and repeatedly make the same mistakes over and over again"

#### Access to Resources (particularly for 'niche subjects')

-"Biggest difficulty is finding suitable material in Irish for all my subjects and it is seriously time consuming to have to design your own all the time"

#### **Lack of Teacher Understanding**

-"We could certainly do with some training!"

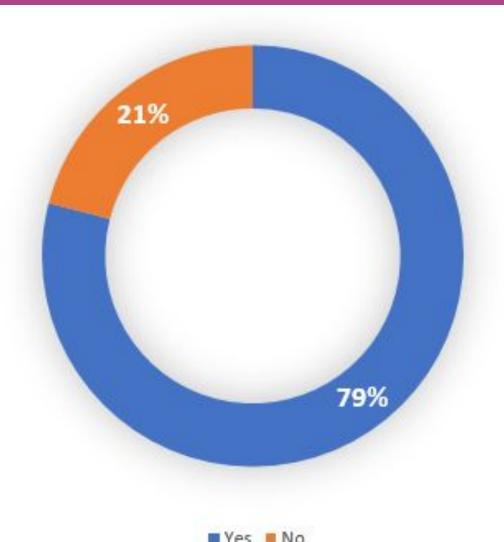
### **Technology Use**



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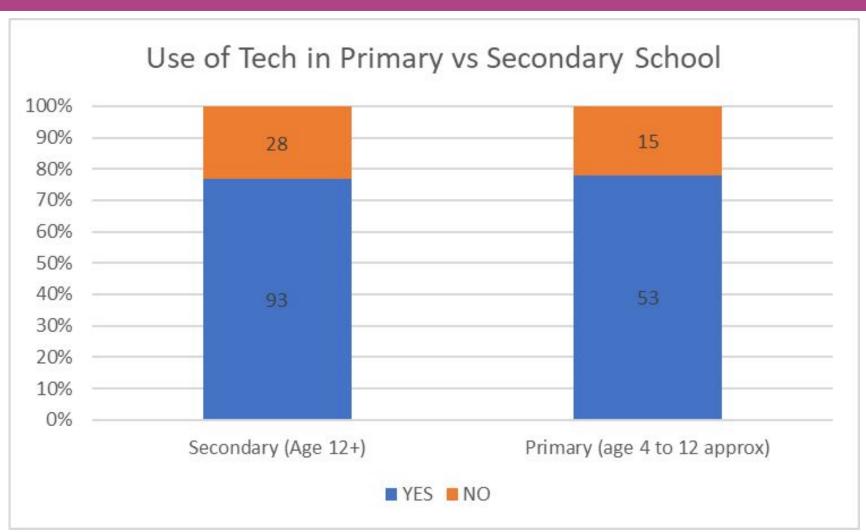
### Do you use technology to support your assessments?



Almost 80% of teachers use technology to support their assessment activities.

21% of teachers do not use technology to support assessments.

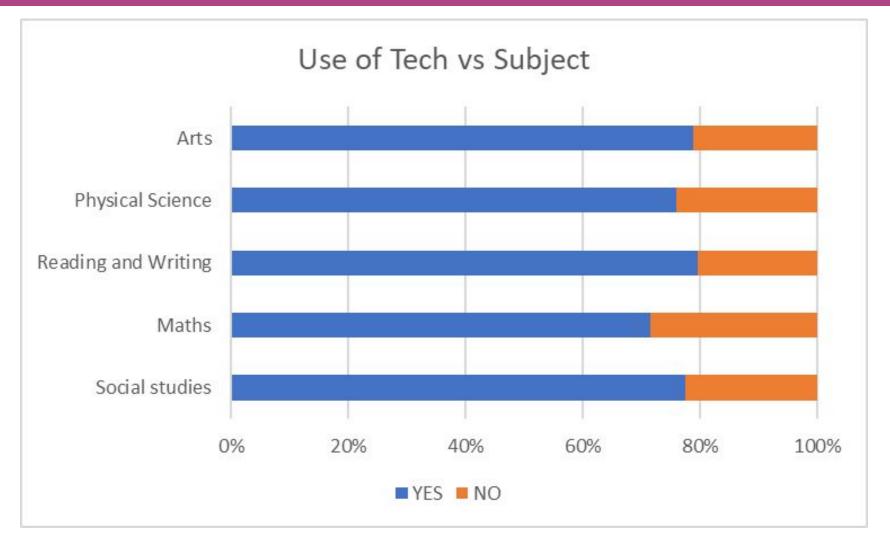
Do you use technology to support your assessments? (By School level)



There is little difference seen in the use of tech depending on the school cycle.

Technology usage remains at about **75-80%** for both groups.

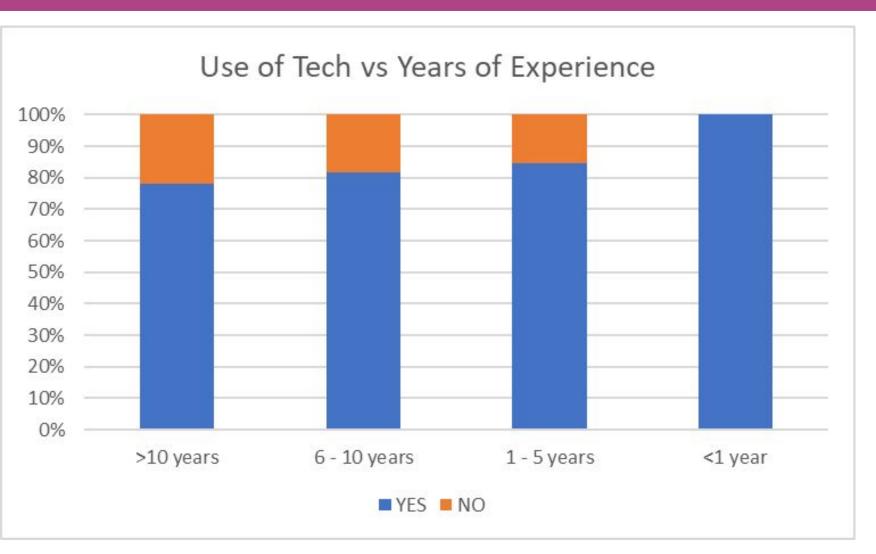
Do you use technology to support your assessments? (By Subject)



There are no significant changes when we compare between subjects.

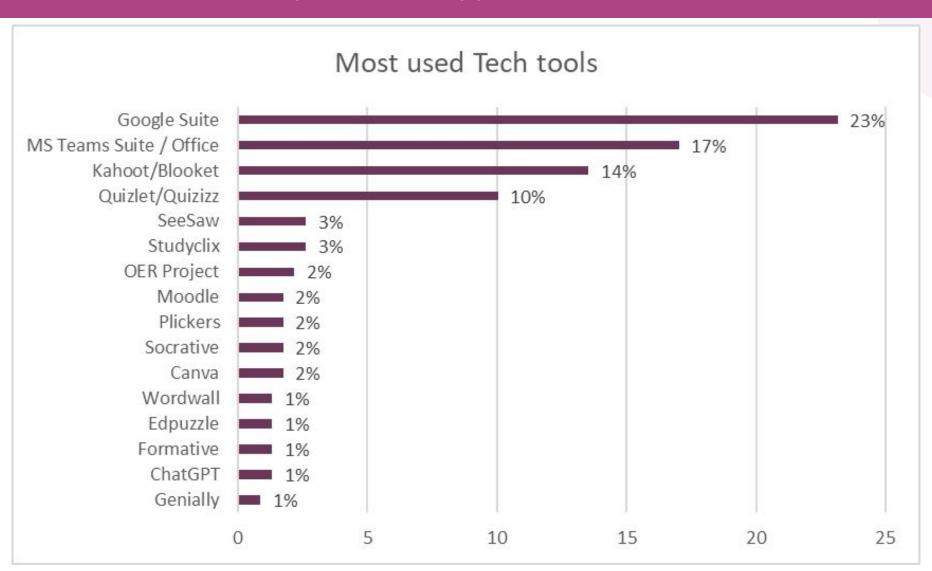
Interesting to see that maths has the lowest level of use of technology.

Do you use technology to support your assessments? (By experience level)



It appears that the use of technology is lower among teachers who are more experienced.

What tech do you use to support assessment activities?



### What tech do you use to support assessment activities?

#### **Classroom and Document Management Systems**

- 23% of participants have mentioned that they use Google apps such as: Classroom, Forms, Slides, etc.
- 17% have mentioned using Microsoft Office or Teams apps.
- Some teachers use other digital platforms to manage their assessments such as Studyclix, Socrative,
   Schoology, Edpuzzle, Moodle or Formative. Some teachers use SeeSaw to create student portfolios

#### Quizzes

- When conducting quick, short assessments, teachers use Kahoot, Blooket, Quizlet and Quizizz, with Plickers and Wordwall an alternative for some.
- Some teachers use SeeSaw to run self assessments.

#### **Devices**

 Teachers use their personal computers to run assessments and grade, students often have laptops, tablets or chromebooks to resolve assessments.

#### **Content Creation**

• When creating material, teachers mentioned using apps like Genially or Canva, apart from the MS and Google Suite.

#### **Generative Al**

A small number of teachers (3) mentioned using AI apps like ChatGPT to support the assessment process.

### How do you use these technologies?

Teachers use technology to generally manage the full assessment process, from preparing the test,
 collecting results and analysing them and presenting back to students.

"Google classroom for providing written feedback to students and keeping records, general communication with students, kahoot for quizzes, Google slides for students to document their work and to collaborate on projects."

• Teacher use some apps for formative assessment to run self- or peer assessment. They will also use apps to run quick checks of the current state of learning and to give immediate feedback to students.

"Mostly maths assessment but sometimes English too. I use Google Forms often (on ipad or chromebook) but I also use online games like Kahoot! and Blooket for more informal assessment."

 Others mentioned using apps for summative assessment, in the way they conduct end of week, topic or unit tests.and "have more information about the student and their evolution."

### How do you use these technologies?

• Apps can be used by students to create materials to respond to assignments, research topics, collaborate with peers and share back with the teacher or the classroom.

"They use their Chromebooks and the apps for research and for creating content such as videos, podcasts and other digital content."

- It is interesting to see that some teachers will use apps just for fun, but also for thinking activities, improving understanding, and showing relationships between concepts
  - -"Quick assessments of baseline knowledge and fun"
  - -"Give students a better understanding of how to construct an essay and the language they can use. I also use the Big History course to show students how History, Science, Maths, English and other subjects are all interrelated."
- It is significant that one teacher uses technologies to create "Democratic classroom practices, collaborative resources, and building topic archives", which is the line of this research work.

Please provide at least one example where you use a technology to conduct an assessment activity in your classroom (146 responses)

- Most of participants offered examples of the use of well known applications such as Kahoot, Blooket or Quizlet for short formative assessments, pre-diagnostic test or reflection quizzes.
- Apps like Plickers or WordWall serve as a revision tool of main concepts in a topic.
- Collaboration facilitated with Google Apps and MS Teams. Students and teachers can raise questions and make comments on content. Peer assessment is available through this digital collaborative environment and also using dedicated apps such as Flipgrid

#### Some other interesting examples included:

- VR to create assets and QR codes to identify them
- Podcasting apps to create radio commercials to better understand a topic
- Plotagon to create interviews with people in a detailed scenario
- Photographs, video or audio recordings to present results
- SeeSaw to reflect on a science experiment
- Discussion forums in LMS such as Moodle
- Revision Assistant AI to give instant feedback
- ChatGPT to expand students comments and create a consolidated score

Please provide at least one example where you use a technology to conduct an assessment activity in your classroom (146 responses)

"Research, writing, directions, lesson plans, coming up with scenarios, and so much more. I have **ChatGPT** even make my groups for me in my classes (Yes, Chat can make seating charts!)."

"Students photographed their work and using the record function, they orally assessed their work."

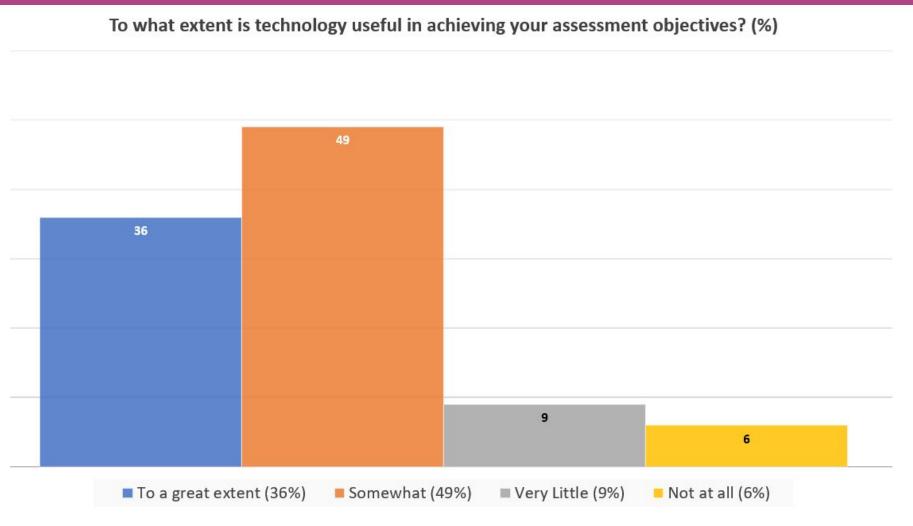
"I had students create radio commercials about a topic after a unit of study to demonstrate learning. They worked in pairs to use a **podcasting app** and then shared their commercial on our digital classroom platform."

"I have used **"Score"** or **"Revision Assistant"** Al to give students writing feedback as they compose their essays. It does not replace my feedback, but it helps guide students more instantly than I can."

"Students completed assessments at the end of a topic in google forms. Students provide a write up of a science experiment in **SeeSaw** learning journal; method, results, conclusions, what they could do differently."

"Reviewing key terms in English using **Plickers**. I am using the technology so there is no pressure on students to do so and as I conduct the assessment, the app compiles class and students results and data."

To what extent is using technology for assessment useful in achieving your assessment objectives in the classroom?

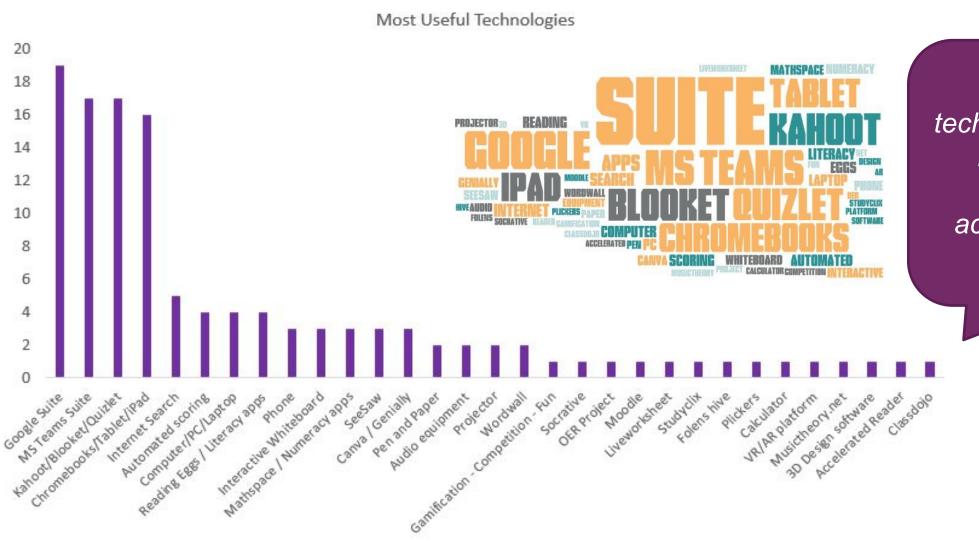


77 teachers (36%) stated to a great extent with 105 (49%) replying with 'somewhat'.

Only 13 teachers (6%) stated, 'not at all'.

These results imply technology has some way to go in enabling teachers to achieve their objectives.

What technology do you find most useful/effective for assessment? Why?



"The most useful technology is that which is very familiar to students, easily accessible, free, and easy to use."

### What technology do you find most useful/effective for assessment? Why?

 Google and MS Suites applications appear as the most useful technologies in the classroom for assessment purposes. One teacher owed this to the everyday exposure to and familiarity with these Apps.

"Word processing, slide decks, Google forms etc might seem boring, but they are part of everyday functioning. I do use a few apps, but the majority of my assessments are simple."

When looking for some extra engagement, teacher like Kahoot, Blooket and Quizlet because:

"The students like to compete against each other and that has been fun and engaging for them."

"Kahoot and Quizzes as they provide feedback and give the correct answer so that there is learning involved also"

### What technology do you find most useful/effective for assessment? Why?

• One teacher mentioned a VR/AR platform as being their most useful technology, because of its potential for immersion, collaboration and sharing.

"VR/AR Platforms such as VRTY. They put the creative power to build immersive experiences in the hands of students. It enables sharing of student stories safely across large distances."

 While another mentioned their love of a particular music website that helps their students develop in the correct way

"musictheory.net - I can set clear parameters for an activity for skills practice and students can clearly show me when they have hit the target or that they are improving"

• These last two examples shows that finding the right technology for the right context, the right use case and the right group of students is clearly important to teachers. One participant mentioned the importance of "adequately provide each student with the best means to succeed as we can" given that "every child / adult / human being learns differently and at varied rates of success". This leads to "true scaffolding and differentiation".

### What technology do you find least useful/effective for assessment? Why?

• Considering that approximately 20% of our respondents have said that they do not use technology at all, we can find here some reasons why they decide not to use technology: time, budget, purpose, lack of personalisation, etc.

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"I don't use technology I don't find useful"

"Any technology where the focus is on the technology and not on student learning."

"If it takes me a long time to learn I am less able to offer it to students"

"We also cannot afford the pay version of any app... unless the free version is useful"

"The same test being given to everyone and not adjusting to the level of each pupil"
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• We have seen that Kahoot and other similar apps are used in classroom to run quick engaging assessments. Still, some teachers have concerns about using this type of apps, regarding how they can affect students' levels of concentration. Also, some teachers do not find these type of apps' scoring methods appropriate for the class.

"Kahoot/Quizizz and other novelty quizzing platforms. They are more distracting than useful."

"Games that only involve first past the post winning as it favours strong students too much"

<sup>&</sup>quot;Blooket- it does not measure who knows what and the best students may not win the game. It is a lot of fun for the students but that's it really."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Rewards speed over accuracy and isn't all it is hyped up to be in terms of concrete learning outcomes"

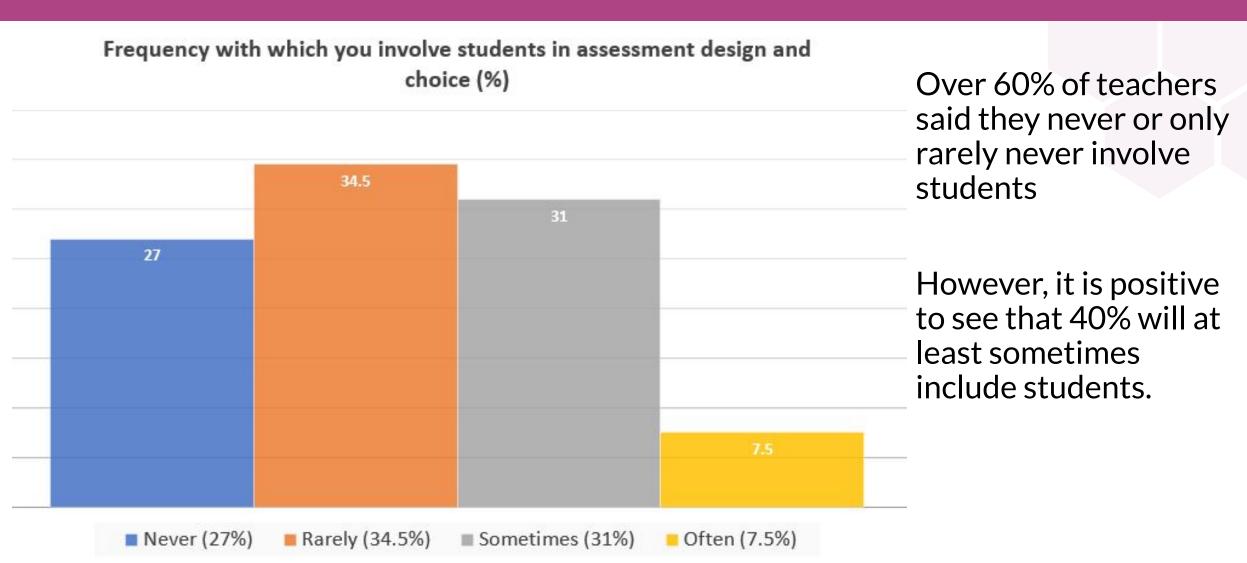
# Student Involvement & Transferable Skills



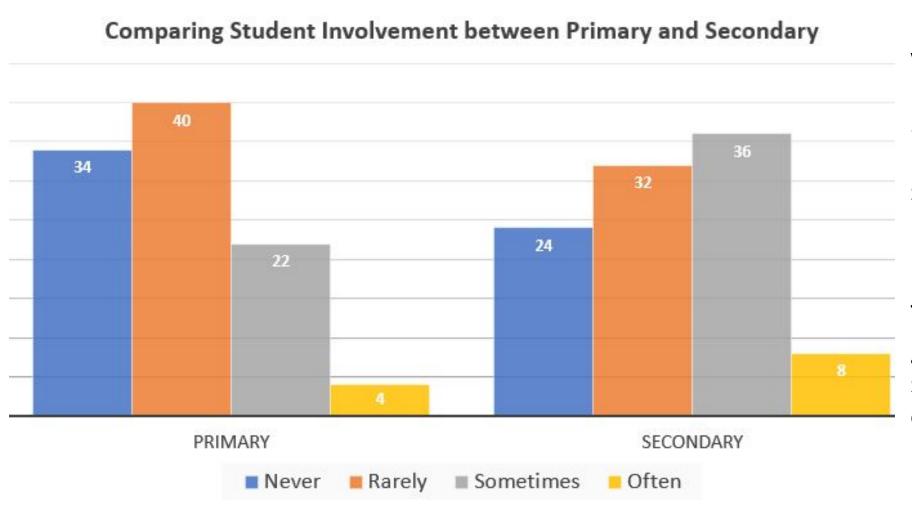
Democratic, Inclusive & Authentic Assessment for Learning & Sustainability

Assessment for Learning & Sustainability

How often do you involve students in planning assessments, defining criteria and choosing the assessment type?



### Student Involvement



It appears that teachers will be more likely to involve students in assessment design and implementation in secondary school over primary school.

This finding makes sense given the maturity of students to take ownership over their learning and assessment

To what extent do you incorporate the teaching and/or assessment of transferable or transversal skills in your classroom?

