TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

Views and ideas from the world's students on how to transform education.

CONTENTS

Look out for these icons...

Indicates a deeper dive into the data

Regional insight to the data, using the SPI measurement.

Insight into the global data.

Indicates a quote - from an educator, researcher or student..

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are two groups of people we would like to give our particular thanks to in this report. Firstly, to the **thousands of students who so willingly shared their thoughts** and views with us. Secondly, to the **teachers and educators who shared this survey** with their students. For the guidance they offered them and for igniting the conversation about transforming education in their classrooms. **We are incredibly grateful - thank you.**

"Young people will be the ones who demand from us, and from their governments, their right to a quality education. That is how rights become a reality."

- Leonardo Garnier, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Transforming Education Summit

FOREWORD

In September 2022, the UN convened the inaugural **Transforming Education Summit,** with the ambition to **elevate education to the top of political agendas** and galvanise action in light of the global wide school closures caused by COVID-19.

2023 also marks the "halfway point" to the **United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals,** with SDG4: Quality Education describing that we must "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" **by 2030.**

It is against this backdrop, that **we launched the Transforming Education Survey** - a research project centred on hearing and elevating the voices of thousands of schoolchildren around the world. Through our outreach we balanced giving voice to those not usually heard as well as **representing a diverse group of students from across the world.** While we have broken new ground with the number of responses we received from students around the world - we know there are still **so many more to hear from.**

Through this research we are **honouring the children's feelings about the current state of education,** empathising with how the pandemic impacted them and also helping these children articulate what can be done to make education more aligned to their dreams. We did this by exploring their **current reality** in classrooms today, what they think the **purpose of education should be** and their own **real-world solutions.**

DEAR LEADERS

A message to education leaders from the fourteen youth members of the World's Largest Lesson Advisory Panel.

All members are aged between 11-14 years old and from the following countries: Australia, Ghana, Greece, India, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Namibia, Nepal, Scotland, Sri Lanka and Turkey.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Dear Leaders,

We are the future and we will be the ones who decide what we want the future to look like. Education is key to this. So we, young people, children and students, need to be consulted on how to transform education.

If you ask us, you will gather useful data and insights. It's the first step to make and we can help you build this roadmap to change.

37,000 of us played this survey and shared our views. From around the world our calls for change are strikingly similar - we want to learn more practical skills, from learning how to code and analyse data, to how we can look after our mental health and protect our planet.

Education sits at the heart of the Global Goals and they will not be achieved unless every child receives quality education. We urge you to read this report, reflect on the findings and go out and collect data by listening to the students in your own schools, districts, and countries.

The time to transform education is now, so what are you waiting for?

Yours sincerely,
World's Largest Lesson Youth Advisory Panel

INTRODUCTION

In June 2022, **World's Largest Lesson** and **NetApp,** with the help of **Play Verto**, launched the **Transforming Education** survey. The survey invited students aged 7 to 19 years old to share their views on education and what they would like to see change.

Our ambition was to **ignite a conversation in classrooms** around the world about education. To ask children what they think the purpose of it is and what their views are on it.

The **questions were developed in collaboration** with UNESCO, UNICEF, Teach for All, Play Verto, NetApp and World's Largest Lesson, alongside a youth advisory panel.

The **Transforming Education** survey was designed to be played by students as part of a classroom activity. A discussion guide and lesson plan were also created, to **give teachers additional support** and guidance in distributing the survey. To maximise participation, the survey was open for 6 months, from June 2022 and closing on International Day of Education 24th January 2023.

The survey was predominantly played online but an offline version was made available as well. This was created to **hear from students from harder to reach communities** who do not have digital access. Here, students answered on paper and a photo of their responses were uploaded by their teacher.

Throughout the report, you will see a comparison between what children had to say, with specific reference to responses from India, Pakistan, United Kingdom, Nigeria and the United States.

Our goal was always to **shine a spotlight on the voices of children from around the world,** show that it is possible to include them in conversations around the transformation of education, and to **create a platform** for them to share their views. Our findings show that urgent action is needed if we are to achieve Global Goal 4: Quality Education by 2030, and change must start by including the views of those who are most affected – **children and young people.**
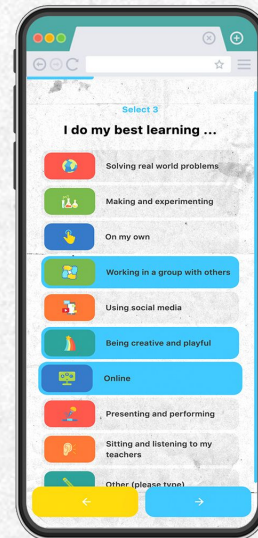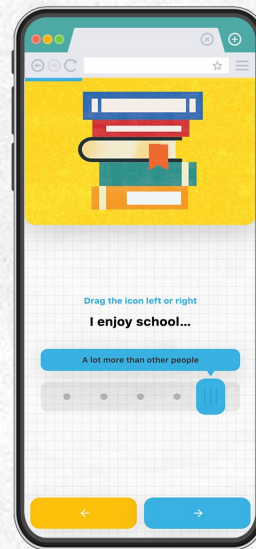
A NOTE ON BENCHMARKING

Throughout this report we benchmarked our primary data against the **Social Progress Index (SPI).** The SPI creates an accurate snapshot of how each country is performing across multiple variables and assesses countries based on whether they are **above the median** (better performing) or **below the median** (worse performing) than the SPI average.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

"Every country now faces two key challenges. The first is quality: kids may be in the classroom but are they learning effectively? The second is equity: too many children are still excluded from a good education, often by factors outside the classroom such as access to sanitation, discrimination, lack of access to the internet at home, lack of access to early years education, etc. Tackling these challenges inside and outside the classroom will be crucial if we are to meet targets like the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfil our responsibilities to our children."

- Michael Green - CEO, Social Progress Imperative

2022 Social Progress Index Framework

Basic Human Needs

Nutrition & Basic Medical Care
- Undernourishment
- Maternal mortality rate
- Child mortality rate
- Child stunting
- Deaths from infectious diseases
- Diet low in fruits and vegetables

Water & Sanitation
- Access to improved sanitation
- Access to improved water source
- Unsafe water sanitation and hygiene
- Satisfaction with water quality

Shelter
- Access to electricity
- Household air pollution
- Dissatisfaction with housing affordability
- Usage of clean fuels and technology for cooking

Personal Safety
- Interpersonal violence
- Transportation related injuries
- Political killings and torture
- Intimate partner violence
- Money stolen

Foundations of Wellbeing

Access to Basic Knowledge
- No schooling
- Primary school enrollment
- Secondary school attainment
- Gender parity in secondary attainment
- Access to quality education

Access to Information & Communications
- Mobile telephone subscriptions
- Internet users
- Access to online governance
- Alternative sources of information index

Health & Wellness
- Life expectancy at 60
- Premature deaths from non-communicable diseases
- Access to essential services
- Access to quality healthcare
- Satisfaction with availability of quality healthcare

Environmental Quality
- Outdoor air pollution
- Lead exposure
- Particulate matter pollution
- Species protection

Opportunity

Personal Rights
- Political rights
- Freedom of peaceful assembly
- Freedom of religion
- Access to justice
- Property rights for women
- Freedom of discussion

Personal Freedom & Choice
- Vulnerable employment
- Early marriage
- Satisfied demand for contraception
- Corruption
- Freedom of domestic movement
- Young people not in education, employment or training

Inclusiveness
- Acceptance of gays and lesbians
- Discrimination and violence against minorities
- Equal protection index
- Equal access index
- Power distributed by sexual orientation
- Access to public services distributed by social group

Access to Advanced Education
- Expected years of tertiary education
- Women with advanced education
- Quality weighted universities
- Citable documents
- Academic Freedom

A note on SPI measurement
Throughout the report we use the SPI median measurement to show how some of these current realities sit against other countries. When we refer to "above the median" we refer to better performing countries in social progress. In contrast to "below the median" referring to those worse performing countries than the SPI average.
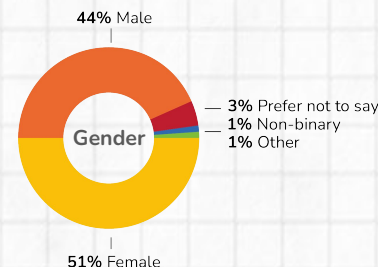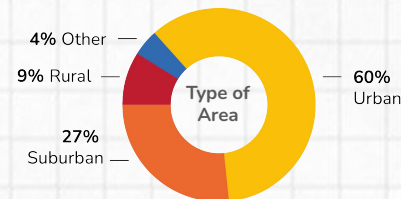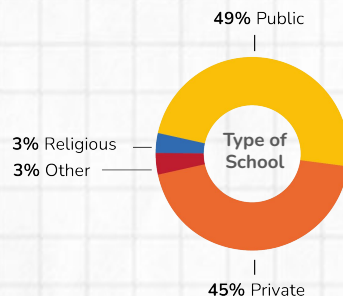
WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON ∎ NetApp

What did the students say?

We asked children their thoughts on education and **what they would like to see change.** Their responses show that they have **strong feelings and opinions** on what they think the purpose of education should be, what they want the future to look like and how change could be made. Taking their views, listening to them and acting on them is a **positive step towards change** and achieving **Global Goal 4 Quality Education.** Their responses provide **real, actionable insights** for policy makers to lean into.
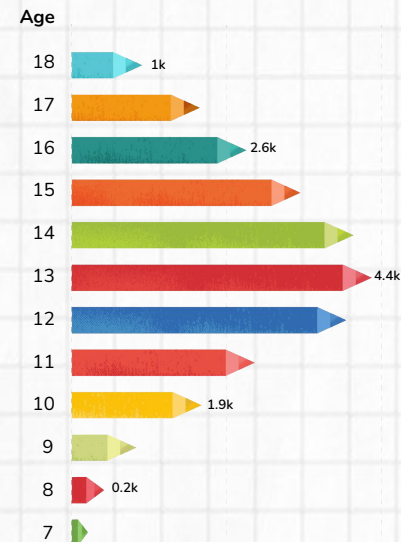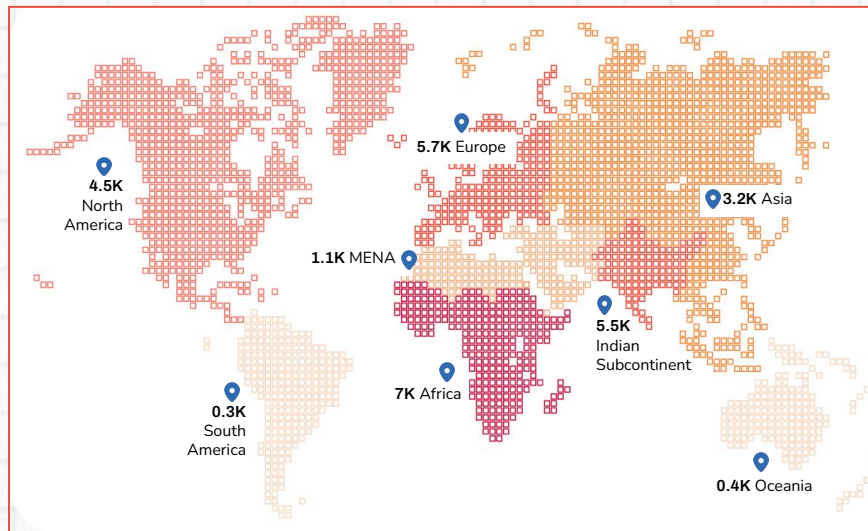
Who are these students?

We reached **37,000 students across 150 countries** and had equal representation from countries in both below and above the median Social Progress Index.

5.7K Europe
3.2K Asia
4.5K North America
1.1K MENA
5.5K Indian Subcontinent
7K Africa
0.3K South America
0.4K Oceania

Age
18 — 1k
17
16 — 2.6k
15
14
13 — 4.4k
12
11
10 — 1.9k
9
8 — 0.2k
7

49% Public
3% Religious
3% Other
Type of School
45% Private

4% Other
9% Rural
Type of Area
60% Urban
27% Suburban

44% Male
3% Prefer not to say
1% Non-binary
1% Other
Gender
51% Female

7
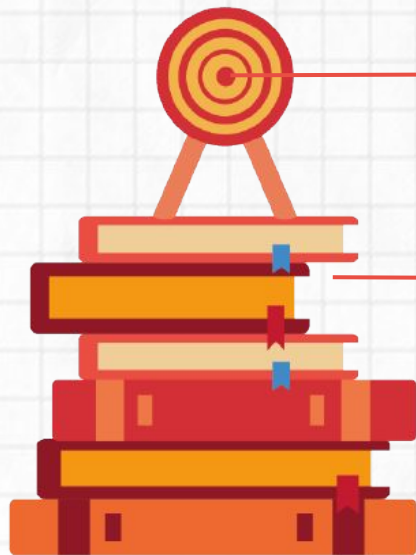
PART 3

Finally, we examine the skills they think they need to make change.

PART 2

We then move to exploring what students think the purpose of education is and their ideas on how to change it.

PART 1

We first set out to show a "temperature check" of classrooms right now, looking at student's current reality.

We'll start from the foundations here
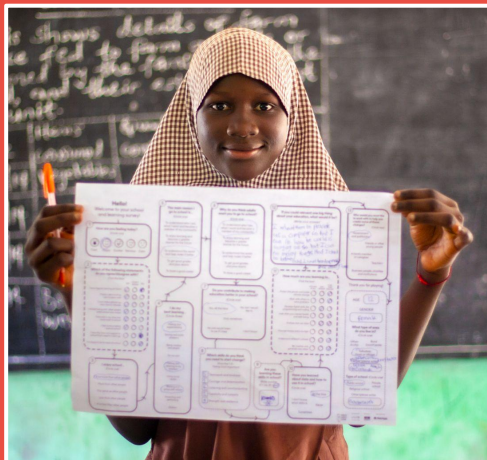
Photos of students and teachers playing the survey. Responses were recorded via both digital and paper-based formats.

© DEAN | JIBOLA OJEDIRAN
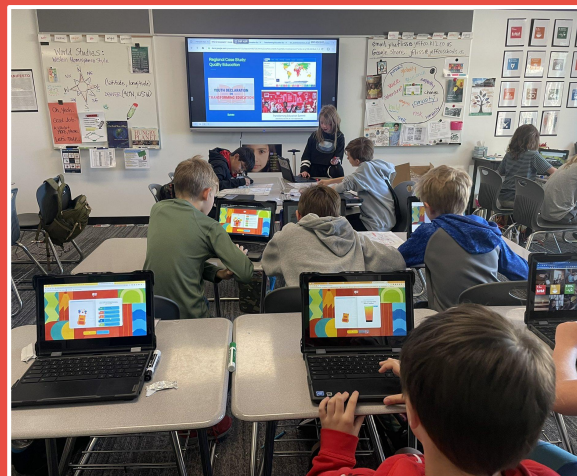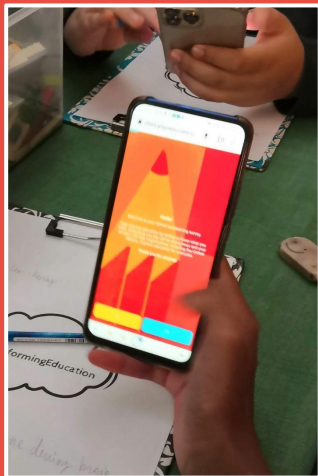
PART ONE

CURRENT REALITY

By understanding children's current reality and insights into the quality of their education, we become better equipped to understand the context of their future dreams and desires.

CURRENT REALITY

Students are happy to be back at school...

Most students are back to having **classes in person (80%)**. 77% of our respondents said they are **happy to be back at school** after the school closures and that they **missed others while their school was closed (74%)**.

...but many are anxious

However, this doesn't tell the whole story. As almost a **third of our respondents (33%) said they feel anxious being back at school.** When we explore this further, we see that although these students still report missing others while their school was closed (76%), almost **half of them believe they have fallen behind their classes because of the closures (44%)** and **42% of them were happier to be learning at home**.

Further correlation between the perceived feelings of falling behind and anxiety
Looking at the data from another perspective reinforces the relationship between the perception of falling behind and anxiety being back at school. Of those students whose perception is that they have fallen behind their peers, more of them feel anxious to be back at school (48% vs 33%).

33%
are anxious to be back at school

80%
of students are back to having classes in person
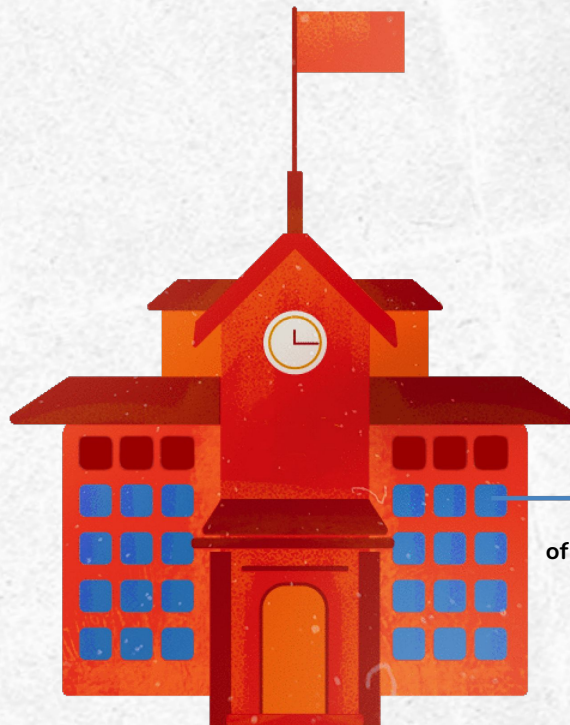
The children who are happiest to be back at school, are the ones who had no device of their own to learn with.

Of children who do not have access to their own device, more report being **happy to be back at school** (85%) and **missing being with other people** (78%).
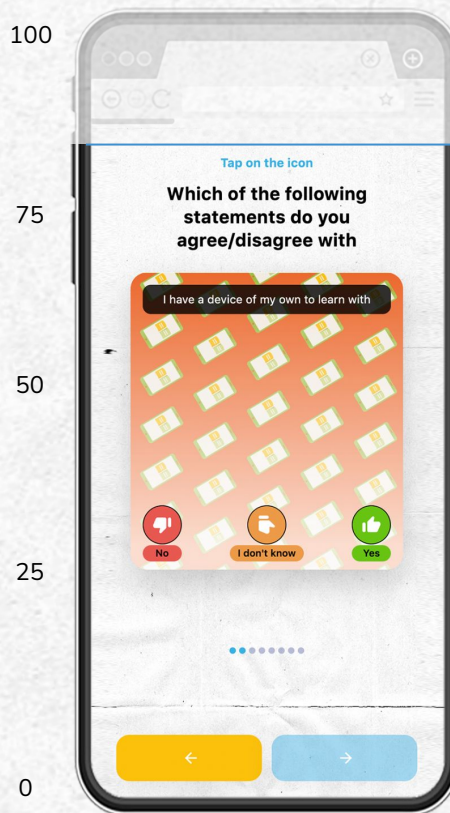
In the **United States**, 20% of children said they were happier learning at home

In the **UK** 27% of children said they were happier learning at home

In **Pakistan**, 28% of children were happier learning at home

In **India**, 29% said they were happier learning at home

Nigeria has the highest figure of children saying they were happier learning at home with 42%

Children's perceptions of whether they have fallen behind their classes because of COVID-19 school closures is not consistent across the world. For those children living in below the median SPI countries, **39% of them indicate they have fallen behind,** compared to 19% of those living in above the SPI median.

We also see a difference in the responses from these children around having a device of their own to learn with. Whilst **84% of respondents** from countries with higher social progress said they have one, only **59% of respondents** from countries with lower social progress said they did.

100
75
50
25
0

Tap on the icon

Which of the following statements do you agree/disagree with

I have a device of my own to learn with

No   I don't know   Yes

←   →

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CURRENT REALITY

Students agreed that working in a group with others helps them learn best.

Preferred learning styles in response to the question
"I do my best learning when..."
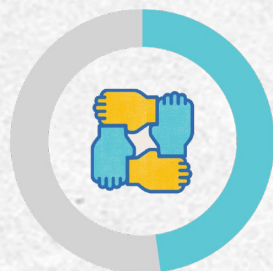
48%
Working in a group
with others

46%
Sitting and listening
to my teachers
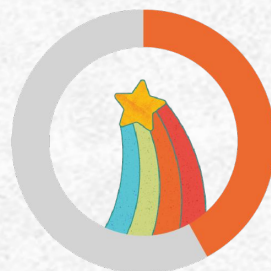
42%
Being creative
and playful

Children living in countries below the SPI median (low score on social progress) favour "Sitting and listening to teachers", "Working in a group with others" and "On my own" as their top three choices.

However, children living in countries above the SPI median (high score on social progress) choose first "Working in a group with others" and "Being creative and playful" and then tied "Sitting and listening to my teachers" and "Making and experimenting".

This difference in preference for either passive or active learning styles needs further research. It may be that children are reporting simply what they have experienced.

Globally, **Online (19%)** and **Using social media (18%)** come as the last chosen options.

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But not all students think they're learning what they need.

We asked students how much they were learning to **analyse and use data** and their responses were;
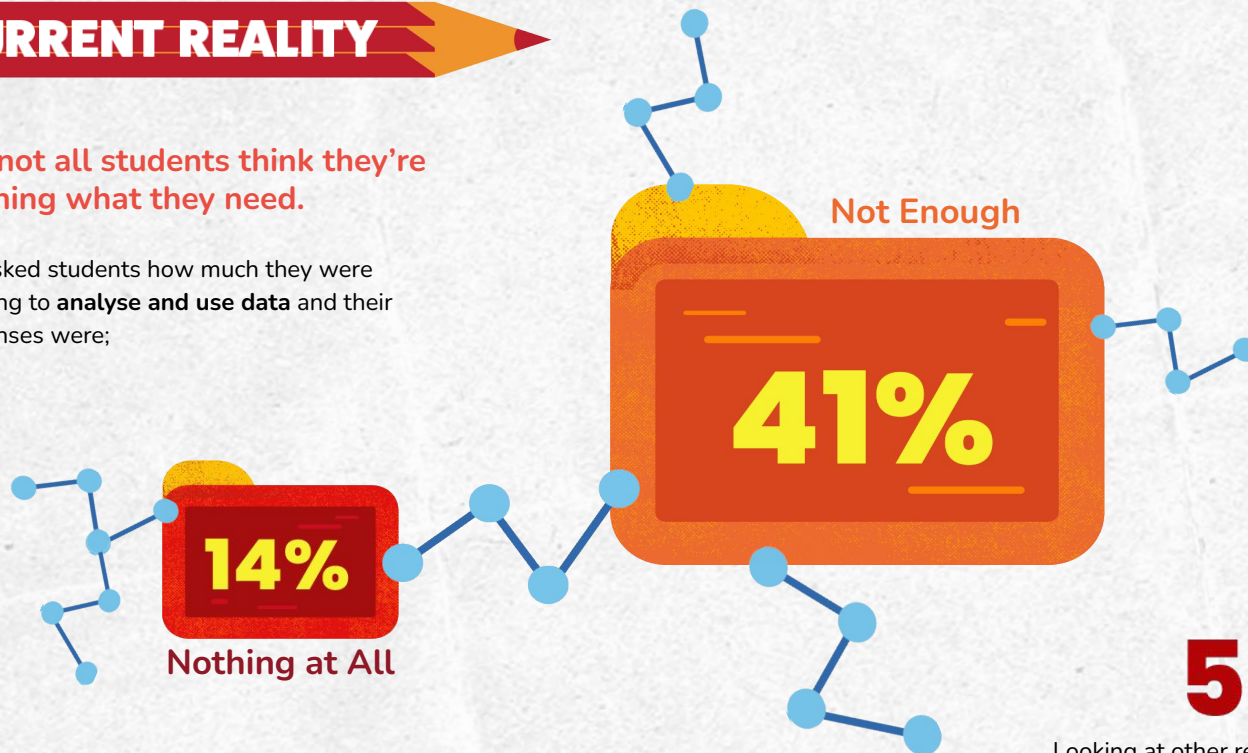
A similar trend can be observed with **"Develop digital skills like programming and coding",** where 41% said **"Not enough"** and 20% replied **"Nothing at all".**

Not Enough

41%

14%

Nothing at All

59%

Looking at other responses, **22K children around the world (59%) do not believe they are learning enough (or nothing at all) about how to manage money and a budget.**

WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON

NetApp
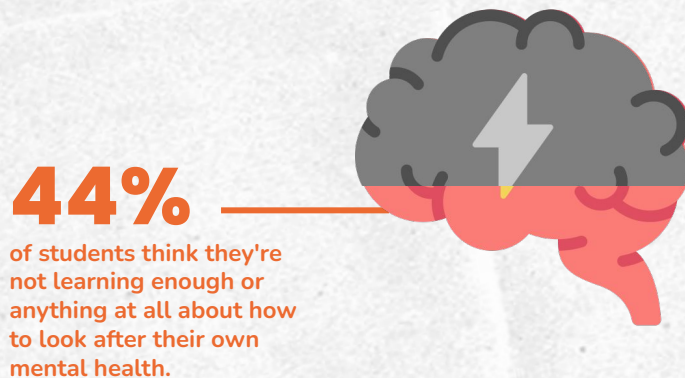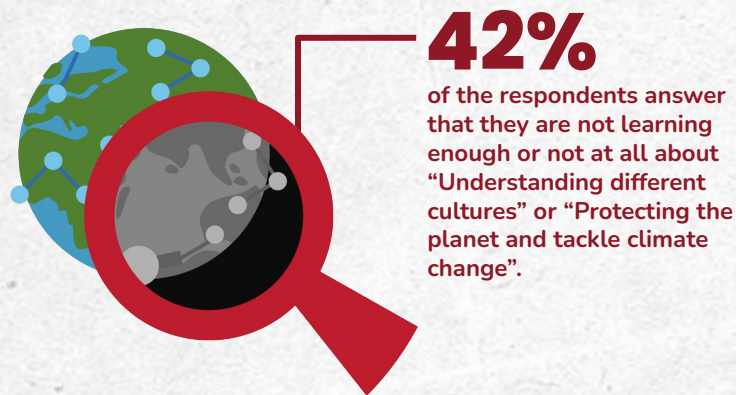
48% of respondents from countries with lower social progress feel they **learn to manage money and budgets** sufficiently, while only 30% of respondents from countries with higher social progress think so.

42%

of the respondents answer that they are not learning enough or not at all about "Understanding different cultures" or "Protecting the planet and tackle climate change".

When we see it by country breakdown, children in the **United States** believe they are not learning enough, or nothing at all of "Develop digital skills" (45% and 25%), "Analyse and use and data" (43% and 9%), "Manage money and budget" (42% and 29%) and "Protect the planet and tackle climate change" (41% and 10%).

Very similarly, children in the **United Kingdom** believe they are not learning enough, or nothing at all of "Develop digital skills" (40% and 15%), "Analyse and use and data" (47% and 16%), "Manage money and budget" (48% and 23%) and "Protect the planet and tackle climate change" (42% and 6%).

In **Pakistan,** children report not learning enough, or nothing at all, of "Develop digital skills" (40% and 18%), "Analyse and use and data" (41% and 8%) and "Manage money and budget" (50% and 8%).

Nigeria changes slightly and their children said they are not learning enough, or nothing at all, of "Develop digital skills" (41% and 25%) and "Analyse and use and data" (40% and 16%).

Finally, players in **India reported** learning "More than enough" in all the topics previously mentioned.

44%

of students think they're not learning enough or anything at all about how to look after their own mental health.

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STUDENTS CURRENT REALITY, IN SUMMARY

Overall, **children are happy to be back in school** but still, a significant number, 33%, report **feeling anxious** to be back in school.

COVID-19 widened existing educational inequalities, with more children in lower social progress countries reporting they feel **they have fallen behind in their schoolwork** vs students in higher social progress countries. Of these, more **did not have access to their own device** to learn with.

Learning online and **using social media** is students' least favourite way to learn. This is an interesting response from the digitally native student generation. This could indicate further need for teacher professional development to support student engagement or a general fatigue with online learning in the light of COVID-19. However, further research is needed to understand this in more detail.

In contrast a blended approach to learning featuring a combination of **collaboration with peers, being creative and playful** and **listening to teachers** is perceived as the most effective style.

Globally, students feel they are **not learning enough about digital skills like coding and programming** or **how to analyse and use data.**

Strikingly, India stands out as a country where students feel like **they are learning more than enough** across a key range of these skills.

PART TWO

PURPOSE & DREAMS

We asked children the main reason they go to school as a way to explore the purpose of education from where they stand right now. We compared this with why they believe adults want them to go to school. We then asked players what they think the purpose of school *should* be, and what one thing they would change about their education. This gave them the opportunity to share, in their own words, their dreams for the future of education and paint a picture of what and how they would like to learn.

PURPOSE & DREAMS

"To have a good career" is the main reason to go to school globally (30%).

30%

24%
To enjoy learning

14%
To understand who I am

14%
To understand the world

12%
To get good grades

6%
Other
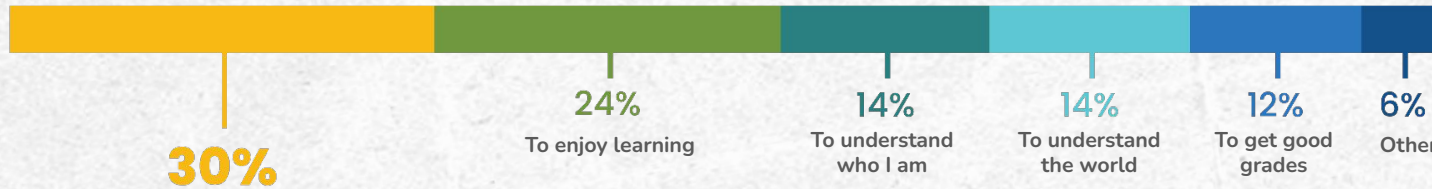
Why children go to school

Students from public schools focus more on "**To have a good career**" as their purpose for education (33%). Students who attend private school chose both "To have a good career" (28%) and "To enjoy learning and become a great learner for the future" (27%).

The proportion of children choosing a "To have a good career" is even higher for the respondents from countries with higher social progress (36% above median, 28% below median).

Why adults want children to go to school

Regardless of where students live, they consistently believe the main reason adults want them to go to school is, **"To have a good career" (40%)**.

Understanding what students think the purpose of education *should* be.

Children were given the chance to share in open text form what the **purpose of school** should be. Understandably the phrase featuring most was **"to learn".**

While this seems a broad answer, **learning is a unique experience,** and sentiments analysis reveals how they each interpret what "learning" means to them.

Children's feelings towards the purpose of education are **overwhelmingly positive.** Where negative sentiments are shared, we find students saying education should be about learning instead of tests, teaching them life skills and transforming what they see as outdated curriculums.

teach people learning things
knowledge educate children
new students world
person career understand develop
life learn help
future become good us fun
prepare give
better purpose school
skills make education

To learn about real life.

To learn new things and to figure out how to manage when you get tossed into the real world.

More practical subject should be included and except for the bookish knowledge there should be life learning lessons too taught in the school.

Form a life-long learner as a world-citizen with more emphasis on skills and attitudes and less on knowledge as the curriculum is out-dated and only changes every 5 to 10 years.

School shouldn't just be about grades and tests.

WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON

NetApp

WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON — NetApp

50%

0

48%
Practical skills attainment

16%
Being informed

15%
Knowledge attainment

9%
Understanding others

3%
Personal Growth

3%
Aspiration

2%
Innovation

Practical skills attainment is what children focus on the most, mentioned by 48% of the players and refers to **learning or being taught a new skil**l. Players said things like *"to teach people about the world we live in, but also how to create and discover new knowledge"* or *"to learn how to live in the real world"*.

Then we see **being informed** (16%), referring to being informed of current events (locally and globally), for which children had to say, *"to learn new things and to figure out how to manage when you get tossed into the real world"* and *"educate people about the world and human issues, so that they can live more responsibly and make it better"* among others.

Children also talk about **knowledge attainment** (15%), which is learning new knowledge, with the phrase *"give me a quality education"* coming up very often, but expressed in different ways.

9% of children believe **understanding others** should also be the main purpose of their education, with responses like *"to understand and create more adaptable and accepting humans"*. We also saw repetition of one of the survey questions used earlier, with students writing *"to understand who I am, what I want and be part of the community"*.

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We asked students "If you could change one thing about your education, what would it be?"

Understandably, the common changes students would like to see reflect what they believe the purpose of school should be about **acquiring practical skills** (33%).
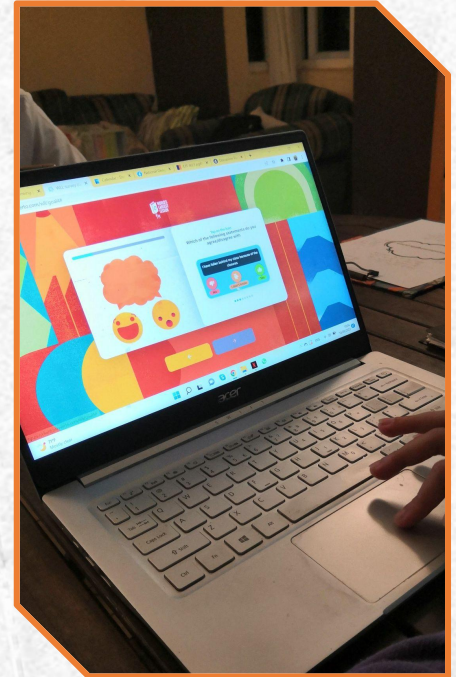
Comments vary from, *"Focusing not on textbook education, but on skill and creative learning that involves various tools and materials for students"* to *"Learn to read and write in my mother tongue and to use the computer very early"*.

We also see **being informed** (21%), with respondents mentioning *"Lots of things, such as learning about much more history, the planet, and more things"* or *"Talk more about everyday life, about how the world of work works"*.

Similarly, we see **knowledge attainment** (18%), in the form of *"Granting children the ability to tailor their education to suit their interests and talents"* or *"I would remove examinations because they teach learners to learn in order to get good grades only."*
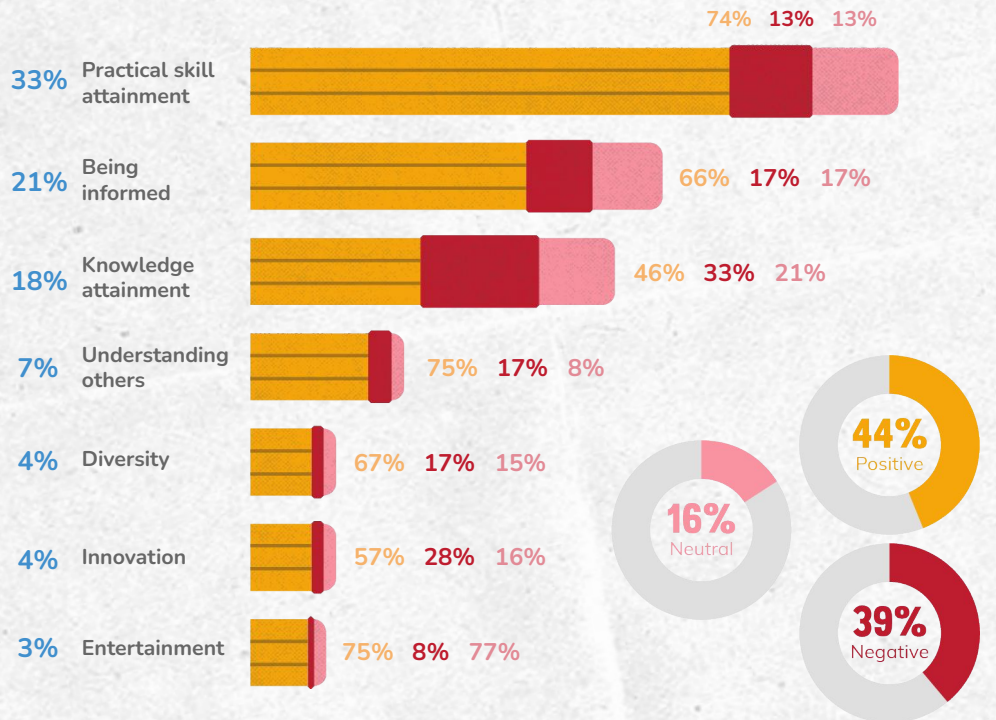
Understanding others (7%), where *"Read and write in my mother tongue"* is expressed in different ways.

Finally, we also see comments about learning to be creative and **innovate** and accessing learning in more **diverse** ways (4% each). Students express a desire for education to *"Foster creativity from an earlier age, make creative classes more accessible continuously, as well as other classes regarding specific interests (language, engineering, etc)"* or *"I would incorporate different types of learning by having various projects and ways to evaluate your knowledge and abilities"*.

PURPOSE & DREAMS

If you could change one thing about your education what would it be?

Sentiment breakdowns of the total percentage in blue

Category	%	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Practical skill attainment	33%	74%	13%	13%
Being informed	21%	66%	17%	17%
Knowledge attainment	18%	46%	33%	21%
Understanding others	7%	75%	17%	8%
Diversity	4%	67%	17%	15%
Innovation	4%	57%	28%	16%
Entertainment	3%	75%	8%	77%

44% Positive
16% Neutral
39% Negative

We analysed this question using a mix of sentiment analysis and an artificial intelligence engine that allowed us to group the comments into the categories listed on the left hand side.

We received 26,000 free text comments. Some of them were about positive change (44%) and some negative (39%). The negative focused on what students wanted to see removed or experiences they feel they have missed.

The "positive" responses (44%) contained ideas that include wanting to learn in their mother tongue, do more creative learning and start learning with technology at a much younger age.

Amongst the negative comments (39%) we see critiques of the exam system, concerns about the lack of learning life skills and student perception of focusing on an outdated curriculum

We explored the negative further by asking what is one thing that their school should stop doing (Q8). Commons themes also emerge around exams, homework and bringing more technology into classrooms.

Let's take a closer look at children's responses on the next page...

**If you could change one thing about your education what would it be?**

The top 3 categories of positive messages are **practical skills attainment** (74%) - *students wanting to acquire a new skill*, **being informed** (66%) - *students wanting to be informed of local/global events* and **knowledge attainment** (46%) - *students wanting to learn something new.*

44%
Positive
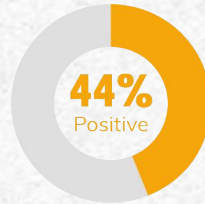
Here are some of the most common comments from the students:

- *"Learn to read and write in my mother tongue."*
- *"The teaching method/curriculum - I would make the teaching unpredictable but fun and engaging with the students so that they will look forward to what comes next."*
- *"Learning about current important topics like feminism, racism, climate crisis, cruelty to animals."*
- *"To invent machines that could change and make learning easy"*
- *"To teach daily life lessons such as bills, taxing, saving, home science, presenting yourself in a community etc."*
- *"I would take some lessons outside, in different settings, experiencing practical lessons."*
- *"Lots of things, such as learning about much more history, the planet, and more things."*

The top 3 categories of negative messages are **knowledge attainment** (33%), **being informed** (17%) and **skill attainment** (13%)

39%
Negative
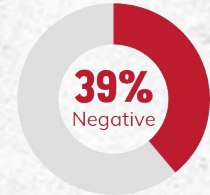
Here are some of the comments from the students:

- *"One thing I would like to change in my education is rote learning."*
- *"I need to learn more about the things that related to math, because I have a low capacity of understanding math lessons."*
- *"Don't have us sitting, listening and writing all the time, we get bored and we're not going to learn anything."*
- *"Less emphasis on mainstream issues that are already well trespassed and more emphasis on less known issues to gain further knowledge and allow for increased student independence of mind."*
- *"I would allow children to choose the disciplines they want to, I would also like to make free high education more accessible."*
- *"A change regarding my education would be not to take history or Spanish after 9th grade because I would have liked to take classes in finance or what university life is like to adapt."*
- *"I would want the education system to be productive and simultaneously have leniency so that students aren't crippled by the societal pressure of grades."*

"Who I'd like to work with to change my education…"

Next, we asked students who would you most like work with to help you create change in school?

Students in Nigeria selected **"teachers"** as **first** place in their list with **(57%),** followed by **"government and politicians" (43%)** in second place.

Children from countries with higher (above median) social progress would like to work the most with **friends and other young people** (63% of respondents from higher social progress countries picked this response) while children from countries with lower (below median) social progress would like to work the most with **teachers** (52% of respondents from lower social progress countries picked this response).

38% of respondents from countries with lower social progress picked **government and politicians** to work with (third most voted option), while the corresponding number for respondents from countries with higher social progress was only 28% (and it was the least preferred category of people to work with).

62%
would like to work with friends to create changes in their education
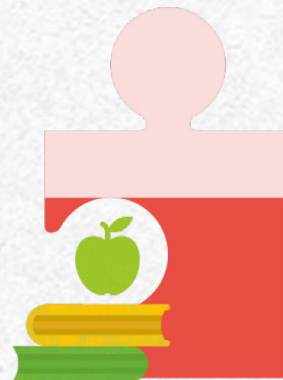
55%
would like to work with teachers to create changes in their education

PURPOSE & DREAMS, IN SUMMARY

From where students stand right now, there is a dominant narrative that **they believe the main reason they go to school is to have a good career.** This is even more strongly endorsed when asked why they think adults want them to go to school **(40%).**

When asked to express freely what they think the purpose of school should be, students use a richer vocabulary to **express ideas around gaining skills for work and life,** knowing and understanding the world around them and understanding others.

Students continue to ask that **schools focus less on exams, tests and homework** and find alternate ways to assess them. This is not new but could contribute to discussion around testing in a world where we are able to **assess performance in new and different ways.**

Globally, **students want to work with other young people and their friends** to bring about change to their education and schools. Governments and politicians ranked in fourth position. Further research is needed to understand this, however, it does suggest that governments could do more to engage with school children and to provide ways in which they can show they are listening to their views and ideas.

In the words of one member of our Youth Panel;

"To me the government is not very approachable, a system that often does not do work and focuses more on political agendas than on making any true positive outcomes. Such opinions about the government and the belief that we as children have power to make the change ourselves and that the idea that change should start with us, the people who understand the gravity of the issues, are the reasons to why I believe children and young people don't want to work with governments and politicians to bring about change in schools."

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PART THREE

MAKING CHANGE

A blueprint for action

Having established students' current realities at school and understanding how they view the purpose of education and aspire for change, how can we move into action?

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We asked children around the world if they contributed to making education better in their school and they globally replied with "Yes, all the time" (35%).

26% of students said "Only sometimes" and 20% chose "No, but I would like to". Worryingly 11% of students selected the response "No-one would listen to me if I tried."

Some specific country examples highlight that this sense of agency is not felt by every student. In the US for instance, the second most common response was "No, but I would like to" (22%).

40% of children from lower social progress countries state that they contribute to make education better in school "All the time", this figure drops to 23% when the respondents are from higher social progress countries.

Transforming education needs courage and determination, say children

If we want children to actively participate in their education and bring about change, then we need to help them develop the skills and attitudes to do this.

Students and young people think that the most important skill they need to drive change is **Courage and determination** (chosen first by 32% of the players). The majority of students indicated that they are learning these skills (59%), but a significant proportion are not (41% between "I don't know" and "No").
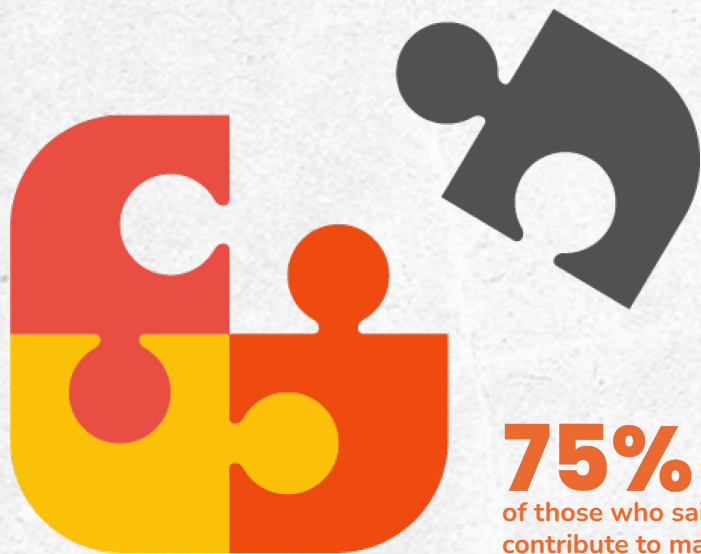
32%
think that the most important skill they need to drive change is courage and determination

35%
of children around the world said they contributed to making education better in their school, all the time

27

Correlation between learning those skills in school and feeling like they can contribute to making education better in their school.

To explore the link between skills, agency and action we ran a separate analysis for those students who replied either positively or negatively to the question, "**Do you contribute to making education better in your school?".**

The students who actively contribute to making education better in their school (answering "Yes all the time" and "Sometimes") reported having a strong sense that they were being taught these skills in school (**75%** responding **"Yes"** to learning the skills for making change).

The opposite is true for those who feel they do not have agency to make change at school. Out of the students who answered "**No, but I would like to try"** and **"No one would listen to me if I tried" 39%** of them answered "I don't know" as to whether they are learning the skills for making change at school.

75%

of those who said they contribute to making their education better, report having a strong sense they learning the skills needed to contribute to making their education better

MAKING CHANGE, IN SUMMARY

Courage and determination are the top skills students think they need to learn and demonstrate to bring about change

Students in lower social progress countries are more likely to say they contribute to making education better than their corresponding students in higher social progress countries.

35% of students said that they contributed to making education better all the time. However, an almost equal number of students do not feel the same sense of agency. (20%) of students selected "No, but I would like to" with 11% selecting "No-one would listen to me if I tried". This suggests schools could create clearer mechanisms for students to participate in meaningful change and feel like they are being listened to.

One way to do this would be to support students in acquiring the skills they feel they need to drive change and ensuring they are aware they have these skills.

WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON   ■ NetApp

It is not often that students in school are asked to step back and reflect on the purpose of their learning. This survey reached **37,000 children and young people** from across **150 countries,** and **collected 25,000 ideas** on how they would change their education.

Not only does it provide a **"temperature check"** on what children and young people are experiencing in classrooms right now, it also paints a picture of the kind of education students feel will set them up for their future.

We highlight how a **pivot to practical skills attainment is what students globally are most keen to see** implemented. From learning how to protect the planet and students' own mental health to managing money and a budget, to digital skills like programming and coding, students have a sense that **their curriculums are outdated** and not reflective of the skills they think they need.

The data also **highlights existing inequalities between low and high social progress index countries,** with students feeling the lack of digital access as being an acute issue. 84% of respondents from countries with higher social progress said they had a device to learn with, whilst only 59% of respondents from lower social progress countries said they did.

More broadly, our findings indicate that we **must ignite wider discussion around what the purpose of education is.** Students' perception of the purpose of the education they are currently receiving is **narrowly targeted towards careers** and ultimately contributing to economic development. When invited to share their own thoughts, they introduce ideas of skills for both work and life and the need to understand the world around them and communicate effectively in it. There is a rich and potentially **transformational conversation we could be having,** involving all stakeholders and placing children and young people at the centre.

As Emily Markovich Morris and Ghulam Omar Qargha have recently written:

*"Unless we anchor ourselves and define where we are coming from and where we want to go as societies and institutions, discussions on systems transformation will continue to be circuitous and contentious." ***

*E. Markovich Morris and G. Omar Qargha, 2023, *In the quest to transform education, putting purpose at the centre is key,* Brookings

"There are 2.2 billion children in the world and no one is asking them how to make education better. That's a waste of opportunity."

Professor Stephen Heppell

This provocation **ignited our ambition** to see conversations about education taking place in classrooms across the world, and we have demonstrated that we can **capture these conversations in a meaningful way** so that a large volume of student voices are heard.

We have shown that all over the globe, **children and young people have thoughts, opinions and ideas** they want to share on what education means to them and how they would transform it.

Our message to you as education leaders is simple: **Now is the time to participate in regular, open dialogue with school children about their education. Now is the time to listen to their thoughts and take their views into account as you look to build and develop new educational policies and curriculum updates.**

As lead stakeholders in the system of education, **students have a right to speak up** and be listened to. Students who are empowered in this way will feel more engaged and their insights will become more and more valuable.

It's a win- win!

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

World's Largest Lesson believes learning is the first step to action and is committed to introducing children and young people everywhere to the Global Goals, or SDGs. World's Largest Lesson is delivered in partnership with UNICEF, with the support of UNESCO, along with many other NGOs, private sector organisations and foundations.

NetApp is a global, cloud-led, data-centric software company that empowers organisations to lead with data in the age of accelerated digital transformation. The company provides systems, software and cloud services that enable them to run their applications optimally from datacenter to cloud, whether they are developing in the cloud, moving to the cloud, or creating their own cloudlike experiences on premises. With solutions that perform across diverse environments, NetApp helps organisations build their own data fabric and securely deliver the right data, services, and applications to the right people—anytime, anywhere. Learn more at www.netapp.com or follow on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram.
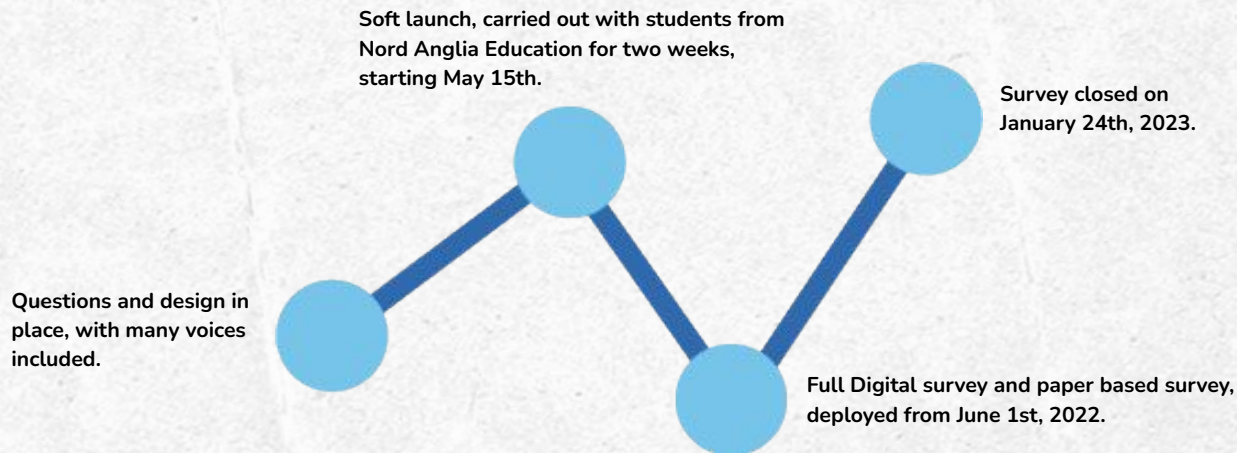
NetApp Data Explorers is a student learning journey filled with exploration, investigation, and problem solving with social issue data.

WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON ■ NetApp

Survey Creation process

1. Co-created the survey experience with young people and partner organisations:

2. Created a lesson in which children and their teachers talk and reflect together about the purpose of learning, what they are learning and how they want to learn.

3. Captured the conversations and their ideas via a gamified survey experience created by Play Verto.

Timeline

Soft launch, carried out with students from Nord Anglia Education for two weeks, starting May 15th.

Survey closed on January 24th, 2023.

Questions and design in place, with many voices included.

Full Digital survey and paper based survey, deployed from June 1st, 2022.

WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON

NetApp

play verto

Play Verto is a research and play-based technology firm that can map, manage and measure change - end to end. We are specialists in community engagement for market research and social impact, helping organisations create unique and authentic campaigns that are aligned with their mission and vision. Our fully customisable tech platform is centred around the player, and our gamified surveys have an 80% completion rate.
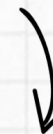
SOCIAL PROGRESS IMPERATIVE

The Social Progress Imperative is a global nonprofit based in Washington, DC, providing decision-makers and everyday citizens with the very best data on the social and environmental health of their societies and helping them prioritise actions that accelerate social progress. Its flagship tool, the Social Progress Index, captures how well a country provides for its people on the things they really care about such as their health, safety, shelter, education, and opportunity.
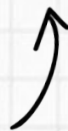
RURAL senses

Rural senses analyse and visualise rich data about the changing priorities and perceptions of target communities and audiences. Using Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing (NLP) allows them to process large volumes of qualitative and quantitative data faster.

COLLABORATORS

unicef for every child

unesco

Teach For All

OECD — BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

LEARNING PLANET INSTITUTE

Scouts

UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION

BigChange

WISE Foundation

BROOKINGS

DESIGN for CHANGE

RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT

AKDN

These incredible organisations helped us to create the survey.

These amazing partners helped distribute the survey

Teach For All

FUTURELABS

FORAM initiatives

AIESEC

NetApp

unesco — Member of the Associated Schools Network

unicef UNITED KINGDOM

DEAN

STEAMLabs Africa

NIGERIAN TEACHERS

NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION

COMPASS EDUCATION

tag

NTT

MY WORLD MÉXICO

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

Thank you for reading!

To read a more comprehensive analysis of each question with full demographic breakdowns, and further information on the methodologies used, click here.