

THE ONE ABOUT IDENTIFYING EXPERT TEACHERS

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THE STUDY

It has often been said that teaching is the one profession that creates all other professions. Therefore it is important that we learn how to do it right. The ways that teachers learn from each other is an important part of this. Over a period of 5 years, teachers from 14 different primary schools were surveyed and interviewed to explore both how they discern each other's expertise and whether they are inclined to seek advice and help from the most able.

THE MAIN FINDINGS

- 1 The majority of teachers (over 90%) **did not refer to student test scores** when asked how to identify which of their colleagues were the best teachers.
- 2 Instead of focusing on test scores, teachers **judged their colleagues** level of expertise on:
 - ▶ The type of instruction they used when teaching
 - ▶ The sort of questions they asked students during their lesson
 - ▶ The organisation and flow of their lesson
 - ▶ Their ability to generate student engagement
 - ▶ Their subject knowledge
 - ▶ The level of leadership of formal training they had

- 3 A teacher's performance based on student test scores, **does not predict** whether they are asked for advice on teaching by their colleagues.

- 4 On the other hand, these "expert" teachers, as measured by student test scores, were the ones who were actually **more likely to seek advice from their peers** the following year. It seems that the better the teacher performed, the **more likely they were to go out and obtain feedback** on how to be even better.

