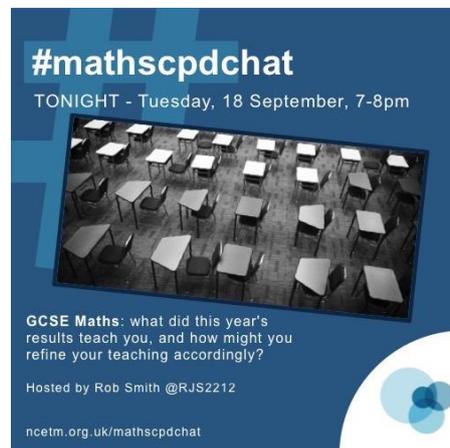# #mathscpdchat 18 September 2018

GCSE Maths: what did this year's results teach you, and how might you refine your teaching accordingly?
Hosted by @RJS2212

This is a brief summary of the discussion – to see all the tweets, follow the hashtag
#mathscpdchat *in Twitter*

Some of the areas where discussion focussed were:

- how to find **CPD time to look at students' scripts**, and to digest information from the exam boards … the need to **read examiners' reports**;
- **content areas with which pupils struggled**, for example algebra in both tiers and 'new' topics in the Higher tier;
- too many students lost single marks owing to **accuracy mistakes** … students needing to develop habit of showing detailed methodical working …finding tasks that help students to avoid making accuracy mistakes;
- **questions that were unexpectedly difficult**, such as 'Work out ½ × 5' … how to address this; whether 'going back to basics' in KS3/4 may result in starting-points for students' being set too low;

- inability of some students to find ways to 'get into' questions that required **competence in reasoning and problem-solving** … students not knowing where to start;
- **whether geometry is being 'squeezed out'** by greater emphasis on other topics such as algebra and multiplicative reasoning;
- the need to think about **how students use calculators** in lessons;
- what teachers are **doing to improve inadequacies in learning** that were revealed by students' poor responses to questions, for example introducing new algebra approaches using manipulatives, tiles and area models; 'new' topics in Higher tier made more explicit in SoL, giving CPD time to them;
- **changing the style of revision or intervention sessions**, for example replacing previous 'anyone can come' sessions with sessions designed for specific students or topics;
- whether the **choice of exam board** affected grades achieved … reasons for moving from one board to another, for example depending on the teacher-support provided such as Edexcel's local hub days;
- making **decisions about tier entry** … reflecting on whether particular decisions were right, and whether they were unduly influenced by parents' wishes;
- the rise in **grade boundaries** this year, and whether grade boundaries will become stable.

A particularly interesting sequence of tweets, about the possibility that some geometry topics are getting a bit overlooked, followed from this tweet by Robert J Smith:

> **Robert J Smith** @RJS2212 · 17h
> Question for Maths GCSE #mathscpdchat
> Geometry is getting 'squeezed' a bit by all the algebra and multiplicative reasoning/ratio
> Thoughts?

including this one from Mr Mattock FCCT
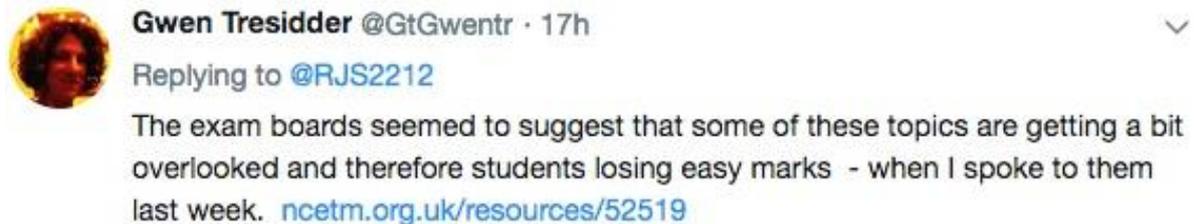
> **Mr Mattock FCCT** @MrMattock · 17h
> Replying to @RJS2212
> For the last 5 minutes I would say definitely not. Geometry is probably the oldest mathematical discipline and still worth a shed load of marks. So important for A-level as well. Over look at your peril #mathscpdchat

and this one from Robert J Smith

> **Robert J Smith** @RJS2212 · 17h
>
> Maths Departments could dedicate more time to it ... !!!
> Then students might actually understand WHY !!!
> Read @solvemymaths Yes, Buy Why !!! #mathscpdchat

and this one from Gwen Tresidder

> **Gwen Tresidder** @GtGwentr · 17h
>
> Replying to @RJS2212
>
> The exam boards seemed to suggest that some of these topics are getting a bit overlooked and therefore students losing easy marks - when I spoke to them last week. ncetm.org.uk/resources/52519

and this one from Mr Mattock FCCT

> **Mr Mattock FCCT** @MrMattock · 18h
>
> Replying to @MrMattock @RJS2212 @solvemymaths
>
> Of course you can bring algebra and multiplicative reasoning into Geometry, so no reason to squeeze it **#mathscpdchat**

and this one from Robert J Smith

> **Robert J Smith** @RJS2212 · 18h
>
> Replying to @MrMattock @solvemymaths
>
> I hear you lead a very well resourced Department when it comes to manipulatives !!! **#VeryJealous #mathscpdchat**

(to read the discussion-sequence generated by any tweet look at the 'replies' to that tweet)

Among the links shared were:

GCSE Maths 9-1: How did it perform in its second summer? which is a podcast discussion in which Andrew Taylor (AQA), Graham Cumming (Edexcel) and Neil Ogden (OCR) share with Gwen Tresidder (NCETM Communications Manager) their thoughts on GCSE questions they set, how students (and questions) performed and much more, shared by Gwen Tresidder

KS2 or KS4? Which assessment do these questions come from? which is a collection from the Mathematical Association of pairs of assessment items for which the challenge is to decide which item formed part of assessment at KS2 and which at KS4, shared by Robert J Smith

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[Pearson Edexcel free online discussion about summer 2018 GCSE Mathematics exam](#) which will be suitable for a department meeting, and will be hosted by Edexcel's maths subject expert, Graham Cumming, on Wednesday 17 October, 4 pm-5.30 pm, shared by [Mary Pardoe](#)

[Solving 'number' problems](#) which is a 6-step process into solving problems, written for GCSE Edexcel, BBC Bitesize, shared by the author of the material, [Tess Maths](#)

[The right or wrong challenge](#) which is a collection of sets of '10 quick questions', designed and written by Steve Blades for Foundation GCSE students, shared by [Tess Maths](#)

[Goal Free Problems](#) which is a website where you can find and share goal free problems, shared by [Mr Mattock FCCT](#)

[Addressing the Reasoning and Problem-Solving demands of the new GCSE](#) which is an article in the NCETM Secondary Magazine 144, published exactly one year ago in September 2017, shared by [Mary Pardoe](#)