Gen Z in the Classroom

Creating the Future

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METHODOLOGY

WHO	HOW MANY	ACCURACY	WHEN	HOW
Gen Z Students (Ages 11-17) in Australia	AUSTRALIA n=505	MOE = +/- 4.0	AUSTRALIA: September 26 – October 6, 2016	20 minute online survey
Gen Z Teachers (Teach students Ages 11-17) in Australia	AUSTRALIA n=200	MOE = +/- 7.0		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INSIGHT 1 > GEN Z STUDENTS SEE TECH AND CREATIVITY AS IMPORTANT AND INTERSECTING ASPECTS OF THEIR IDENTITIES

- Gen Z is considered to be more curious, innovative and open-minded than past generations – in part because they have grown up in the age of technology, which provides more outlets and digital tools for exploration and expression

- Both students and teachers think Gen Z is more creative than past generations

- Gen Z students say that they "are always looking for a better way to do something" and "create mostly using digital or online tools/devices"

> *"I have more digital tools and information on other people's ideas to inspire me when I feel creative."*
>
> **Student, AU**

> *"They realise that anything is possible when they see that technology is constantly changing and improving."*
>
> **Teacher, AU**

INSIGHT 2

GEN Z STUDENTS ARE EXCITED BUT NERVOUS FOR THEIR FUTURES, AND THEY DO NOT FEEL FULLY PREPARED FOR THE "REAL WORLD"

- Gen Z students have mixed emotions when it comes to their future after they finish school – they feel "excited" and "curious" but also "nervous" or "worried"

- Both students and teachers feel that Gen Z is only somewhat prepared for their futures after school

- Some students feel uncertain about finding a job and concerned that school has not properly prepared them for the "real world"

"School hasn't taught me any of the vital things like paying my bills and organising taxes, but they teach me how to properly do quadratics, etc. I am 100% unprepared to deal with actual real world challenges."

Student, AU

"At the moment they are very hand fed for a particular pathway. They are not learning practical life skills. The curriculum is too much centered on covering everything and not important topics well.   They need to understand the world.."

Teacher, AU

INSIGHT 3 ❯ GEN Z LEARNS BEST BY DOING AND CREATING, AND STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ALIKE WANT MORE FOCUS ON CREATIVITY

- Both students and teachers alike agree that Gen Z learns best through doing / hands-on experience (e.g., Lab work, creating content)

- Both audiences wish that there was more of a focus on creativity in the classroom

- Teachers say that having more opportunities for this type of hands-on learning is the number one way they can better prepare Gen Z students for the workforce, but teachers also feel that they need more tools and technology to nurture creativity

INSIGHT 4 ❯ CREATIVITY WILL PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

- Students and teachers agree that being creative will be essential to their future success, and that creativity is going to play an integral role in solving many of the challenges the world faces today

- Students believe that they will be creating things in their future career, and that there are a lot of professions that require creativity

INSIGHT 5

> TECHNOLOGY WILL SET GEN Z APART IN THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

- Most say that increased access to digital tools and technology will make Gen Z more creative and better prepared for the future workforce.

- Computers and technology classes are the "sweet spot" – both a top class to prepare students for the future and a top class for creativity

- Teachers say that their students will one day have careers that we didn't even know would exist today

DETAILED RESULTS

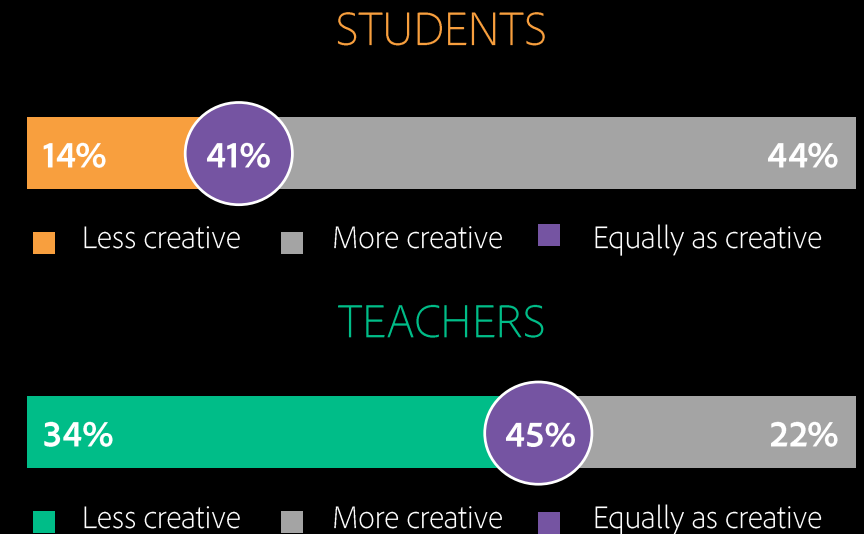# Both students and teachers characterize Gen Z as creative, curious and confident

Gen Z feel they are more creative than past generations; however teachers did not agree wholeheartedly

Describing Gen Z
(Shown: % Top 5 Selected)

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
1	Creative (46%)	A little lazy (74%)
2	Team player (44%)	Social (60%)
3	Smart (43%)	Bored by the past (49%)
4	Social (42%)	Confident (40%)
5	Curious (37%)	Outgoing (34%)

Q6: Which of the following words best describe [you / Gen Z]? [MULTI-SELECT]

Gen Z Creativity Compared to Older Generations

STUDENTS

14%	41%	44%

■ Less creative   ■ More creative   ■ Equally as creative

TEACHERS

34%	45%	22%

■ Less creative   ■ More creative   ■ Equally as creative

Q11: Do you think that [you are / Gen Z is] more creative, less creative or equally as creative as older generations? [SINGLE SELECT]

Modern infrastructure and technology gives Gen Z more opportunities to explore their curiosity

- Teachers and students agree that Gen Z enjoys more opportunities than past generations, such as access to technology and more freedom for self-expression.

- Gen Z is often positively associated with tech immersion and literacy, including social media, computers and cellphones. However, some worry that Gen Z students may be too reliant on technology.

Differences Between Gen Z and Past Generations
(Shown: Open End Responses)

STUDENTS
"Our generation is definitely different in how we learn, we are more reliant on technology than figuring things out ourselves compared to older generations where they constantly had to work things out without the answers being already on the internet." (AU)

TEACHERS
"I think because Gen Z have access to the whole world (via Internet) they realise that anything is possible so they set higher goals and aspirations. Gen Z are more creative, they know how to think and extend their thinking to find answers. Gen Z are more knowledgeable.." (AU)

Q7: What do you think are the biggest differences between [you / Gen Z] and older generations [like your parents' or grandparents' generation]? [OPEN END]

Technology provides more tools and inspiration for Gen Z creativity

- Gen Z students think that their creativity comes from access to a greater variety of tools, platforms, opportunities, and avenues to express oneself. Some also point to the ability to access other people's ideas as something that inspires their own creativity.

- Teachers say that Gen Z students have greater opportunities and are naturally exploratory.

How Gen Z is More Creative
(Shown: Open End Responses)

STUDENTS
"I have more digital tools and information on other people's ideas to inspire me when I feel creative." (AU)

TEACHERS
"Because they have so much electronic media at their fingertips, they don't have to spend time reinventing the wheel. Their efforts can be directed at NEW things, thoughts, and projects." (AU)

Q12: How [are you / is Gen Z] more creative than older generations? [OPEN END]

Gen Z students are innovative multitaskers that like to create using digital or online tools and devices

Perceptions of Gen Z & Creativity
(Shown: % Somewhat Agree / Strongly Agree)

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
I like / Gen Z likes products that can be personalized	91%	91%
I enjoy / Gen Z enjoys taking ideas and creating something from them	88%	75%
I am / Gen Z is always looking for a better way to do something	84%	46%
Most of what I create / Gen Z creates is done using digital or online tools / devices	70%	88%
Multi-tasking comes naturally to me / Gen Z	64%	51%

Q10: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

11

Technology gives Gen Z unprecedented access to information and global connectivity…

- Gen Z sees interconnectivity, access to information, inclusion, and the greater variety of professional choices as their greatest advantages. This generation is filled with hope at this age and sees potential and possibility through the lens of technology and a global network.

- Teachers say that the ease of access and familiarity Gen Z has with technology opens a whole world of possibility.

Gen Z Advantages
(Shown: Open End Responses)

STUDENTS

"We are more open minded. We follow our own pathways. We love technology and everything new. We are ready to learn new things." (AU)

TEACHERS

"They have technology at their fingertips, they are able to access such a wealth of resources everyday." (AU)

Q8: What are the biggest advantages that [you have / Gen Z has] compared to older generations? [OPEN END]

…However, Gen Z also faces more pressure to keep up with technology developments and competition for job placement

- Teachers see the negative side in a globally connected world with global competition. Some also point to interpersonal, social, independent and logical thinking as skills Gen Z students are not adequately developing.

- Students are more concerned about their future job opportunities and global issues like the environment.

Gen Z Advantages
(Shown: Open End Responses)

STUDENTS

"There is lots more pressure and social media is a constant source of drama and bullying." (AU)

TEACHERS

"It is almost too easy to find out information, so they feel they don't actually need to learn the information." (AU)

Q9: What are the biggest challenges that [you face / Gen Z faces] compared to older generations? [OPEN END]

Gen Z is excited and curious about the future after school, but many also feel worried or nervous
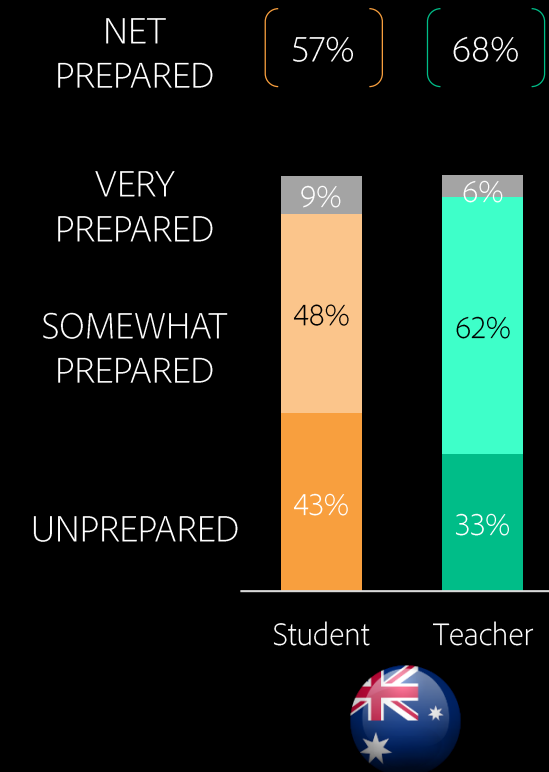
Gen Z Feelings About Future After School
(Shown: Top 5 Responses, Students)

	STUDENTS
1	Excited (52%)
2	Nervous (49%)
3	Curious (39%)
4	Happy (27%)
5	Worried (22%)

Q22: When you think about your future after you finish school, how do you feel? [MULTI-SELECT UP TO 3]

Most students and educators think that Gen Z is only somewhat prepared for their future after they finish school

Gen Z Preparedness for the Future

NET PREPARED   57%   68%

	Student	Teacher
VERY PREPARED	9%	6%
SOMEWHAT PREPARED	48%	62%
UNPREPARED	43%	33%

Q23: How prepared do you [feel for your / think your students are for their] future after [you / they] finish school? [SINGLE SELECT]

Both students and teachers are nervous about Gen Z's preparedness for the "real world" after school

How Gen Z is Unprepared
(Shown: Open End Responses)

- Students who feel unprepared for their future after school are uncertain about what they want to do for a career or are worried about their job prospects. Some also say what they learn in school is not adequately preparing them for the "real world."

- Teachers are also concerned that Gen Z is lacking "real-world skills," and many worry that they are too reliant on their families.

STUDENTS
"School is only a small aspect of the world and so when we finish school we will suddenly be exposed to the real world with a limited safety net. Secondly, in school we (generally) have not experienced problems faced by adults and are not use to the workforce lifestyle. We are also not accustomed to the intensity life after school possesses." (AU)

TEACHERS
"Lacking critical thinking and writing skills; not expected to take much ownership of their lives as minors, so not prepared to make adult decisions when they leave school; little to no training on making financial decisions." (AU)

Q25: What are some of the reasons why you [feel / think your students are] unprepared for [your / their] future after [you / they] finish school? [OPEN END]

13

Gen Z learns best by creating and hands-on experiences…

Effectiveness of Gen Z Teaching Methods

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
Doing / Creating	74%	80%
Watching	59%	67%
Researching online	53%	62%
Collaborating	47%	67%
Listening	41%	20%
Reading	40%	19%
Writing	36%	19%

*Shaded boxes indicate top learning method by audience.

Q15: In which of the following ways do [you / Gen Z students] generally learn best when it comes to classwork? [MULTI-SELECT]

…Yet students and teachers agree the current curriculum is more focused around lectures and writing

Frequency of Gen Z Teaching Methods
(Shown: % All of the Time)

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
Listening	56%	38%
Writing	49%	41%
Reading	44%	13%
Researching Online	29%	22%
Doing / Creating	13%	24%
Watching	15%	21%
Collaborating	18%	25%

*Shaded boxes indicate top learning method by audience.

Q16: How often do [you / Gen Z students] get to learn by…? [ASKED FOR EACH METHOD SELECTED IN Q15]

Teaching priorities today are more about interactive tools

Educational Priorities for Gen Z and Past Generations
(Shown: % Somewhat / Very Important, Teachers)

Developing critical thinking skills — 87% / 95%

Developing intellectual curiosity — 91% / 95%

Learning through hands-on experience — 90% / 97%

Solving real world problems — 81% / 93%

Developing team building skills — 84% / 95%

Memorizing facts and historical information — 81% / 43%

Using interactive digital media like videos or podcasts — 49% / 96%
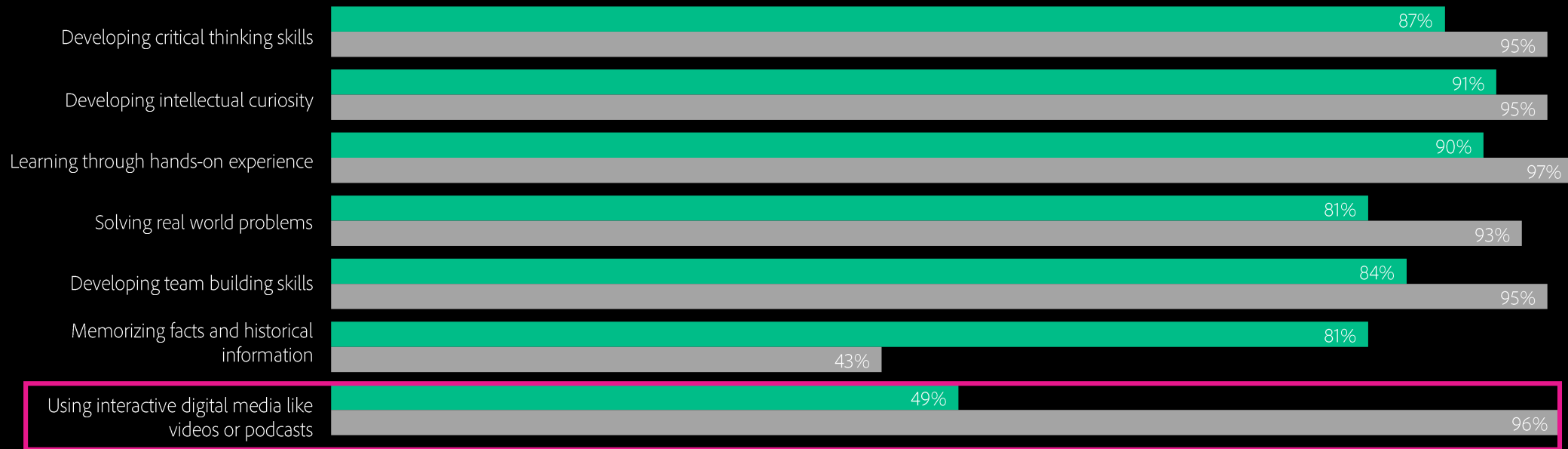
Q17: Below is a list of different educational priorities. How important were each of the following in educating previous generations of students?
Q18: Today, how important are each of the following in educating Gen Z students?

15

Teachers want more opportunities for hands-on learning and letting students follow their curiosities to prepare them for the workforce
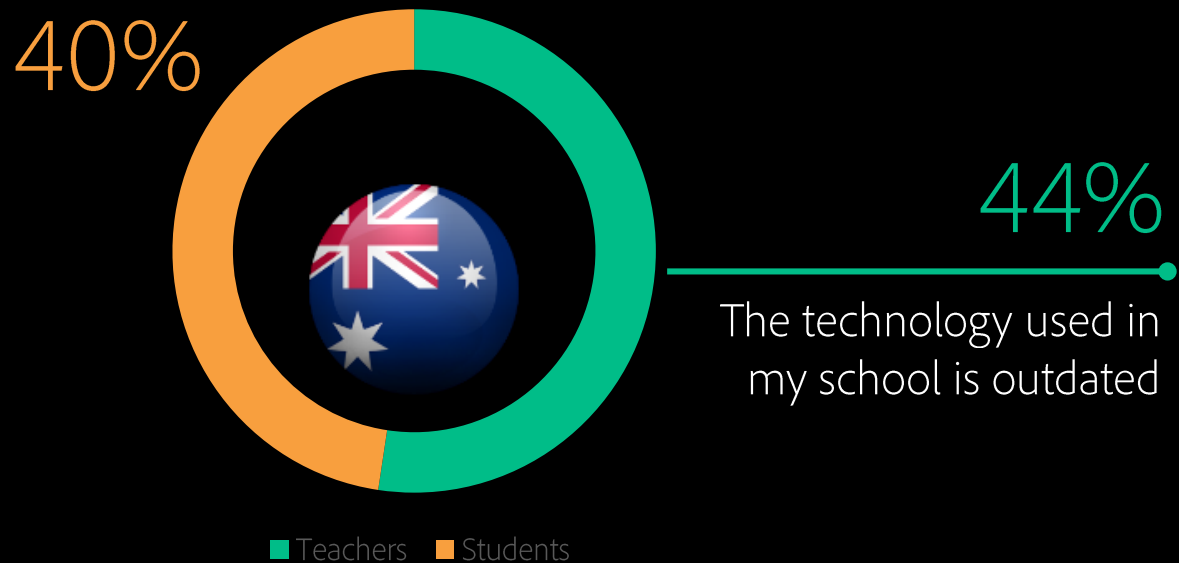
Methods to Better Prepare Gen Z for the Future Workforce
(Shown: Teachers)

Having more opportunities for hands-on learning	62%
Letting students follow their curiosities	47%
Evolving the teaching curriculum	68%
Using more technology in the classroom	32%

Teachers and students want better technology and tools in the classroom

Perceptions of the Technology & Tools

(Shown: % Somewhat Agree / Strongly Agree, Students, Teachers)

Perceptions of the Technology & Tools

(Shown: % Somewhat Agree / Strongly Agree, Students, Teachers)

40%

44%

The technology used in my school is outdated

■ Teachers ■ Students

78%

I need better tools to help prepare Gen Z for the future workforce

*asked only of teachers

Q20: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? [SINGLE SELECT]
Q36: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? [SINGLE SELECT]

17

Although teachers already inspire curiosity, both audiences want more of a focus on creativity in the classroom

Perceptions of Gen Z Classes & Curriculum
(Shown: % Somewhat Agree / Strongly Agree)

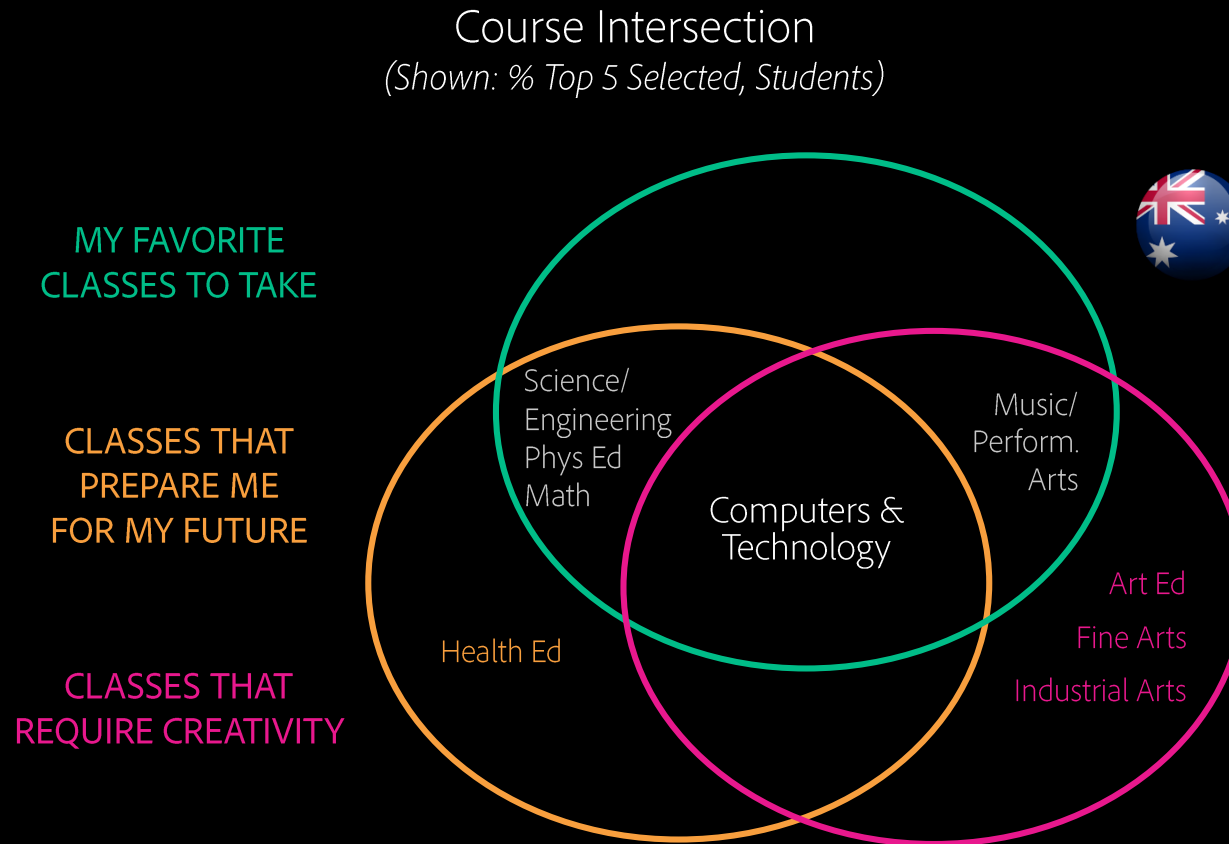|	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
I wish there was more of a focus on creativity in my classes / curriculum	79%	71%

Students and teachers are aligned on the importance of creativity in Gen Z's future success

Perceptions of the Future Gen Z Workforce
(Shown: % Somewhat Agree / Strongly Agree, Students, Teachers)

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
I / Gen Z will be better prepared for the future given how well I / they understand technology	93%	78%
Creativity is going to play an integral role in solving many of the challenges the world faces today	87%	93%
Being creative will be essential to my / Gen Z's future success	78%	93%

Computers and technology courses are important for both creativity and future preparation

Course Intersection
(Shown: % Top 5 Selected, Students)

MY FAVORITE
CLASSES TO TAKE

CLASSES THAT
PREPARE ME
FOR MY FUTURE

CLASSES THAT
REQUIRE CREATIVITY

Science/
Engineering
Phys Ed
Math

Music/
Perform.
Arts

Computers &
Technology

Art Ed

Fine Arts

Industrial Arts

Health Ed

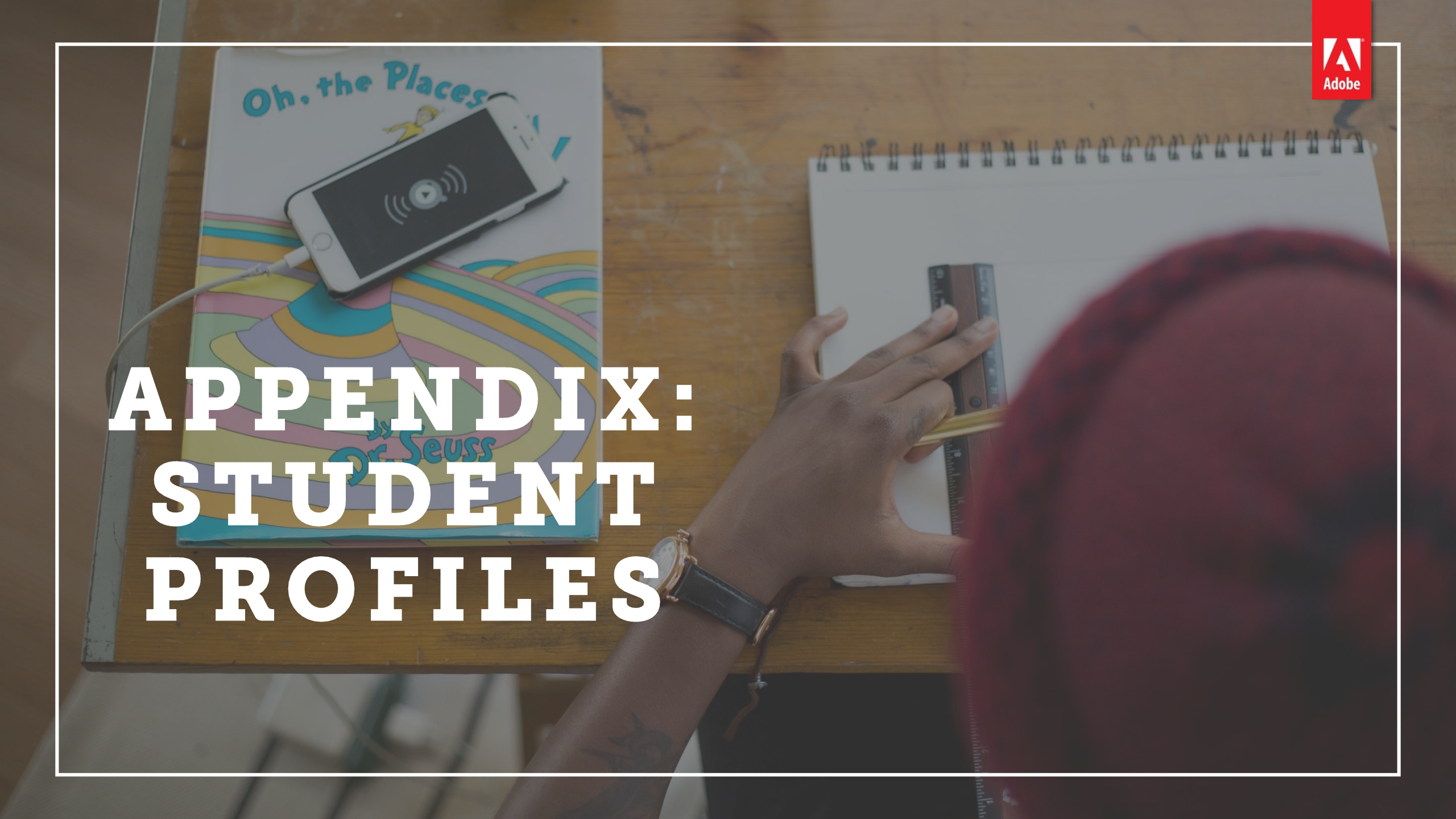Q1: What are your favorite subjects / classes to take? [MULTI-SELECT UP TO 3]
Q29: Which of your classes is most useful to you in preparing for your future after you finish school? [MULTI-SELECT UP TO 3]
Q42: Which of the following classes do you feel requires some form of creativity? [MULTI-SELECT]

19

Teachers think their students will one day have careers that we didn't even know would exist today

Perceptions of the Future Gen Z Workforce
(Shown: % Somewhat Agree / Strongly Agree, Students, Teachers)

77%

I will be creating things
in my future career
asked only of students

98%

My students will one day have
careers that we didn't even
know would exist today
asked only of teachers

APPENDIX: STUDENT PROFILES

AUSTRAILIA GEN Z STUDENT PROFILE

	Favorite Classes	Extracurricular Activities	Online Sites / Apps	Online Behaviors
1	Physical Education (37%)	Sports (61%)	YouTube 79%	Post my own photos (50%)
2	Mathematics (33%)	Music (27%)	Instagram 60%	Share someone else's photos (38%)
3	World Languages (32%)	Dance (15%)	Snapchat 53%	Share someone else's videos (36%)
4	Computers & Technology (29%)	Volunteering (11%)	Facebook 42%	Post my own videos (23%)
5	Science & Engineering (20%)	Internship (9%)	Twitter 25%	Share someone else's link to a story or article online (20%)

62%
post content
53%
share content

Q1: What are your favorite subjects / classes to take? [MULTI-SELECT UP TO 3]
Q3: What extracurricular or after-school activities do you participate in? Please select all that apply. [MULTI-SELECT]
Q43: First, which of the following websites or apps do you use? Please select all that apply. [MULTI-SELECT]
Q45: And which of the following do you do online or using apps? Please select all that apply. [MULTI-SELECT]

DEMOGRAPHICS – AU STUDENTS

Category	Sub-Category	%
Gender	Male	50%
	Female	50%
Grade	Year 6	17%
	Year 7	16%
	Year 8	9%
	Year 9	12%
	Year 10	16%
	Year 11	17%
	Year 12	13%
Age	11-13	38%
	14-15	28%
	16-17	35%

Favorite Subject	%
Mathematics	34%
Physical Education	32%
Science & Engineering	32%
Computers & Technology	30%
Music / Performing Arts	24%
Art Education	23%
History	14%
Health Education	11%
Language Arts & Literature	9%
Social Studies / Political Science	9%
Fine Arts	8%
World Languages	7%
Other	7%
Industrial Arts	5%
Career & Technical Education	4%

Extracurricular	%
Sports	56%
Music	28%
None	17%
Volunteering	15%
Dance	14%
Drama	12%
Computer science	9%
Other	8%
Debate	6%
Robotics	6%
Student government	5%
Fine arts	5%
Internship	2%
Journalism / Yearbook	1%

Region	%
New South Wales	30%
Victoria	28%
Queensland	21%
South Australia	8%
Western Australia	10%
Tasmania	2%
Northern Territory	0%
Australian Capital Territory	1%

APPENDIX: TEACHER PROFILES

DEMOGRAPHICS – AU TEACHERS

Category	Sub-Category	%
Gender	Male	30%
	Female	70%
Age	22-24	0%
	25-34	15%
	35-44	22%
	45-54	25%
	55-64	30%
	65-74	9%
	75 and over	0%
Employment	Full-Time	57%
	Part-Time	44%

Category	Sub-Category	%
Grade(s) Teach	Year 6	41%
	Year 7	43%
	Year 8	44%
	Year 9	45%
	Year 10	51%
	Year 11	48%
	Year 12	52%
Years of Experience	1-5 years	9%
	6-10 years	20%
	11-20 years	21%
	More than 20 years	51%

Subject(s) Taught	%
Mathematics	38%
Language Arts & Literature	25%
Science & Engineering	24%
History	23%
Social Studies / Political Science	21%
Music / Performing Arts	20%
Health Education	19%
Physical Education	18%
Computers & Technology	16%
Other	15%
Special Education	14%
Art Education	14%
World Languages	7%
Library Media Programs	6%
Fine Arts	5%
Career & Technical Education	4%
ESOL / Bilingual Programs	4%
Industrial Arts	2%

Region	%
New South Wales	31%
Victoria	30%
Queensland	16%
South Australia	9%
Western Australia	11%
Tasmania	2%
Northern Territory	1%
Australian Capital Territory	2%