

PUBLICFIRST 

How teachers use textbooks

Teachers' perceptions of physical, digital and online resources and the impact of Covid-19 on these

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Background and Objectives

On behalf of the Publishers Association, Public First ran a detailed research project testing teachers' spending on and perception of teaching resources (physical, digital and online) and how these may have changed in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

A mix of both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to complete this project. Between December 2020 and February 2021, Public First ran 8 focus groups with teachers and conducted a nationally representative poll of 1,000 teachers, both across England. The quantitative and qualitative research complement one another; the quantitative research provides insight into what teachers think and the qualitative research allows us to probe why they think it. We have also conducted a segmentation analysis of teachers to reveal how they behave.

Full details of the method can be found in the Appendix.

Throughout the report the following resource types were considered:ⁱ

Online/printed resources: tools such as worksheets, lesson plan templates, e-textbooksⁱⁱ, videos that can be accessed via websites (either requiring membership/subscription or freely available to download).

Digital resources: educational apps, software packages and tools that are interactive and can be used for setting and completing tasks (e.g. on a computer/mobile device).

Physical resources: predominantly textbooks and literary texts/library books, and revision guides.

Headlines

Across the research we identified the following key findings:

- Teachers largely agree that high quality textbooks provide a good foundation for curriculum structure and can offer a familiar routine to students in lessons.
- Teachers were positive about the quality and range of textbook options available in the market, and largely do not find them too expensive.
- There was a recognition that some teachers perceived a stigma around textbooks, although most teachers we spoke to did not think they held that view themselves.
- The largest barrier to extensive textbook (physical or digital) use identified by teachers is the need for differentiation and professional autonomy – especially in primary schools.
- Teachers who prefer physical resources are more likely to be a secondary teacher, work in an outstanding school and less likely to be stressed. They are also more likely to be satisfied with their job than the average teacher, less likely to have had a preference shown to them through training for them to create their own resources, and are more likely to use them as written.
- Teachers in the core subjectsⁱⁱⁱ would not be much more likely to use specific resources such as published textbooks even if it came as a free or heavily subsidised proposition. By and large if they were not using them it was because they did not “*fit the kids*” in front of them.
- Most teachers see themselves as content curators – cherry-picking the best resources for each lesson and each student. Choice is therefore very important.
- When asked, 72% of teachers would prefer to use physical, digital and online resources to making their own.
- The willingness to use textbooks is significantly increased when it comes as a digital proposition, especially in secondary schools.

- Teachers use textbooks to reduce their workload. Without access to these, they would spend an additional 5.7 hours a week planning their lessons.
- If textbooks were not used, the state system would require an additional 52,250 teachers to function, which would cost nearly £3 billion a year.
- Teachers did not think experiences during Covid-19 would lead to significant acceleration towards a digital first strategy in schools although they were keen to retain some of the digital tools they had been using.
- There was little appetite for different, newly created, 'catch up' resources for students in addition to resources already available to schools.

Main Findings

1

Teachers largely agree that high quality textbooks provide a good foundation for curriculum structure and can offer a familiar routine to students in lessons.

In general, when asked, most were very quick to list the benefits of high-quality teaching resources.

It was felt by most focus group participants that textbooks are good for giving students a set routine and structure in lessons. More prominent at secondary, teachers said students did enjoy the simple routine of using a textbook in a lesson.

“They quite like a textbook, because it can be like their little comfort zone, they’ve got the content, and they’ve got a task and sometimes that works for them.”
[Secondary PE teacher].

“When they see it in a textbook, it just formalises what I’m saying in the classroom somehow.” [Secondary maths teacher].

There was a general feeling that textbooks were most relevant for exam classes and more knowledge-based subjects such as maths, science and, to an extent, the humanities (as opposed to more practical, creative or hands-on subjects such as art, design, technology, or music).

“I’ve never taught a level without them having a textbook.” [Secondary science teacher].

“Textbooks are good for reference for content and knowledge, but I think that’s more for key stage five or year 11.” [Secondary business studies teacher].

“None of the schools I’ve taught in, apart from maths, particularly ever use textbooks.” [Primary teacher].

“I think they have a place helping students when they are independently learning but I wouldn’t want to see them in English classrooms for me. I’m big in reading across the curriculum and I worry about the quality of teaching

if there’s an over reliance on textbooks.” [Secondary English teacher].

“I think I can see why it would be hugely beneficial for content-based subjects and subjects like maths and science. Whereas for English, the only time I use textbooks is to just extract a comprehension activity with quick mark scheme.” [Secondary English teacher].

The poll confirmed these preferences with teachers more likely to prefer to use textbooks for exam classes and digital resources such as interactive websites or educational apps for classes with challenging behaviour.

Figure 1: Which type of resource prefer to use for each class (one type per class)

	Physical resources ^{iv}	Digital resources ^v	Online or printed resources ^{vi}	I don't have a preference	Don't Know
An exam class (e.g. a GCSE or KS2 class)	27%	19%	18%	29%	7%
A well-behaved class	20%	24%	17%	38%	1%
A class with challenging behaviour	16%	36%	21%	26%	2%
A high ability class	23%	24%	17%	34%	2%
A lower ability class	17%	30%	27%	25%	1%
A class you know well	16%	24%	20%	40%	1%
A class you have just started teaching	20%	24%	24%	30%	1%

There was agreement from all but the most sceptical that textbooks were useful for fostering independence, instant feedback and as a pupil reference.

“In maths a textbook can be really good for instant feedback because they can instantly turn to the back and check the answer.” [Secondary maths teacher].

“In English they are good as revision guides to have at home for independent study.” [Secondary English teacher].

“In our school, there is a lot of emphasis on students reading ahead before the lesson, especially for sixth formers. So, if they have a textbook, they can use it to

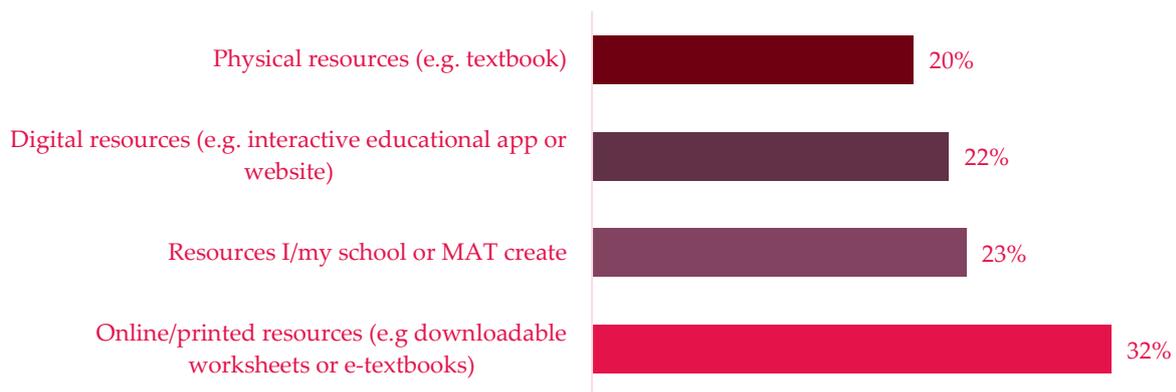
read a chapter before the lesson to really push students”
[Secondary history teacher].

2

Most teachers are open to textbooks in principle.

There is no overwhelmingly preferred resource that teachers use in the classroom, with one in five (20%) of those who use them mostly preferring physical resources such as textbooks, through to 32% mostly preferring online/printed resources (whether paid-for or downloaded for free). This suggests that teachers like a mix.

Figure 2: Type of resource prefer to use



Q2: And of those types of resources you use in the classroom, which do you MOST PREFER to use?

Whilst only 20% of those who used them said their preferred resource was physical resources such as textbooks, focus group findings show that most teachers do use textbooks as support for curriculum planning.

“The textbook is the base for us to build on.” [Secondary maths teacher].

“Take that as your starting point, and then tweak to fit your kids.” [Secondary geography teacher].

“It has a place as a reference point.” [Secondary maths teacher].

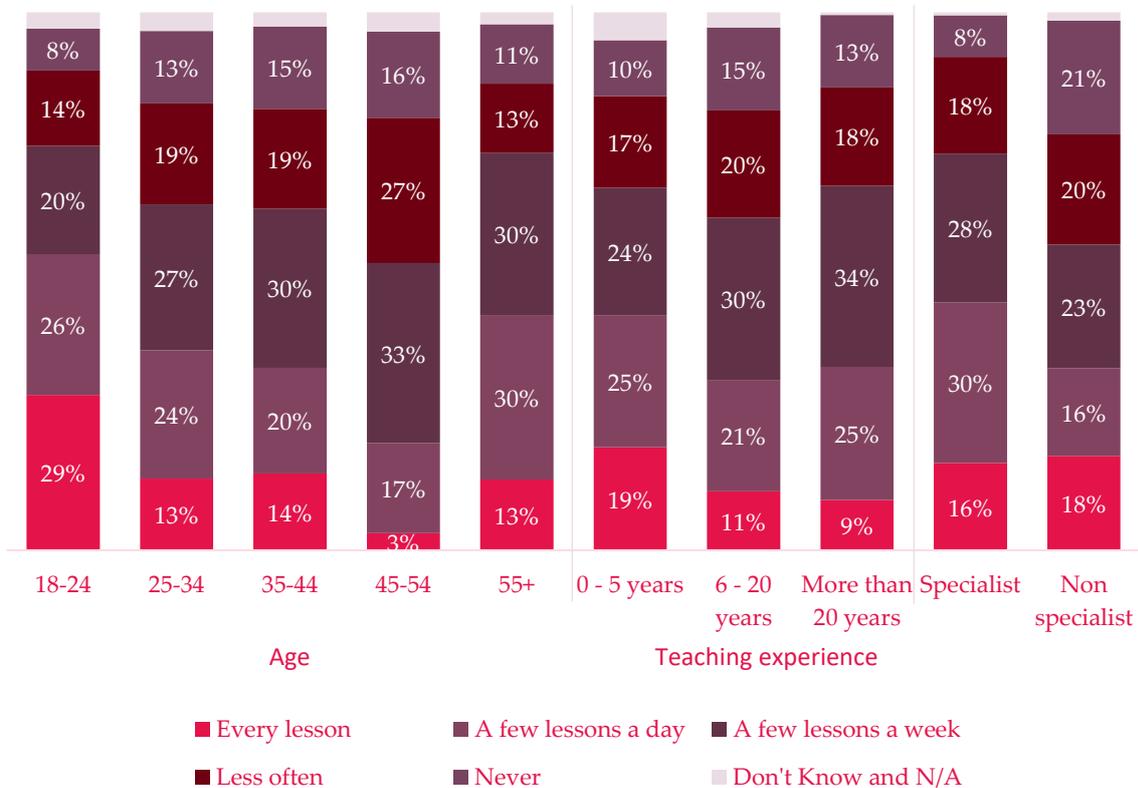
“I think it’s really good to prepare with textbooks.” [Secondary history teacher].

Different demographics have different preferences for physical textbook use. Secondary teachers with less than five years' experience, those with more than 20 years' experience, and those at outstanding schools are likely to prefer physical resources more than other types of teacher. Furthermore, maths and humanities secondary teachers are more likely to prefer physical resources, such as textbooks, compared to science and MFL secondary teachers. From the poll, only 13% of teachers never use a physical textbook and 30% never use an online textbook.

Younger (55%) and less experienced (44%) teachers are more likely to use a physical textbook at least a few times a day compared to their older counterparts. However, they are also more likely to use a wide variety of resources every day.

There was also a different pattern of use between teachers at primary (29%) who were less likely than those at secondary (44%) to use a physical textbook at least a few times a day.

Figure 3: How often on average use physical textbooks to support teaching and learning in classroom



Q3: How often on average, if at all, do you use physical textbooks to support teaching and learning in your classroom?

Throughout all the focus groups, it was neither cost nor quality that was the barrier to using textbooks, but the feeling that one resource would not fit what they wanted to do – so they mix-and-matched and tailored to suit the children in front of them.

“It’s too formal, it’s too prescriptive. And I don’t think that’s what teaching is about, I think we should be able to be, you know, have our own autonomy and create our own lessons and engage the children and putting a textbook in front of them for me 80% of them would just switch off, you might get a few who will just focus, and they love reading and they want to have a visual reference.” [Secondary business studies teacher].

3

Teachers have a clear idea over what they associate with high-quality resources. They were positive about the quality and range of options available in the market, and largely have the budget to buy textbooks if they wish.

The most popular reasons for choosing each type of resource varied across resource. For physical resources 28% gave the main reason for choosing this as it is a *higher quality resource*; for digital 40% gave the main reason as *it allows students to access them at home*; and for online, 46% stated that *they are easier to tailor*.

Within the focus groups the words that came up most often when teachers were asked to describe a high-quality resource were: “accurate”, “engaging”, “user-friendly”, “concise”, “allowed for differentiation”, and “customisable”. The overwhelming response was a desire for differentiation and the ability to tailor for students in their class. There was a wish for more digital resources that were updated to consider any changes and that could be downloaded and edited to cherry pick the best bits.

However, there was little appetite for following a scheme lesson-by-lesson, word-by-word.

“Differentiation – so they can hit the middle of the park, and then the higher ability.” [Secondary PE teacher].

“We want an anthology of texts for kids to refer to and for us to break down and differentiate as required.”
[Secondary history teacher].

“What I want is something that has accurate information in a sensible flow”. [Primary teacher].

“The most important thing is, can it be easily adaptable to meet the needs of all children. Then it might be worthwhile.” [Secondary citizenship teacher].

“For maths, we just need questions, questions, questions. What I tend to do is put some easy questions on the board, then most do the textbook ones, but I also end up having lots of printouts for extensions. I end up with so much paper that just gets thrown in recycling at the end of each session, because I don't know how they're going to cope and if they are going to need the other things.”
[Secondary maths teacher].

In general, teachers were not dismissive of the quality of textbooks available in the market, they just thought they did not work for them or their students.

“I think they're much improved. The more recent ones are a lot more engaging, colourful, bright, diverse in terms of the content. But it's about delivering, isn't it, and it's about the person who's using that as a resource, like anything.” [Secondary history teacher].

“I always find that tasks in textbooks are not awful and the content is well produced. The exam questions and tips like that are quite good.” [Secondary maths teacher].

“I feel like the last couple years, there's been a lot more phonics books coming out, that are actually quite a decent quality.” [Primary teacher].

“I think the physical resources are great, if you find the right ones, and the children like them.” [Primary teacher].

“The ones I've used seem fine and do the job adequately. I am not sure I've ever come across one that I've sort of thought was below standards.” [Secondary science teacher].

Few displayed a perception that the schools were struggling to buy resources. Interestingly, very few

teachers brought up Covid-19 budget squeezes having an impact on their decision making when purchasing choices; however, this could have been because we spoke mostly to classroom teachers and middle leadership who feel further away from a school's budget concerns.

"There is at my school quite a lot of cash." [Secondary teacher].

"We buy lots and lots of resources, but we might not necessarily use our money on workbooks and textbooks." [Primary teacher].

"There's loads of money set aside to get the textbooks that we want." [Secondary teacher].

"Subject leaders will look at their curriculum and see what needs resources." [Primary teacher].

"Books and materials, that's where the money's going." [Secondary teacher].

However, some expressed frustration over budget allocation from school improvement plans, which left certain subjects scrambling to get resources.

"It's quite clear that for certain subjects, there isn't budget and for other subjects, because there is a focus in the school improvement plan there is." [Primary teacher].

Participants from all stages and school types spoke positively about how collaboration on resources with other schools and teachers helped reduce workload. This also included sharing resources with teachers on social media.

"I've come across them because a colleague uses them and then passes them on to me." [Primary teacher].

"We do get a lot of resources on our Twitter feed and we share lots of resources that we create. But we also take lots of resources as well to influence our teaching and learning." [Secondary teacher].

"We had all the heads of department in Camden all teaching the same subject and same specification. So, resources were getting bounced around." [Secondary teacher].

“Being part of a Facebook group was an eyeopener and the amount of content they share is phenomenal.” [Secondary teacher].vii

Perhaps unsurprisingly, collaboration was more developed in multi-academy trusts (MATs) and workload was less of a concern for this group of teachers in helping to reduce planning workload. The more advanced MATs had created their own “textbooks” which typically would be accessed on a shared drive and be a mixture of PowerPoint presentations for classroom instruction or worksheets and workbooks that were printed out. On using a trust wide curriculum one teacher at a MAT concluded that,

“It’s got our structures and routines that have been tried and tested and we find it has been really successful over the past few years with the results. I don’t think we would go back to the generic stuff when we’ve got the talent kind of in house creating these resources.” [Secondary teacher – MAT].

However, despite most teachers that we spoke to at MATs feeling like they had access to a “high-quality” suite of resources that used the same “type of language” mimicking the style of the trust, the perceived need to tailor for their particular class did not diminish.

“We do things at the same time as every other academy across the trust. And that seems to work, it keeps things consistent, but still allows you that level of ability to add things into your own practice within your own academy.” [Secondary teacher – MAT].

“Our trust curriculum website has these packages on there. There’s the long-term plan, there’s the resources, there’s the PowerPoint slides, there’s the printouts, etc. But I haven’t looked at one of those and thought, I’m comfortable to use this with my class.” [Secondary teacher – MAT].

4

Teachers use paid-for textbooks to reduce their workload. Without access to textbooks, their workload would increase by an additional 5.7 hours a week to plan their lessons.

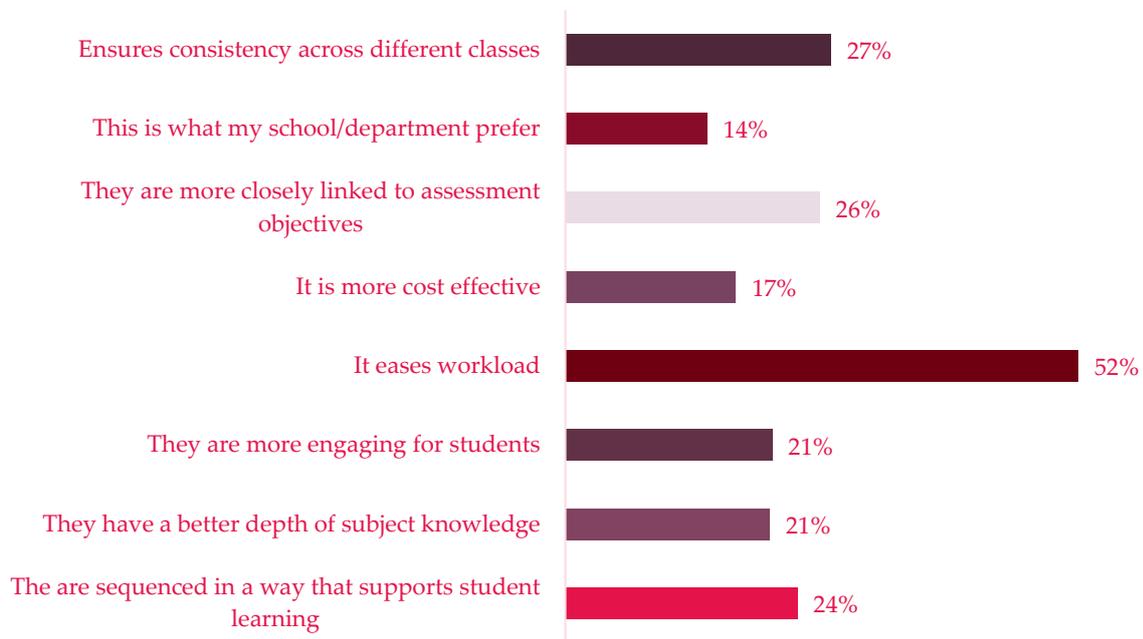
The poll results show that the median amount of time teachers spend planning an average lesson is 30 minutes, with 21 minutes of that being taken

up by searching for things online.^{viii} This equates to 5.4 working weeks over a year spent searching the internet.^{ix}

The poll found that if teachers did not have access to textbooks, they would have needed to work an additional 5.7 hours a week. This would have been the equivalent to English schools needing another 52,250 teachers in the system due to increased planning time currently saved by access to textbooks – which would cost just under £3 billion.^x

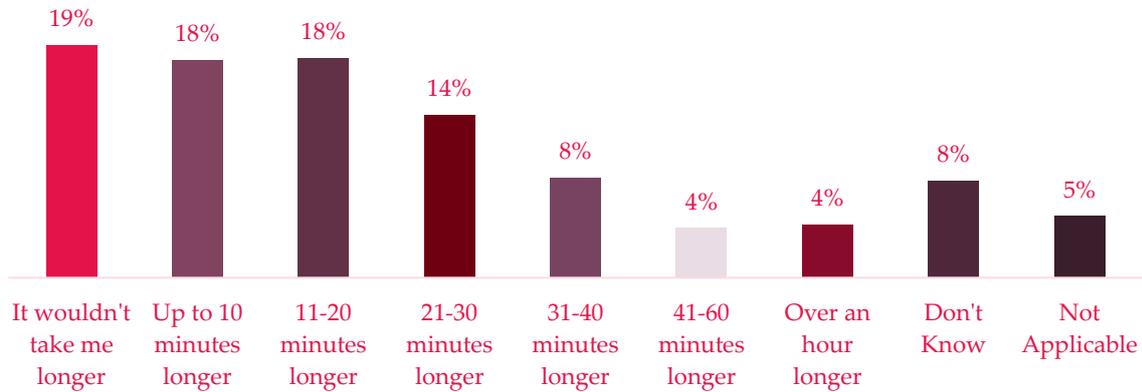
Teachers reported that the main reason for choosing paid-for resources over creating their own resources is to ease workload (52%), which was almost double the next highest mention. The next two most commonly cited reasons for using paid-for resources were that they help ensure consistency across classrooms and are better aligned with assessment objectives than non-paid for resources, with similar proportions between primary and secondary teachers.

Figure 4: Main reasons for using paid for resources over own created resource
(choose up to 3)



Q6: What would you say are the main reasons you use paid for resources over your own created resources, when you do? Select up to three.

Figure 5: How much longer it would take to plan for an average lesson without access to relevant textbooks



Q19: How much longer, in minutes, would it take you to plan for an average lesson without access to relevant text books?

As might be expected, the impact of not having access to the internet for research would have the biggest impact on planning time. Our results show that not having access to the internet would increase the median lesson planning time by 22.01 minutes, reaching as high as 25.40 minutes among primary school teachers (18.41 among secondary). Textbook dependent teachers feel the lowest impact here, with an estimate of 15.29 minutes increase to the median time, and 13% of them saying it would have no impact at all.^{xi}

5

Segmentation analysis reveals four different categories of teachers based on their use of resources. These categories are labelled: Self-reliant, Pick 'n' Mix, Tech Head, and Textbook-reliant.

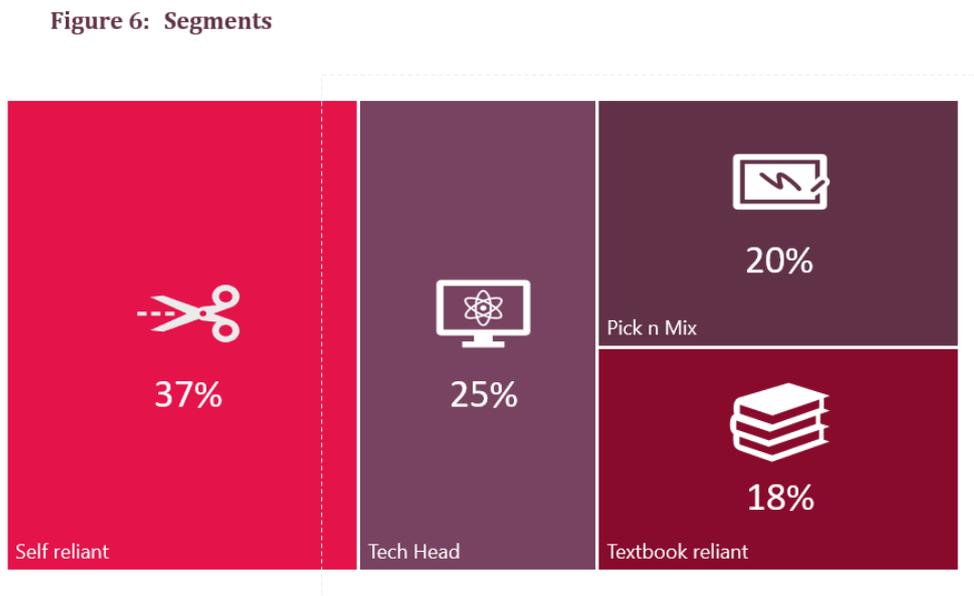
Within this research there are three ways of considering how many teachers in England are supportive of the use of textbooks and other paid-for resources: how many who say they are in principle; how many use them on a regular or semi-regular basis; and a more sophisticated segmentation of teachers by their attitudes towards textbooks and resources. Full details of our segmentation approach can be found in the Appendix.

As seen earlier in this report, in principle, the majority of teachers are not instinctively hostile to physical textbooks and learning resources – when asked, 72% of teachers would prefer to use physical, digital and online resources to making their own.

In terms of actual users, currently 22% of teachers use mostly paid resources, with 37% using an even mixture of resources that are paid-for and created by themselves, with 38% mostly using their own / ones their school has created.

In other words, almost 6 in 10 teachers are regular or semi-regular users of paid-for resources.

Figure 6: Segments



We can segment teachers in England into four main groups by their engagement with and support of textbooks and other resources. This segmentation shows that there are three groups of teachers – those who are heavily physical textbook dependent, those who are interested in using technology, and those who adopt a pick-and-mix approach who are regular users of paid for resources. Together this audience accounts for 63% of the teaching profession.

Those teachers who prefer physical resources are more likely to be a secondary teacher, work in an outstanding school and less likely to be stressed. They are also more likely to be satisfied with their job than the average teacher, less likely to have had a preference shown to them through training for them to create their own resources, and are more likely to use them as written.

The following breaks down the identified segments in more detail:

37%

Self-reliant

The Self-reliant group prefers to create their own resources. This group is largely made up of primary school teachers and they tend not to have a preference on resource medium – although a large proportion never uses online resources.

When they do use paid-for resources, it is mainly to ease workload. This group prioritises customisability of resources over everything else.

20%

Pick 'n' Mix

The Pick 'n' Mix group prefer to use a wide variety of resources in the classroom. A majority of them use resources they create, and over a third use their own created resources in every lesson. This group is less likely to use paid-for resources and tend to only use them to ease workload. When they do use paid-for resources they are very likely to add modifications and customise them.

This group mostly uses online resources; however they still tend to mix-and-match, using physical textbooks for exam classes and digital options for those with challenging behaviour. This group has also converted to digital as a result of Covid-19. They are the most likely to be stressed in their job.

25%

Tech Head

The Tech Head group prefer to use online and digital resources rather than physical resources. They are mainly school leaders (middle or senior level) and are more likely to be part of a MAT. This group are big supporters of both digital and online resources, and half expect to be using majority digital resources in the next 5 years.

The Tech Head group mostly use paid-for resources rather than creating their own and are strong believers that there is a stigma around using physical textbooks.

18%

Textbook-reliant

The Textbook-reliant group prefers to use physical resources. They always prefer physical textbooks, regardless of the class and almost a third use textbooks for every lesson. A large majority of this group use paid-for resources as written, rather than changing them to create their own resources,

and they are less likely to feel a stigma around teachers using physical textbooks.

They are more likely to be a secondary teacher, work in an outstanding school and less likely to be stressed. A third of this group are over 55 and are more likely to have a degree in the subject they teach. They are also more likely to be satisfied with their job than the average teacher.

6

There was a recognition that some teachers perceived a stigma around textbooks, despite the fact most teachers we spoke to did not think they had that view themselves.

For a few, the stigma around using textbooks came from a substantial pressure in schools not to rely on a textbook. This stemmed from a feeling that this was “lazy” or “not the current vogue in education”.

“There is definitely a perception that a textbook is old fashioned.” [Secondary history teacher].

There was also a belief that a textbook on its own was not sufficient for learning, especially for high-performing students.

“We really find that our top students can’t just use the book, especially those students that want to go to Oxbridge.” [Secondary history teacher – Independent school].

For more, the stigma stemmed back to the impression they had received during their training. This quote typified the feeling:

“When I was doing my training, if I’d taught from a textbook, that probably would have been a little bit looked down on.... I think that my assessor would have felt that they found it difficult to assess the lesson if I’d use the textbook, because there was a lot in my training about creating your own materials and making sure they’re engaging for your class.” [Primary teacher].

But for most, the stigma came from the idea that the children would not engage in a textbook-heavy lesson. Many teachers mentioned the perceived difficulty of getting students to concentrate

on a singular text and exercise in a book for a full lesson, especially those in state schools.

“There’s one or two members in my department that are very textbook dependent. And I think the kids kind of see them as the old dinosaurs teaching history that not really coming up with new ideas or not necessarily making the subject exciting.” [Secondary history teacher].

“To get 30 children to fully engage in a textbook lesson I imagine quite a lot of textbooks would end up out the window after the first minute.” [Secondary English teacher].

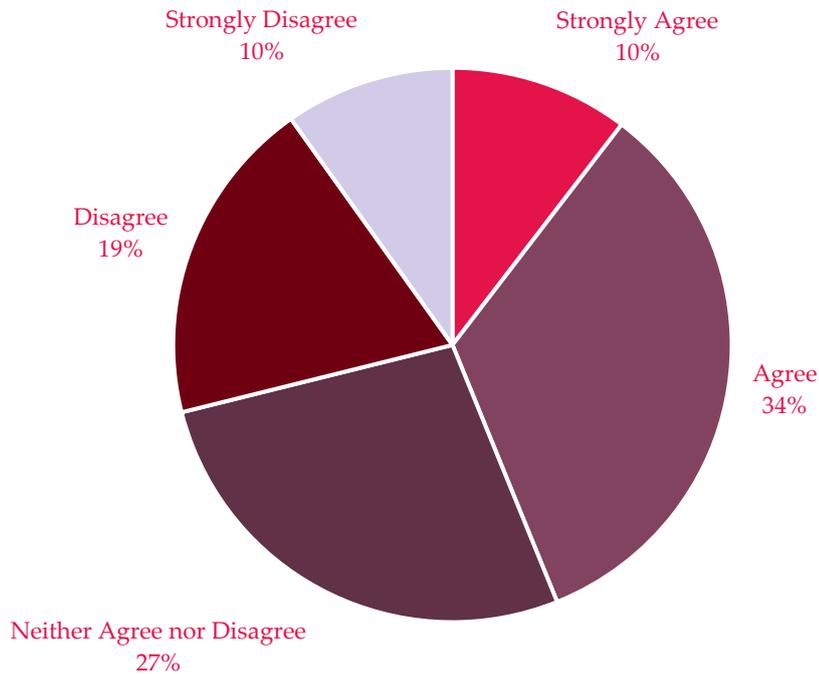
“You’re expected to create and impose your own sort of personality on it and bring out some enthusiasm from the children by doing that.” [Primary teacher].

“To get a load of kids to engage with a textbook when you teach in the middle of Salford is not going to happen.” [Secondary maths teacher].

“I think about that element of teacher input when it comes to actually engaging students in the learning. And I’ve never found a textbook that really does that.” [Secondary politics teacher].

This finding was reaffirmed through the poll results: 44% of teachers agreed that there is a stigma around teachers using textbooks. However, it should be noted that strength of agreement with this statement is quite low, with only 10% agreeing strongly that there is a stigma around using textbooks. Overall, a slightly higher proportion of primary teachers agree with this (48%) than secondary teachers (37%) and for those who work at a MAT (48%) than those who do not (39%).

Figure 7: Extent to which agree or disagree that ‘There is a stigma around teachers using textbooks’



Q13: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: "There is a stigma around teachers using textbooks"

However, although they knew teachers felt a perceived pressure to create resources themselves, many of the teachers participating in the focus groups said they did not feel that themselves.

"So I don't really but most of my department definitely do. It's the guilt, if you weren't working, if you finish work and left school at five, and you didn't do anything that evening, and the other person did, often there is kind of this implication that, well, maybe you should have been working on that resource or making that thing a little bit better." [Secondary maths teacher].

"I think there's definitely a stigma to do with using a textbook, in that you haven't done anything, or that you're lazy, or that you, you know, you're just not bothered about your practice. But I certainly don't think that." [Secondary business studies teacher].

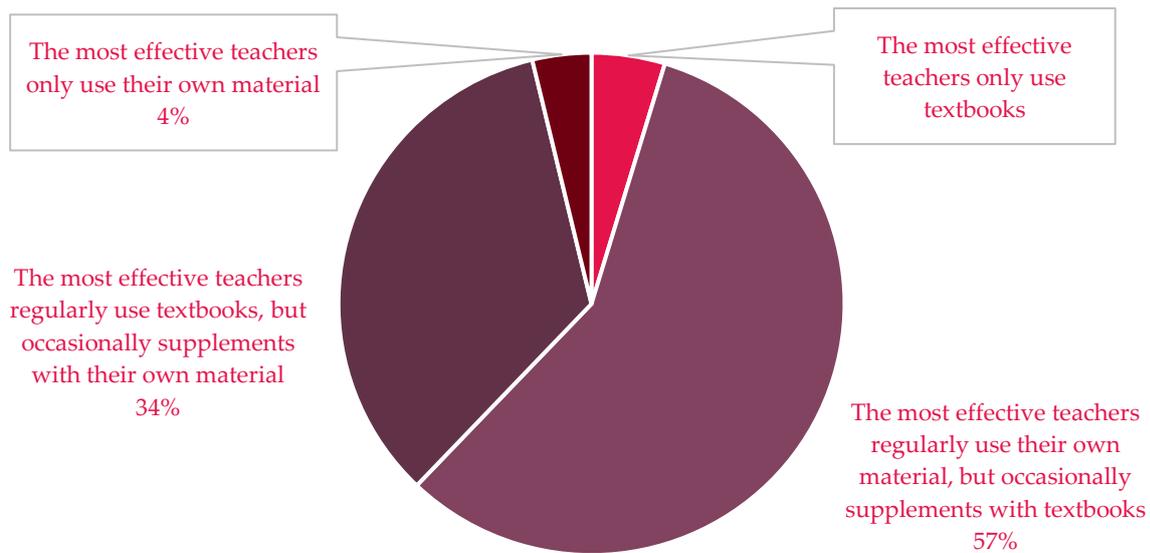
And, on principal, most teachers did not see anything inherently wrong in using resources created by others through textbooks or otherwise.

"If I find somebody else's resource and I really like it then I'll use it and that's fine." [Secondary maths teacher].

“I don’t see why we should spend hours and hours doing the same thing.” [Secondary English teacher].

Furthermore, very few teachers (4%) believe that the most effective teachers **only** use their own material.

Figure 8: Statement agreed with most



Q14: Which of the following do you agree with most? Please select the statement which comes closest to your view, even if none are exactly right

When broken down by subject at secondary, humanities teachers (54%), maths teachers (52%) and MFL teachers (47%) are more likely than English teachers (43%) and perhaps surprisingly science teachers (37%) to agree that the most effective teachers regularly use textbooks.

7

Most had not heard of a “complete curriculum programme” and there was a mixed reception to its benefits.

When the concept of a “complete curriculum programme” was explained within the focus groups, most were instinctively sceptical of the idea. Their reaction brought out phrases such as, “restrictive”, “limited” and “outdated”. Similarly, when presented with an anonymised quote from Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for School Standards, on the topic of high-quality textbooks being good for teachers, students, and parents, as well as

bringing us closer to the norm in higher performing countries, participants' immediate reaction was to dismiss the idea as it would remove creativity from learning.^{xii}

"So prescribed, no creativity. And it almost felt like there was no skill delivering the curriculum." [Primary teacher].

"As a teacher, I think I'd find it incredibly boring. If I had to teach just from a textbook." [Secondary history teacher].

"If there was something that works for everyone in the country everyone would be using it." [Secondary maths teacher].

However, after further prompting there was recognition that many had used something similar and that it could be helpful especially for non-specialist and new teachers. Teachers who had recently swapped subjects stated that they had found using a complete package useful. One described themselves without it as "completely clueless" and another stated,

"to have something in front of you where all the contents are there, so you don't have to go do research is good." [Secondary geography teacher].

"We've had quite a lot of staff turnover and so I suppose one of the big advantages of having something like that is that it provides a mechanism by which say, you've got somebody who's coming on very quickly, they may be a non specialist So in that sense, something like that could be quite useful." [Secondary computer science teacher].

Others had also seen the benefit it could bring on reducing workload.

"It's almost always better than having nothing in front of me, even if it's just for some inspiration." [Secondary PE teacher].

"I'm thankful for it, because I've been a little bit overloaded with work." [Secondary maths teacher].

Due to the perceived need to adapt all resources felt by many teachers there was still doubt from some that there would be positive workload gains.

“So if you’re going to spend time adapting it, making it personal to you, and by the time you’ve done that, you may as well do it from scratch.” [Secondary geography teacher].

“I don’t see how it would reduce my workload because I would still have to prepare all my resources.” [Secondary computer science teacher].

“I just think I’ve never ever got anything that I think ‘Brilliant, I can use that tomorrow’. And obviously, because you’ve got to put it onto our own template. That sometimes creates more work.” [Secondary English teacher].

Teachers were also concerned over whether a single programme would be relevant to all their pupils. This came with a particular concern over resources for disadvantaged, English as an additional language (EAL) and special educational need and disability (SEND) students. They were unanimous in their concern for these students and said this cohort struggled to engage with most published resources, and would often need to make them more bespoke to suit their needs. This was chiefly related to students who struggled to read the text or relate to experiences used in resources. According to the poll, “supporting the least able students” (46%) is the most important factor for a resource to have, tied with “it is customisable” (46%), thus reflecting the focus group responses.

“For an inner-city child, that vocab is few and far between, and they just don’t understand it.” [Primary teacher].

“We have some really weaker children as well who just can’t access the material and I think a one for all approach is never going to work.” [Secondary business studies teacher].

“They haven’t been able to experience the things that I think certain curriculums might expect them to.” [Primary teacher].

“So even if it was just the basics that you could then amend if it was a package that would have lower middle and higher ability options within it, that would be something that would be more helpful.” [Secondary maths teacher].

From some, there was a worry that it would diminish their subject expertise and therefore potentially damage their credibility if, by virtue of using something pre-prepared, they might not be as expert in this topic area as needed and a student question might throw them off course.

“If then they come back to you with a specific question, or a follow up question or something that needs elaboration that can potentially undermine your credibility.”
[Secondary English teacher].

8

The largest barrier to extensive textbook (physical or digital) or complete curriculum resources use felt by teachers is the need for differentiation and professional autonomy.

The biggest barrier to teachers using textbooks extensively, and with fidelity when they did, was the perception that they did not cater for the children they had in front of them. Participants were clear that this was necessary because of the ability range in their classrooms. This was also found through the poll’s open responses. When describing a high-quality resource in their own words, most teachers focused on the desire for resources to be differentiated to suit their class.

“Sometimes you might have a boy heavy class, or you might have a class for example, who maybe have never been to the beach before you do beaches, and it won’t fit.”
[Primary teacher].

“It’s not one size fits all.” [Primary teacher].

“I think the reason why we’re changing these resources; is we can do it better for the children we’ve got.” [Primary teacher].

“The reality is most children in the world don’t fit into this neat little box for the government.” [Primary teacher].

“We all know our schools and our classes better than some person who’s designing the curriculum who might not necessarily take everything into account.” [Primary teacher].

“It depends on your level of knowledge, for example you are put into a non-specialist position, then, absolutely rely on experts. But then when you are the individual expert, then back yourself regarding knowledge, understanding, and also how you can impart that on young people.” [Secondary English teacher].

“I’m going to need to differentiate depending upon the kids I’ve got in front of me” [Secondary science teacher].
“I don’t follow the same structure for every lesson because every child learns in a different way.” [Primary teacher].

Due to this perceived need to tailor, nearly all participants cited they spend a lot of time either rewriting resources or creating their own to match lesson objectives.

“Not very often can I directly go that’s perfect and that’ll work” [Primary teacher].

“It’s the resources, that take so long, because we’re making them from scratch.” [Secondary geography teacher].

“It requires a huge amount of time and investment.” [Secondary maths teacher].

In some cases, they found it faster to write their own rather than find an existing resource which would inevitably have to be re-written.

“It is easier sometimes to do it yourself as often when you do find something, it might not be completely suitable.” [Secondary maths teacher].

When pressed, teachers in the core subjects^{xiii} we spoke to would not be much more likely to use specific resources such as published textbooks even if it came as a free or heavily subsidised proposition. By and large if they weren’t using them it was because they didn’t “fit the kids” in front of them.

9

The widespread use of a cross-curricular thematic approach to planning at primary is a particular barrier to teachers using textbooks in this phase.

Within the focus groups, teachers at primary schools preferred to take a cross-curricular thematic approach. The reasoning given for this was that younger children find it easier to engage with one topic as opposed to jumping around topics for each subject.

“We design our curriculum so that it’s based on an overreaching question for the whole term.” [Primary teacher].

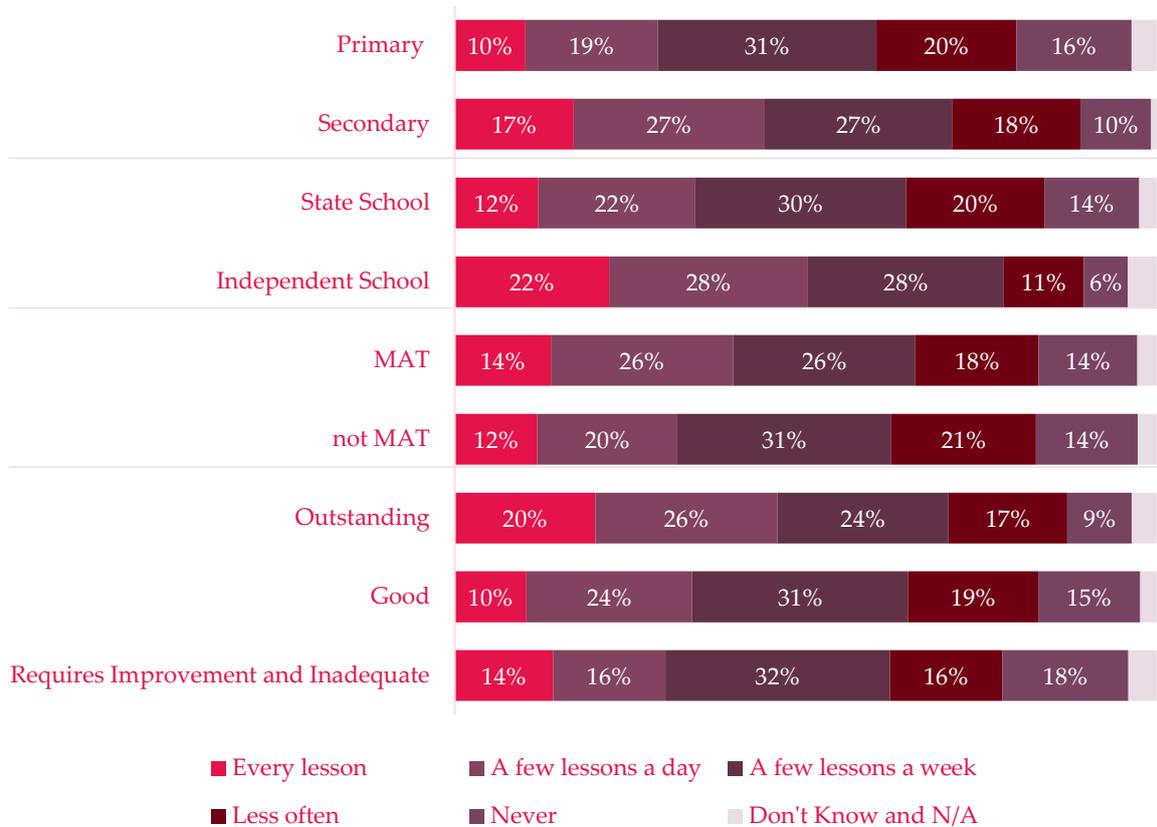
“We find that a curriculum theme overview is the best way to make those links into all subjects.” [Primary teacher].

“It makes more sense for them to do the topic of say winter all through the three main subjects rather than jumping around a lot.” [Primary teacher].

“[Themes make it come] more alive for the children, especially for younger ones, it seems to just ignite their enthusiasm.” [Primary teacher].

This was reaffirmed in the poll results, where primary school teachers were more likely than secondary school teachers to report never using a physical textbook in their classrooms (16% vs. 10% respectively).

Figure 9: How often on average use physical textbooks to support teaching and learning in your classroom



Q3: How often on average, if at all, do you use physical textbooks to support teaching and learning in your classroom?

The use of themes to link together subjects meant teachers needed to create most of the resources themselves, as most textbooks or teaching resources were standalone.

“You might have to get three or four resources.” [Primary teacher].

“It never says quite what I want or quite the spin I want so I often end up rewriting.” [Primary teacher].

“We teach history, geography, DT and art through one question per half term. And all of the resources are done by ourselves in planning time.” [Primary teacher].

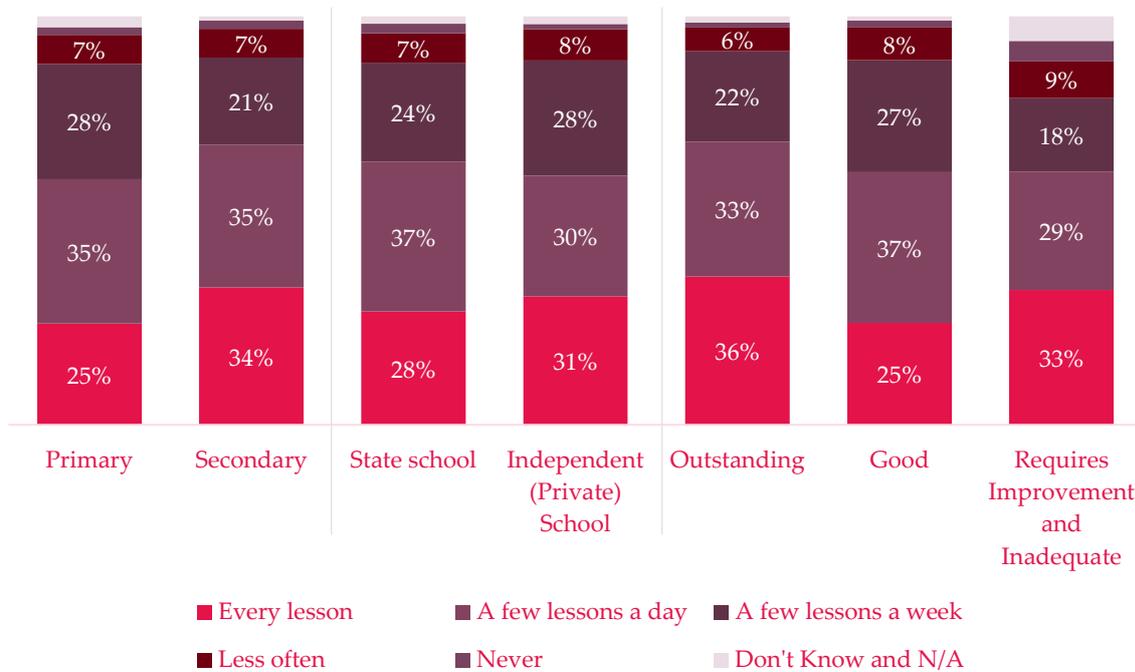
However, the poll results also show that creating resources spans across primary and secondary. In fact, secondary teachers are more likely to use resources they have created themselves daily than primary teachers. This result points to the nuance in how teachers use resources when planning and delivering lessons. When combined with what teachers mentioned in the

focus groups, this shows an underlying tension typified by these two comments.

“Most of the time, I just put things together myself, from over the years, or maybe I might borrow something from a colleague.” [Secondary history teacher].

“Personally, I find one of the reasons I go into teaching is that I can share things that I've learned or things that I brought with me from previous things I've done” [Secondary geography teacher].

Figure 10: How often on average use resources created yourself to support teaching and learning in your classroom



Q3: How often on average, if at all, do you use resources you create yourself to support teaching and learning in your classroom?

Most teachers see themselves as content curators – cherry-picking the best resources for each lesson and each student.

10

The idea of single-mindedly using a physical textbook as written to structure a whole lesson for the whole class was, for most, seen as an idea from a bygone era. Participants again and again referred to the fact that only reciting from a textbook would not allow for sufficient differentiation.

*“This might work well in a private school where the teachers’ number one priority is not engagement.”
[Secondary history teacher].*

Instead, teachers used a plethora of resources from different publishers or from their school or MAT, with most claiming to tailor them to the needs of their class and, to a lesser extent, their own educational philosophy.

*“Some of it will be free, some of it will be things I’ve taken from other schools, some of it will be taken from a textbook. I’m not inventing things from scratch, my job is to collate the content, drawing bits in and cutting the cloth necessary to the students that I’m working with.”
[Secondary English teacher].*

“I wouldn’t say we necessarily use all the resources, but we’ll use the resources that we feel are useful, and then use or make our own.” [Primary teacher].

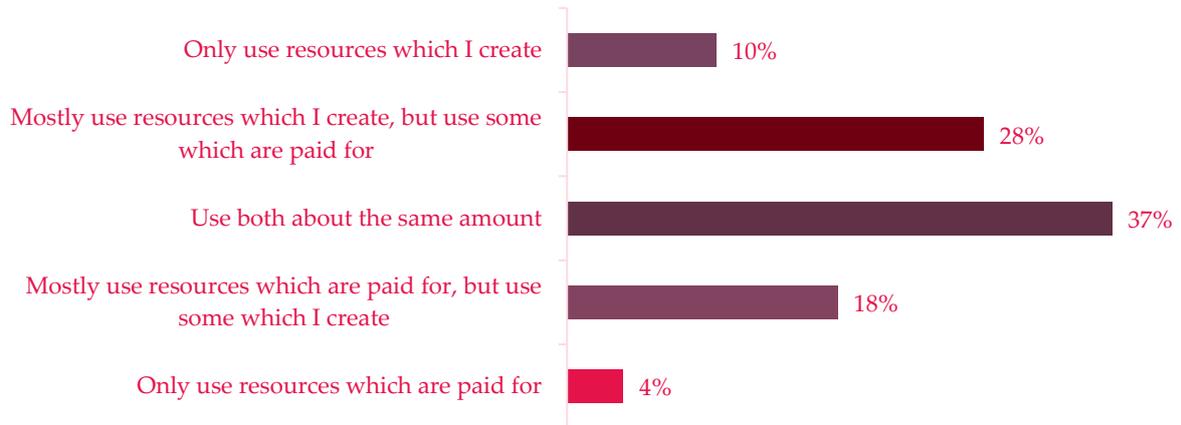
“Obviously, you know, you have to adapt them to your classes, because they’re obviously not as detailed as I would use.” [Secondary economics teacher].

“I think, to take things off the shelf, you’ve got to cherry pick and make them bespoke to work for the children you have in front of you.” [Primary teacher].

“Textbooks tend to be used for the structure of the course, so we know roughly what we’re doing now, after, where are we going. But we will look at different topics in slightly more detail or work out what the kids enjoy as well, and try and use that.” [Secondary history teacher].

This was also found in the poll, where teachers reported using a mixture of paid-for and resources they created themselves.

Figure 11: In general, tend to mainly use resources which are paid for or resources created yourself for lessons

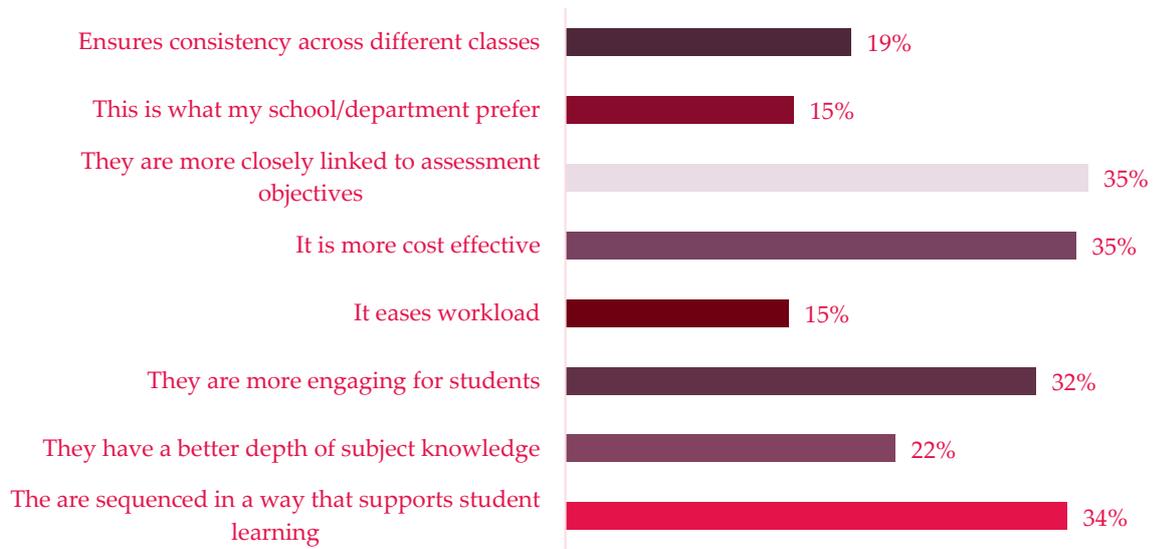


Q5: In general, do you tend to mainly use resources which are paid for or resources which you create yourself, for lessons?

In the poll, we explored the reasons why teachers create their own resources rather than use paid-for ones. The most common responses were cost effectiveness, better links to assessment objectives, sequencing to support student learning, and better student engagement.

However, whilst cost effectiveness was cited as a rationale here for teachers creating their own resources, this was not borne out in the focus groups. Unpicking this, it is likely that teachers do not think of their time as a cost in the same way as using a finite budget to procure resources, and similarly think of resources they create themselves as essentially free. In that sense, pragmatically it would be more cost effective for teachers to create their own resources.

Figure 12: Main reasons for using own created resources over paid for resources (choose up to 3)



Q7: What would you say are the main reasons you use your own created resources over paid for resources, when you do? Select up to three.

Many focus group participants reported looking online for inspiration to create their own resources,

“I am on TES every day looking at things people are doing, not necessarily buying it, but adapting for something else.” [Secondary teacher].

11

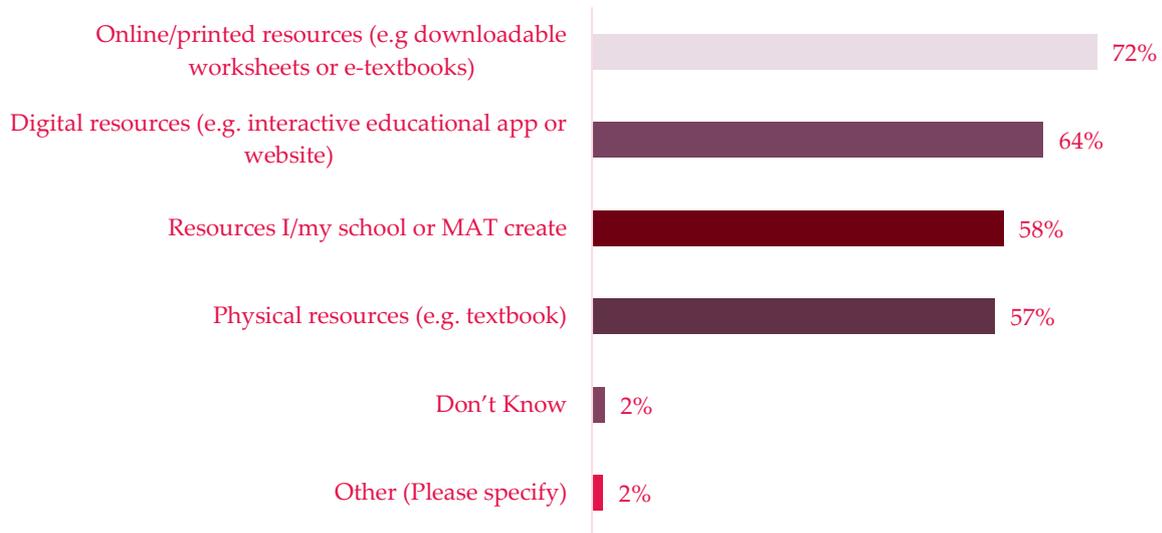
The willingness to use textbooks is significantly increased when it comes as a digital proposition.

Interestingly, the focus group participants had a completely different reaction to the idea of online textbooks than they did for physical textbooks. Most agreed that if they could be used as a teaching resource to dip into, as the basis for lesson plans, or as something that could be printed off, then they were probably a good idea. Throughout the groups, there was a sense that a digital textbook would be easier to tailor for each individual class as it would be simpler for the teacher to pick and choose the most relevant information to be shared.

“If you’ve got it online it makes your life a lot quicker to just dip in and out of it. Find what you need and incorporate on the platform you like to use.” [Secondary science teacher].

This was reaffirmed in the poll. When asked which types of resources teachers tend to use in the classroom, online resources, such as downloadable worksheets and e-textbooks, were the most popular response.^{xiv}

Figure 13: Type of resources tend to use in classroom



Q1: What type of resources do you tend to use in the classroom?

Focus group participants also noted that e-textbooks avoided the issue of textbooks being out of date or less relevant.

“Things are changing all the time. And it’s so important to be up to date and to bring in relevant content.”
 [Secondary politics teacher].

Much of the thinking behind this is due to the default lesson for most teachers being a PowerPoint presentation. This use of PowerPoint and talking has endured even throughout the Covid-19 pandemic for the teachers we spoke to.

“PowerPoints are our main lesson type and allow us to adapt our lesson and they’ve been really useful.”
 [Secondary English teacher].

“My first step is going to a bank of PowerPoints that I’ve got saved and finding one that is the most relevant for the topic.” [Secondary science teacher].

12

Teachers did not think experiences during Covid-19 would lead to significant acceleration towards a digital first strategy in schools and there was little appetite for different ‘catch up’ resources for students in addition to resources schools already had.

Experience of teaching through the Covid-19 pandemic has brought a desire to retain some of the teaching tools used for remote learning from the teachers we spoke to. Unsurprisingly, the overwhelming majority want a return to conventional classroom teaching, but some will retain certain tools used during Covid-19. Printed and online textbooks came up positively here as something that teachers had either missed using due to contamination worries for printed resources or had used for the first time during remote learning. Across both phases there was a sense that online quizzes and similar tools were a useful new method to liven-up lessons and participants would possibly continue to use them in future.

“I’m using a lot more platforms like online games, online whiteboards, just to spice it up a bit. They absolutely love it.” [Primary teacher].

“I don’t think you can just totally shock them into going back to how it was before, I think you need to take the positives out of the good resources that you’ve used, and the variety and bring it back. I think a lot of good things have come out of it in terms of variety of resources and different ways of teaching. So I think things won’t be the same. And I think that’s a good thing.” [Secondary maths teacher].

On the use of technology,

“if it’s used properly it makes things so much more streamlined. And the children actually like it. It’s taken me into the technological age.” [Secondary art teacher].

A few expressed a confidence that in future they would use “live-assessment” and digital platforms as tools to monitor in real-time how much children are learning.

“I expect much more live digital assessment in lessons a way of surveying what’s going on in the lesson.” [Secondary history teacher].

“I think it’s the way forward and I think working smarter and feedback electronically has been, I thought it’d be a lot more difficult, but I found it quite effective and just efficient. And I thought, right, okay, this is working well. So they’ve always got a record of everything.” [Secondary economics teacher].

This finding was also drawn out of the poll. Before schools closed prior to the first lockdown in March 2020, 40% of teachers stated they used majority physical resources. Looking to the future now only 29% of teachers estimate they will use majority physical resources, which is similar to how many used majority physical resources (27%) when schools reopened in September 2020.

However, on the whole, the focus group participants did not convey much thinking about a long-term shift of pedagogy or towards a digital first strategy. Even with probing, teachers we spoke to were broadly just trying to get through day-by-day rather than being in a reflective mindset on their future practice. The polling also reflects this nuance. There is a small group who have likely converted to using majority digital: before school closures (26%), whilst schools were open in Autumn 2020 (32%), looking ahead five years (37%) – an increase of 11 percentage points. The others are still using a mixture of resources in similar proportions through each of the three time periods, and although fewer teachers think they will use majority physical resources in five years (19%), this was not borne out when schools did return in Autumn 2020 (27%) to classroom teaching. Reflecting the lack of consideration of this issue, 12% of teachers stated that they did not know.

Figure 14: For each period of time, resources used mainly digital or physical

	Vast majority digital (76% or more digital)	Majority digital (51-75% digital)	About equal (50% digital, 50% physical)	Majority physical (51-75% physical)	Vast majority physical (76% or more physical)	Don't Know
Before schools were closed to most students because of Covid-19 (i.e. before March 2020)	10%	16%	30%	21%	19%	4%
During the time schools were closed to most students because of Covid-19 (i.e. March to August 2020)	40%	25%	22%	4%	4%	6%
Since the end of most school closures (e.g. September 2020 - currently)	10%	22%	37%	18%	9%	5%
Thinking ahead to the next 5 years	12%	25%	32%	12%	7%	12%

The open-ended responses from the poll indicate that Covid-19 has accelerated the move towards digital resources with many teachers discovering new types of resources throughout the pandemic. There has also been a significant concern about the use of physical resources and their role in transmitting the virus, which has in part driven the move towards digital.

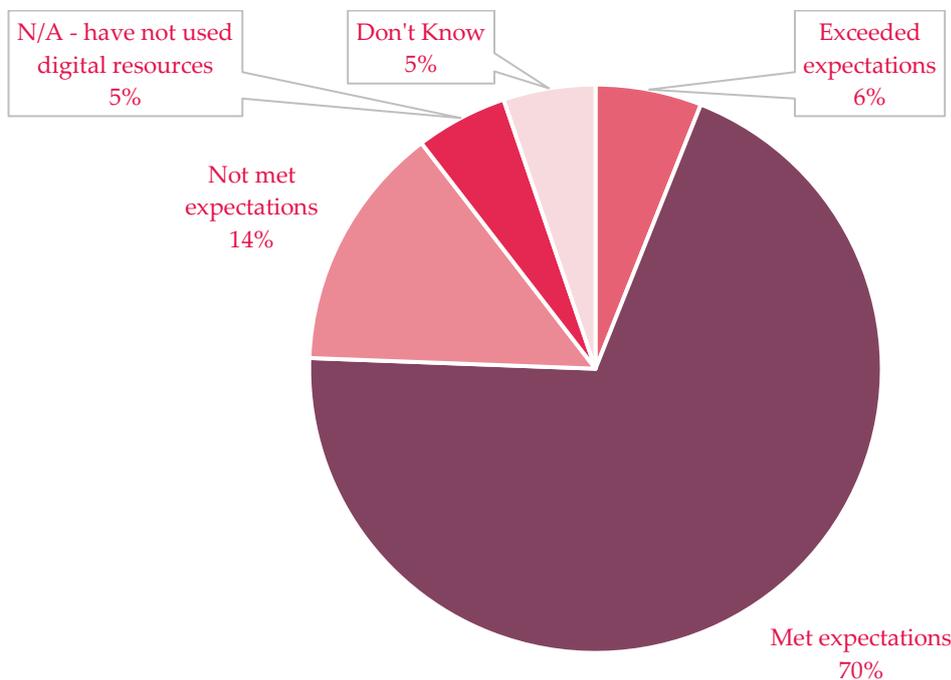
Using online resources during remote teaching has been seen by many as a time and cost saver compared to photocopying - “I’ve gained back a life without standing in front of the photocopier during the pandemic” was a statement that was universally agreed upon in one group.

The future shift towards more digital resources may also be in part attributed to the fact that for most teachers (76%), digital platforms have at least met expectations. Furthermore, many teachers have seen the value in paid-for online resources once they have given them a chance: 47% of teachers took

advantage of free online trials or resources during 2020 and 35% of those teachers have gone on to begin to now pay for them.

However, in focus groups whilst a few had looked at free content offered by providers of digital resources and they spoke reasonably positively of these, there was no real sense that they would or wouldn't continue with them when the price came back in.

Figure 15: Extent to which digital resources used have met expectations about improving student outcomes



Q25: To what extent have digital resources (e.g. educational apps or websites) that you have used met expectations about improving student outcomes?

During a discussion about live lessons during remote learning teachers gave countless examples of children not watching pre-records or reading work in advance - "they do diddly squat." Throughout the focus groups, participants came back to the idea that it is not really about the resources but about the person delivering the teaching.

The common view shared when we asked teachers that we spoke to what their catch-up plan was "we just need the children in front of us." There was a perception that tailored catch up will not work, regardless of the resources, if it's voluntary. The best catch-up resource would be something similar to

revision guides, though teachers want to know what exams are going to look like first.

“I don’t think there’s anything particularly different that I would use for catch-up.” [Secondary teacher].

“I just think we need the children in front of us, you can have every resource under the sun, but unless the children are there physically in the building in front of you, you know, like, every day, I’m fighting a losing battle.” [Secondary teacher].

“It makes no difference what resource you’ve got, if the person can’t deliver it, effectively, then waste of time. Good teaching is what we need.” [Secondary teacher].

“Perhaps the money should be used to train decent teachers”. [Secondary teacher].

There was a recognition from the teachers we spoke to that there was the potential for any catch-up programme to be a ‘differentiation nightmare’ due to the differing home-learning experiences of students even within the same class. All were agreed on the need for diagnostic assessment but there were differing feelings about whether their school had the capability to manage it.

“I think that the successful schools will be the ones that have been able to manage the process and manage who's where and who's been accessing the curriculum.” [Secondary teacher].

“They can't do many more assessments than what we've already got. Otherwise, they'll just be testing all the time.” [Secondary teacher].

Conclusions

The main conclusions from our research are as follows:

- **Teachers across all school phases and experience level were broadly positive to using textbooks and other paid-for resources not created by them in the classroom.** This was also reflected in the poll, where 72% of teachers reported being positive to physical resources. Of the options tested, the most popular reason for choosing each resource was:
 - Physical resources - higher quality (28%)
 - Digital resources - allowing students to access them at home (40%)
 - Online resources - they are easier to tailor (46%)
- **The prevailing view in the focus groups was that textbooks provide a good foundation for curriculum structure and can offer a familiar routine to students in lessons.** In general, when asked, participants were very quick to accurately list the benefits of high-quality resources. The feeling from participants was such resources were most relevant for KS4 and KS5 exam classes in the secondary phase, and for ‘content rich’ subjects such as maths, science and some humanities (as opposed to more practical, creative or hands-on subjects such as art, design, technology, or music).
- **According to the poll, the main reason for choosing paid-for resources over creating their own resources is to ease workload (52%).** The median amount of time teachers spend planning an average lesson is 30 minutes. Without access to textbooks, based on teacher estimated time responses, the research calculates that the average teacher would need to work an additional 5.7 hours a week to plan their lessons. To meet that time demand without further increasing teacher workload, the state system would need another 52,250 teachers in the system, which would cost nearly £3 billion a year – money which can be said is saved due to the presence of textbooks in the system.
- **Focus group participants were positive about the quality of textbooks available in the market from their experiences,** and many participants were satisfied with the range of options available.

- **The single biggest reluctance to using textbooks from the focus group participants was not cost or quality, but a desire to differentiate and maintain a degree of the teacher’s own professional autonomy on lesson planning.** The feeling that ‘no one knows my class better than me’ or ‘textbooks won’t work for my class’ was strongly expressed by many participants. They also expressed a preference to combine multiple resources or amend set programmes, to make them more appropriate for their students. In the poll, when describing a high-quality resource in their own words, most teachers focused on the desire for resources to be differentiated to suit their class.
- **Among some focus group participants, there was also a feeling that imprinting their own personal style on lessons was integral to their job as a teacher.** This was especially the case at primary, where the commonly used cross-curricular thematic way of teaching did not match up well to set resources.
- **Across both the focus groups and poll, there was a real sense of stigma around teachers using textbooks:** 44% of teachers agreed that there is a stigma around teachers using textbooks, 33% of teachers agreed that their senior leadership prefers them to create their own resources, and 38% believed training they had received showed the same preference.
- When recent changes due to Covid-19 were discussed in both the poll and focus groups, **there was a reasonable degree of interest to retain some aspects of remote teaching, in particular accelerating the move towards use of digital resources although not a digital first strategy for most.** Before schools closed, 40% of teachers stated they predominantly used physical resources, but this drops to 19% when asked to think about the blend between physical and digital resources over the next 5 years.
- However, most teachers in the focus groups thought of the digital disruption as a short-term hindrance and had little space to reflect on what that meant for their long-term teaching. Their focus was on wanting children back in class so they could teach face-to-face. There was no strong view from participants either that Covid-19 will, or won’t, lead to a more structural shift in the use of digital resources.

- On catch-up, there was not a desire from focus group participants to re-invent the wheel or purchase bespoke catch-up resources in addition to resources schools already had.

The main interpretations from these conclusions are as follows:

- Segmentation analysis of the quantitative data suggests four different categories of teachers based on their use of resources: what can be termed Self-reliant, Pick 'n' Mix, Tech Head, and Textbook-reliant. Three of these groups (all but Self-reliant) are regular or semi-regular users of paid resources, which together accounts for 63% of the teaching profession. Those who prefer physical resources are more likely to be a secondary teacher; more likely to work in an outstanding school; less likely to be stressed and more likely to be satisfied with their job; less likely to have had a preference shown to them through training for them to create their own resources; and more likely to use them as written.
- There is some reflexive opposition – or at least scepticism – among many teachers when the issue of resources is raised. The reflexive response is that they may be fine in principle, but perhaps not entirely for that teacher and their class. However, this reflexive opposition is just that – reflexive – and, on probing, scepticism gives way to proactive discussion about how resources can be best used. In other words, teachers are open to persuasion and trialling paid-for resources, especially when in discussion with other professionals.
- There was little to no evidence from participants that teachers are put off textbooks by either concerns about quality or cost (though some mentioned this as a second order consideration that would drive budget holders in their setting). Rather, scepticism comes from a feeling that textbooks, in particular, needed to have ease of adaptability for a teacher's context and a need to cater for varying attainment levels. Among almost all participants, a sense that they would not be able to differentiate and deliver teaching for *their* children in *their* classroom, drove suspicion. Addressing this – showing how resources can be customised for all abilities, for group work and individual work, or for a variety of wider needs – would be important.
- Similarly, being able to show that resources were created by someone who knows the user's context will be important. Some participants who

were sceptical about ‘resources’ in general spoke more positively about structured lesson plans, schemes of work and supportive resources that had been created centrally in their department or MAT – despite the fact that under any reasonable definition (assuming it is good quality), that these products offer the same functionality and benefits as a textbook or CCP. The difference was felt to be that the resource would be more designed with the users in mind in the first place, and that further the user teacher could go and ask, or email, the creator and ask for clarification or permission to amend.

- The quantitative data suggests that significant time is saved from teachers planning by use of high-quality resources. This was reinforced in the qualitative work, with participants (including those who didn’t use them) acknowledging that they likely saved time. For sceptics, this time saving didn’t outweigh loss of professional autonomy. But in general, emphasising that it will save time – and being specific about how – is likely to be a message that resonates.
- The fact that so many teachers use physical, paid-for textbooks as the foundation of their schools’ curriculum planning, and that textbook providers develop textbooks to support schools in this way further points to the idea that publishers play a useful role in saving teachers’ time.
- Conceptionally, teachers are open to the notion of a single curriculum resource, but feel in practice there will always be a need for some level of adjustment. This is in part due to a desire from teachers to exercise a degree of autonomy in the classroom and a concern it will not meet the level of all their students.
- This also means – as some participants made clear – that a reduction in curriculum resources open to them through purchased routes, even if that came with a mark of quality, is not likely to be received well. Choice – including choice led by the teacher – was important. Based on participants’ responses, it is plausible that some teachers would react to a reduction in available paid-for resources by creating their own, or seeking out more ‘informal’ paid-for resources (Facebook groups, TES resources, and the like), rather than using an approved list.

Appendix I

Methodology

Quantitative research

In December 2020, Public First ran a nationally representative poll of 1,000 teachers across England, including 178 senior leaders and 349 middle leaders. Polling was carried out online with participants recruited through a specialist panel provider.

The results of the poll were weighted to be representative of teachers on gender, school phase, and independent/state school.

Public First is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by all its rules.

Details of the poll participants were as follows:

Demographic	Breakdown	Weighted number of responses
Age	18-24	101
	25-34	217
	35-44	281
	45-54	207
	55+	193
Teaching experience	0 - 5 years	288
	6 - 10 years	173
	11 – 15 years	157
	16 – 20 years	130
	More than 20 years	227
Secondary teachers with a degree in the subject they mainly teach	Specialist	310
	Non-specialist	69
Secondary subject they mainly teach	Maths	87
	English	93
	Science	65
	Humanities	74
	Foreign Language	36
Type of school	State school	837
	Independent (Private) School	121
Phase	Primary	492
	Secondary	393
	Both primary and secondary	99

Ofsted grade of current school	Outstanding	188
	Good	580
	Requires Improvement	105
	Inadequate	15
MAT school	MAT	380
	Not MAT	543

In addition, we conducted a segmentation analysis to segment teachers in England into four main groups by their engagement with and support of textbooks and other resources.

Segments were generated through a *kproto* approach which combines *kmeans* clustering for continuous variables and *kmodes* clustering for categorical ones. This is a data-driven approach, whereby patterns in the data drive the descriptive analysis. Those who did not teach (e.g. some senior leaders) were excluded from this analysis.

The aspects factored into the clustering procedure were:

- Whether the respondent tends to use paid-for or self-made resources
- Whether the respondent tends to make modifications or use it as written
- Which resources the respondent would prefer to use for various class types
- Whether the respondent believes there is a stigma around teachers using textbooks
- Whether the respondent believes self-made or textbooks make the most effective teachers

Analysis converged on 4 clusters, which were used for the descriptions of segments of teachers (see Appendix II for more detail).

Qualitative research

Between January and February 2021, Public First ran 8 focus groups with teachers across the country. The group compositions were as follows:

- **State Primary:** All under-30 with less than 5 years teaching experience, mix of senior leaders and class teachers, covered all subjects at primary, all urban schools.

- **State Primary:** As above though all over-45 and teaching experienced ranged from 3 to 22 years, mix of urban and rural schools.
- **State Secondary:** All under-30, all urban areas, all with less than 5 years teaching experience, mix of senior leaders and class teachers, subjects covered: science, English, PE, art, and music.
- **State Secondary:** All from multi-academy trust schools, majority from urban areas, experienced ranged between 2 to 12 years, mix of senior leaders and class teachers, subjects covered: English, maths, DT.
- **State Secondary:** All from non-multi-academy trust schools, all from urban areas, experienced ranged between 2 to 22 years, mix of senior and class teachers, subjects covered: politics, history, law, economics, and business studies.
- **Independent Secondary:** All from independent schools, experience ranged from 2 to 19 years, mix of urban and rural schools, mix of senior leaders and class teachers, subject covered: history, English, maths, and science.
- **State secondary:** Mix of MAT and non-MAT schools, all with less than 10 years' experience, all classroom teachers, subjects covered: English, maths, geography and science.
- **State secondary:** Mix of MAT and non-MAT schools, experience ranged from 1 to 23 years, all classroom teachers, subjects covered: English, maths, geography and science.

All groups were made up of 6 participants and took place online for 75 minutes. Occasional groups were observed by other Public First staff or clients, who remained off camera, muted, and anonymised for the whole of such sessions. Participants were aware they were being recorded.

Appendix II

Segmentation Analysis in Detail

Summary of the four segments:

Self-reliant	Tech Head	Pick 'n' Mix	Textbook-reliant
More likely not involved in leadership (60% not involved in leadership).	Most likely to be in leadership – 65% in either senior or middle leadership roles.	Even split Primary and Secondary – 46% each.	Even split Primary and Secondary – 46% Secondary, 45% Primary.
Strongly Primary – 49% Primary, 35% Secondary.	Strongly primary – 49% Primary, 35% Secondary.	41% mostly use paid-for resources with edits, 22% as written.	86% have a degree in the subject they teach (only asked to those at Secondary level).
Least likely Independent schools – 83% State.	More likely to be part of a MAT – 51% part of a MAT.	88% say the most effective teachers mainly use their own material supplemented with textbooks or only use their own material.	31% use physical resources such as textbooks every lesson, 18% use workbooks every lesson.
58% use paid-for resources to ease workload, which is easily the main reason.	More divided on the reasons for using paid-for resources, easing workload the main reason (48%), but ensuring consistency (28%) and depth of subject knowledge (27%) also important.	58% use paid-for resources to ease workload, easily the main reason.	64% mostly use paid for resources as written.
40% say they use self-created resources as they are more closely linked to assessment objectives, 35% because it is more cost effective.	42% under 35.	Seemingly biggest converts to digital through Covid-19; 22% used majority digital before Covid-19, 39% expect to use majority digital in the next 5 years.	41% say that no access to the internet would increase the time it takes to plan for lessons by less than 10 mins or no time at all.
Only 5% use textbooks/physical resources every lesson.	66% agree there is a stigma around teachers using textbooks.	Almost always prefer online resources for classes, with the exception of a class with challenging behaviour where they prefer a digital option, and an exam class where they prefer a physical option.	78% satisfied in their job, 20% not stressed.

Key facts for each segment:

Self-reliants: those who prefer to create their own resources

- Make up 37% of the teaching profession
- More likely not involved in leadership (60% not involved in leadership).
- Heavily Primary – 56% Primary, 36% Secondary.
- Least likely Independent schools – 83% State.
- Only 5% use textbooks/physical resources every lesson.
- 41% never use online resources.
- 33% select resources they create themselves in the classroom as their favourite.
- 9% mostly use paid for resources, 49% mostly those they create themselves.
- 58% use paid-for resources to ease workload, easily the main reason.
- 40% say they use self-created resources as they are more closely linked to assessment objectives, 35% because it is more cost effective.
- Key priority for a resource: customisability (55%), then sequencing (46%) and supporting the least able students (46%).
- 25% mostly use paid-for resources as written, 27% with modifications.
- Largely have no preference when it comes to what resource to use for a particular class – 86% have no preference for a class they know well.

Tech Heads: those who prefer online and digital resources

- Make up 25% of the teaching profession.
- Most likely to be in leadership – 65% in either senior or middle leadership roles
- Strongly primary – 49% Primary, 35% Secondary
- More likely to be part of a MAT – 51% part of a MAT
- 35% use online resources a few lessons a day or more, 58% use digital resources a few lessons a day or more
- 39% say that online resources are their favourite to use in the classroom, 37% say digital

- 41% mostly use paid-for resources, 18% mostly those they create themselves
- More divided on the reasons for using paid-for resources, easing workload the main reason (48%), but ensuring consistency (28%) and depth of subject knowledge (27%) also important
- Key priority for a resource: supporting least able students (41%), then customisability (39%), and sequencing (36%)
- 39% mostly use paid-for resources as written, 19% mostly with edits
- Always prefer to use digital resources
- 66% agree there is a stigma around teachers using textbooks
- 47% used majority digital resources pre-Covid-19, and 49% think they will use majority digital in the next 5 years
- Most likely to think their job has stayed the same or got easier in Autumn 2020 (49%)
- 12% feel that digital resources have exceeded expectations
- 39% feel their stress levels are higher in the week of the poll
- 64% believe their school has good or very good provision of digital learning devices
- 42% under 35

Pick ‘n’ Mix: those who use a wide variety of resources

- Make up 20% of the teaching profession.
- Even split Primary and Secondary – 46% each
- 37% use resources they create themselves every lesson
- 64% use resources they create themselves in the classroom
- 35% select online as their favourite, 30% select resources they create themselves
- 10% mostly use paid-for resources, 58% mostly those they create themselves
- 58% use paid-for resources to ease workload, easily the main reason
- Uses self-created resources for a variety of reasons, mainly engagement (39%), sequencing (38%), and linkage with assessment objectives (38%)
- Key priority for a resource: Supporting the least able (51%), then stretching the most able (48%), and customisability (46%)
- 41% mostly use paid-for resources with edits, 22% as written

- Almost always prefer online resources for classes, with the exception of a class with challenging behaviour where they prefer a digital option, and an exam class where they prefer a physical option
- 88% say the most effective teachers mainly use their own material supplemented with textbooks or only use their own material
- Since Covid-19, 75% have sent work home via an online learning platform
- Seemingly biggest converts to digital through Covid-19; 22% used majority digital before Covid-19, 39% expect to use majority digital in the next 5 years
- 16% dissatisfied in their job, 57% stressed

Textbook-reliants: those who prefer textbooks

- Make up 18% of the teaching profession.
- Even split Primary and Secondary – 46% Secondary, 45% Primary
- More likely Independent – 24% Independent school
- 86% have a degree in the subject they teach (only asked to those at secondary level)
- 41% use resources they create themselves only a few lessons a week or less
- 31% use physical resources such as textbooks every lesson, 18% use workbooks every lesson
- 46% say that physical resources such as textbooks are their favourite to use in the classroom
- 39% say they use textbooks as they are higher quality, 35% as it allows students to access them at home
- 39% mostly use paid-for resources, 21% mostly those they create themselves
- More divided on the reasons for using paid-for resources, easing workload the main reason (40%), but ensuring consistency (35%) and sequencing (28%) also important
- 40% say they use self-created resources as they are more engaging for students, 36% as it is cost effective
- Key priority for a resource: Supporting the least able (47%), then stretching the most able (41%), then sequencing and easing workload (40%)
- 64% mostly use paid-for resources as written

- Always prefer to use textbooks, regardless of the class
- 41% say that no access to the internet would increase the time it takes to plan for lessons by less than 10 mins or no time at all, 48% say this for online resources.
- 47% disagree that there is a stigma around teachers using textbooks
- 81% say the most effective teachers mainly use textbooks supplemented with their own material or only use textbooks
- Since Covid-19 44% have used majority physical resources, and 32% expect to use majority physical resources in the next 5 years
- 26% Outstanding schools, 15% under 100 students
- 78% satisfied in their job, 20% not stressed
- 33% over 55

Endnotes

- ⁱ These definitions were taken from the DfE “Use and perceptions of curriculum support resources in schools – Research report” (July 2018). For the poll, the definitions were shared at the beginning and again before each relevant question. In focus groups the moderators ensured that they were clear what type of resources participants were talking about and asked for clarification if necessary.
- ⁱⁱ In the focus groups, e-textbooks were defined as an electronic version of a print textbook that is typically divided by chapters. Clarity was sought where necessary on whether this was, for example, a paid-for resource from a publisher or in some instances free or created by their MAT. Clarity was also sought where necessary on whether pupils had individual access through a device in school or at home, or whether the e-textbook was displayed on a smartboard in the classroom.
- ⁱⁱⁱ English, maths, science, humanities and MFL
- ^{iv} E.g. textbooks.
- ^v E.g. interactive educational apps or websites.
- ^{vi} E.g. downloadable worksheets or e-textbooks.
- ^{vii} Some teachers use Facebook to network, collaborate and share best practice in groups based around subjects, phases or locations.
- ^{viii} Questions on planning time were asked in range formats (i.e. “10-20 minutes”, “20-30 minutes”), as respondents would find it challenging to give exact numerical responses. To estimate the median from the range data, we assumed a linear trend between the end points of each range (e.g. between 10 and 20, between 20 and 30 etc.), and identify on this basis the point at which half of the relevant sample spends less time on planning and half spends more.
- ^{ix} The DfE 2019 Workload survey estimates teachers spend 21.3 hours teaching a week out a 49.5 hour working week. If we estimate that to be about 20 lessons teachers would spend $21m \times 20 \text{ lessons} = 7 \text{ hours a week looking things up on the internet when planning}$. Over the course of a year (190 statutory sessions = 38 weeks) $7 \text{ hours a week} \times 38 = 266 \text{ hours over the year}$. So across the year $266/49.5 = 5.4 \text{ working weeks a year looking things up on the internet}$.
- ^x Our estimate to the median time it would increase planning by among those who do plan (96% of teachers) is 17.66 minutes. The DfE 2019 Workload survey estimates teachers spend 21.3 hours teaching a week out a 49.5 hour working week. If we estimate that to be about 20 lessons teachers would spend an additional $17m \times 20 \text{ lessons} = 5.7 \text{ hours a week planning if they didn't have access to a textbook}$. $5.7/49.5 = 12\%$ of a FTE teacher. The DfE data shows there are 435,414 FTE teachers in England = 203,686 (primary) + 231,728 (secondary). $12\% = 52,250 \text{ teachers}$. According to the DfE the average FTE primary salary is £38,369 and secondary is £40,527. Taking a conservative average of £39,000 plus 23.7% pension employer contributions and 13.8% NI employer contributions gives us £53,625 as an average FTE teacher salary including on costs. $52,250 \text{ extra teachers} \times £53,625 = £2,801,906,000$ (just under £3 billion).
- ^{xi} The sample size for textbook dependent teachers was 175.

^{xii} The quote used was from a speech the Minister for School Standards gave in 2014 to education publishers about textbooks. The full speech can be found [here](#). The quote used is as follows: *'All the evidence shows that high-quality textbooks are good for teachers, students and parents. For teachers, well-structured textbooks reduce workload and the perpetual ritual of producing worksheets; for students, knowledge-rich textbooks mean they can read beyond the confines of the exam syllabus, and using textbooks helps to develop those all-important scholarship skills; and for parents, textbooks are a guide to what their children are being taught in school. I would like to see all schools, both primary and secondary, using high-quality textbooks in most academic subjects, bringing us closer to the norm in high-performing countries.'*

^{xiii} English, maths, science, humanities and MFL

^{xiv} For this question participants were asked to think about "normal times" pre-Covid (i.e. before school closures in response to Covid-19) where you would be teaching the class in front of you