Data Analysis: Student forums on purpose of public education in SA

Department for Education

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Data Collected:

November – December 2022

Client Contact:

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- Perceived outdated and traditional forms of assessment and learning (e.g., reliance on rote learning, exams, textbooks)
- Work/ assessment overload and unrealistic timelines
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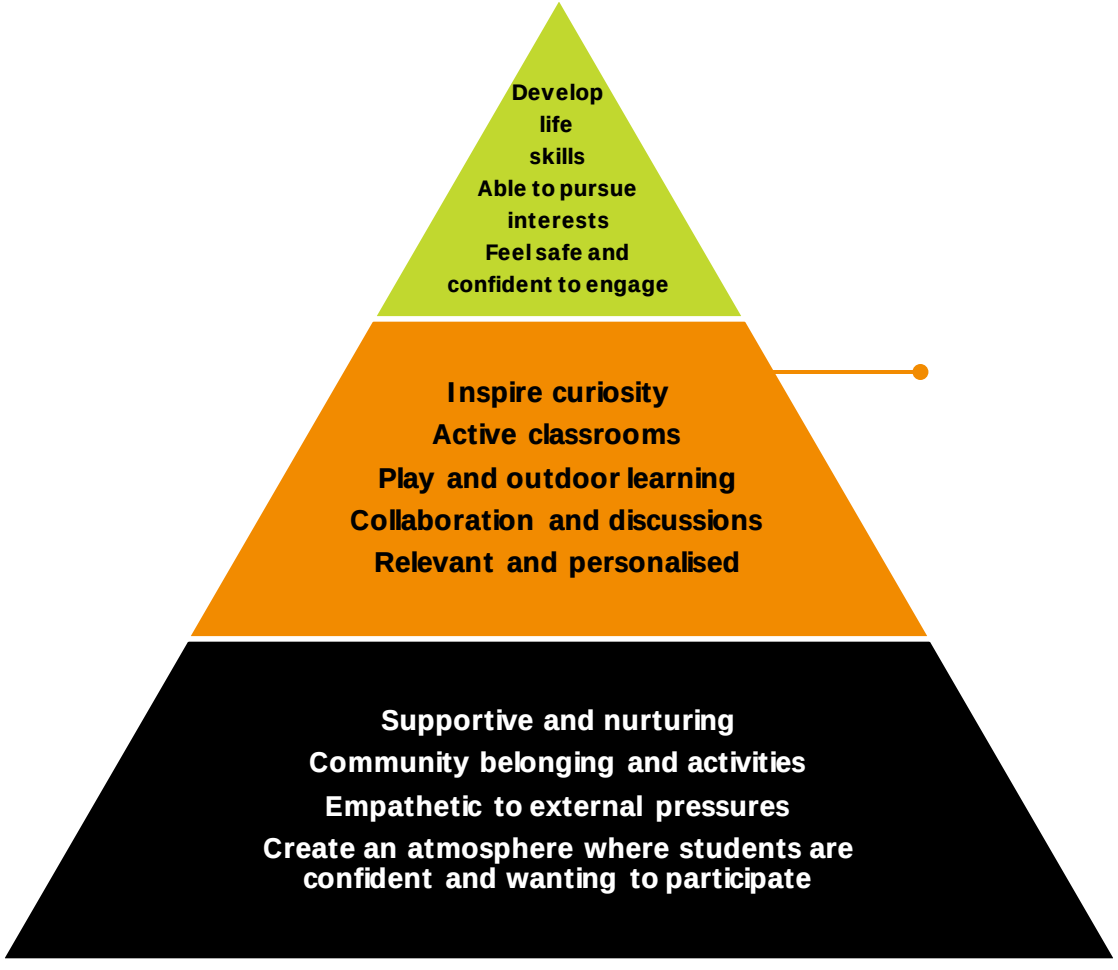
- A good and enjoyable job
- Achieve success (through both schooling and into a career)
- Happiness and positive life experiences
- Help family, friends, community and the environment

WHAAT

Do you hope for the future?

The fundamentals of schooling



Mentimeter Polls

Cognitive strategies

Sample sizes: Years 5 – 6 n~138, Years 7 – 9 n~32 and Years 10 – 11 n~40

I learn by talking and sharing ideas with

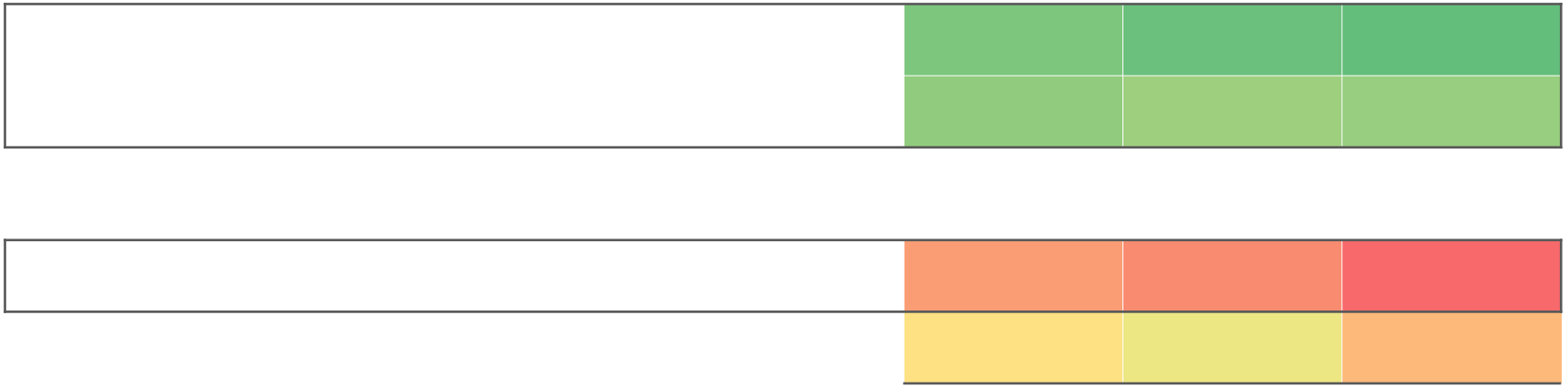
Collaborative learning

	Years 5 – 6	Years 7 - 9	Years 10 - 11
Yesterday I was EXCITED about something I was learning [% = those who stated YES! I experienced this!]	73%	72%	64%
Yesterday I was BORED at school [% = those who stated YES! I experienced this!]	57%	65%	71%
Yesterday I was CHALLENGED in my learning in a good way [% = those who stated YES! I experienced this!]	74%	55%	71%
In the LAST WEEK at school I worked on challenging problems with my peers [% = those who stated very often or often]	35%	35%	24%
In the LAST WEEK at school my peers helped me understand something that was challenging me in my learning [% = those who stated very often or often]	22%	25%	24%
In the LAST WEEK at school I worked mainly by myself [% = those who stated very often or often]	46%	58%	63%
We help each other learn at school [% = those who stated yes]	94%	98%	88%
We discuss and question why people think the way they do [% = those who stated yes]	74%	73%	68%
I learn by talking and sharing ideas with others [% = those who stated yes]	83%	88%	83%
I ask questions about what we are learning [% = those who stated YES – This happens FREQUENTLY]	40%	45%	41%
I contribute to group tasks where everyone must contribute in order to succeed [% = those who stated YES – This happens FREQUENTLY]	72%	63%	66%
I give answers to teachers questions [% = those who stated YES – This happens FREQUENTLY]	61%	60%	44%
When working in groups, are the learning goals about developing collaboration skills made clear like the subject learning goals? [% = those who stated Yes, always]	22%	5%	22%
I think that school is preparing me well for the future I want [% = those who stated yes]	53%	44%	43%

Sample sizes: Years 5 – 6 n~389, Years 7 – 9 n~45 and Years 10 – 11 n~44

Feedback

	Years 5 – 6	Years 7 - 9	Years 10 - 11
I receive feedback IN WRITING [% = those who stated very often or often]	61%	77%	76%
I receive SPOKEN feedback [% = those who stated very often or often]	54%	51%	54%



Sample sizes: Years 5 – 6 n~492, Years 7 – 9 n~42 and Years 10 – 11 n~45

Active learning

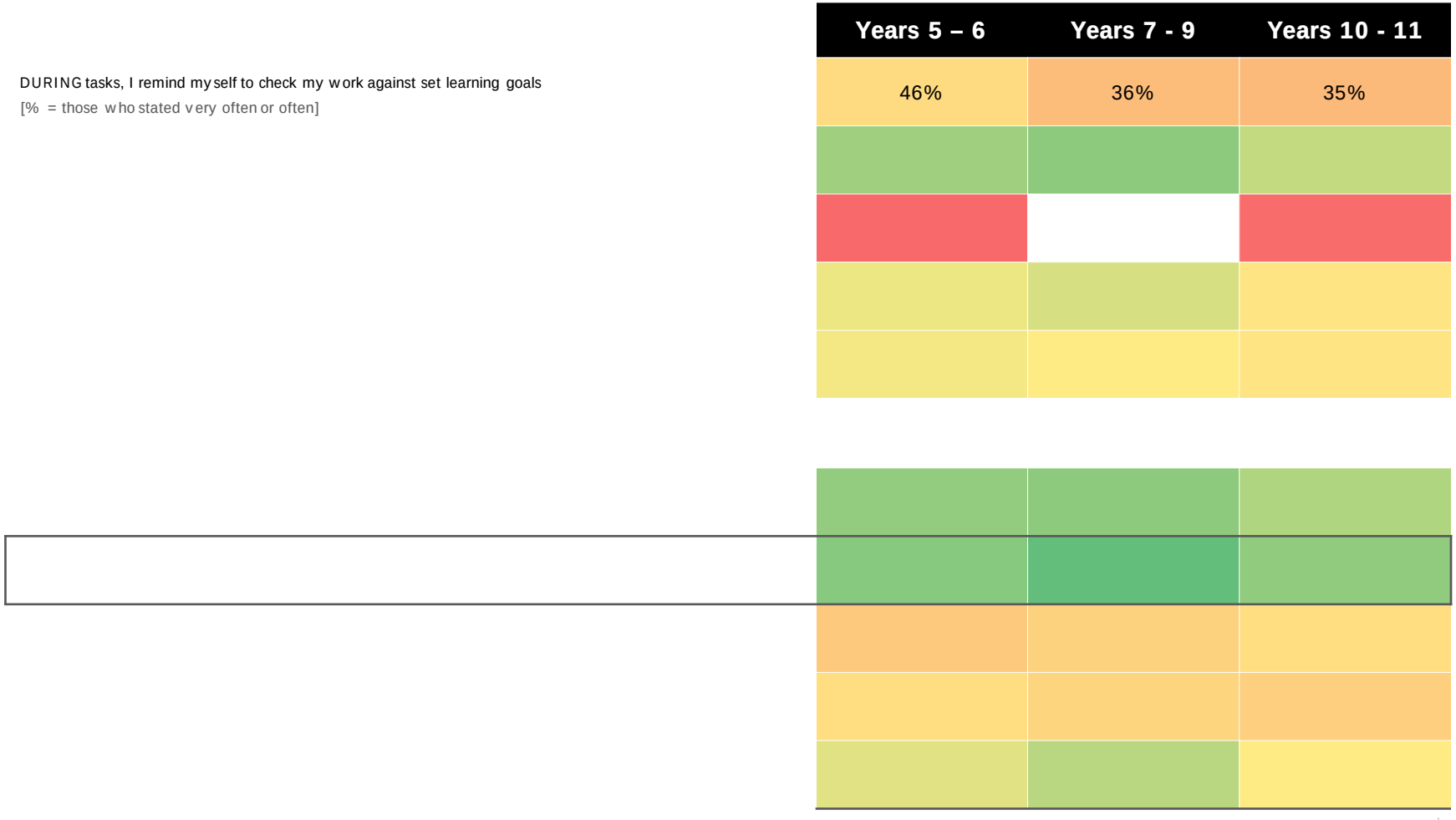
1. Year 5 – 6's are encouraged to keep working through tasks until they are finished
2. Less than half frequently check and reflect on their work whilst completing tasks
3. Majority of students agree they get more involved in learning when they get a choice about how they learn. Whilst many appreciate being told t3811n3

I get more involved in learning when my teacher gives me CHOICE about what or how I learn

1. Year 7 – 9: 100%
2. Year 5 – 6: 89%
3. Year 10 – 11: 86%

Active learning

DURING tasks, I remind myself to check my work against set learning goals
[% = those who stated very often or often]



I Hope Cards

Recurring themes by year level

Years 4 - 6

199 total responses were recorded
Note: Select verbatim comments have been used to illustrate key themes

Example poster from the Pt Augusta student forum

Regional South Australia forums

Perseverance and academic self-concept

When reflecting on the statistics around perseverance, regional students highlight a rise in pressure and expectation from teachers and parents for students to perform well in high school years, at a time when teachers become less engaged with individuals and students are expected to be more self-reliant. This focus on grades as the most important learning metric adds to this overwhelming feeling of pressure, which is exacerbated by the overloading of assignments and unrealistic due dates. The students largely agreed that a more collaborative and connective style of learning, where interactions with the larger community and peer to peer reflections at the end of lessons would be more engaging. They also highlighted a need for an understanding of real world correlation to what they are learning (w)65.3 (h)0.6 (n)0.k31.3 .3 (u)0.'-4.3 (s)55..4 (e)-31.3 (e)-31.3 (r.3 ( )1 (o)-14.3.026 Tc 1 (w)-65u)51 (r)52.6 (.3 (a)51 (r)52t)1 (a)51 (l-65.3 (h)0 year learning (w)65

Regional South Australia forums

Cognitive engagement

Many of the same issues arose in the minds of regional students when focusing on cognitive engagement in classrooms, as perseverance, including a desire for less focus on revision and repetitive learning, and a deeper focus on interactive, hands-on or play based learning (they ascertained that a stronger focus on these styles for primary school children resulted in higher levels of cognitive engagement). Moving learning outside of the classroom was also strongly favoured with a focus on outdoor learning and excursions, as well as more 'active' classrooms full of discussion and debate. The students highlighted that much of the current syllabus feels outdated and unrelated to them as current students, which leads to a lack of understanding around how these lessons actually relate to real life. They also pinpointed that there is a greater acceptance and support for failure in younger students that dissipates as they advance in school – which can act as a block to trying in the first place. COVID and the effect of technology and social media on the mental health and focus of older students was a key theme in discussions, with many students feeling like a more collaborative learning environment where they can have a say in their assignments and projects could act as a remedy to waning interest.

Stop	Start	Issues
ƒ Less focus on revision/ repetitive learning	ƒ Interactive/ hands-on/ play based learning	ƒ More pressure as you get older and less teacher focus
ƒ Teachers need to 'spread the load' with work assignments	ƒ Regular brain breaks with active element (get the body moving)	ƒ Lessons don't feel relevant / haven't been updated
ƒ Classrooms as quiet, still spaces	ƒ Different learning environment (outdoor, excursions etc.)	ƒ More acceptance of failure in younger years
ƒ Grades as the ultimate cognitive priority	ƒ More 'active' classrooms with discussion, talking and collaboration	ƒ COVID / technology (and online learning) has impacted mental health and focus
	ƒ More student choice in learning (assignments, projects etc.)	

Regional South Australia: School belonging and school climate

In a series of forums last year, students shared their hopes about public education for students of the future. Do you agree with any of the below?

	Regional SA school	Metropolitan Adelaide school
I hope for people to be confident in learning	37%	38%
I hope that everyone is not afraid to give something a go	40%	35%
I hope school encourages an environment where it's okay to make mistakes	27%	30%
I hope that people enjoy learning	24%	27%
I hope that there are more subjects to choose from	28%	25%
I hope everyone feels part of a group to help each other learn	27%	24%
I hope mental health and wellbeing is prioritised over grades and exam scores. Students are more than a letter	20%	26%
I hope schools are more hands on. Like doing more outside things	25%	20%
I hope that in the future school is a place where every student gets their own individual ways to learn and improve their learning	18%	23%
I hope that students are more involved in discussions in and out of the classroom (e.g., that students have more of a say in how they learn)	19%	20%
Column n	1,090	2,653

Note: Data is sourced from student surveys undertaken in February 2023

Metropolitan Adelaide forums

School belonging and school climate

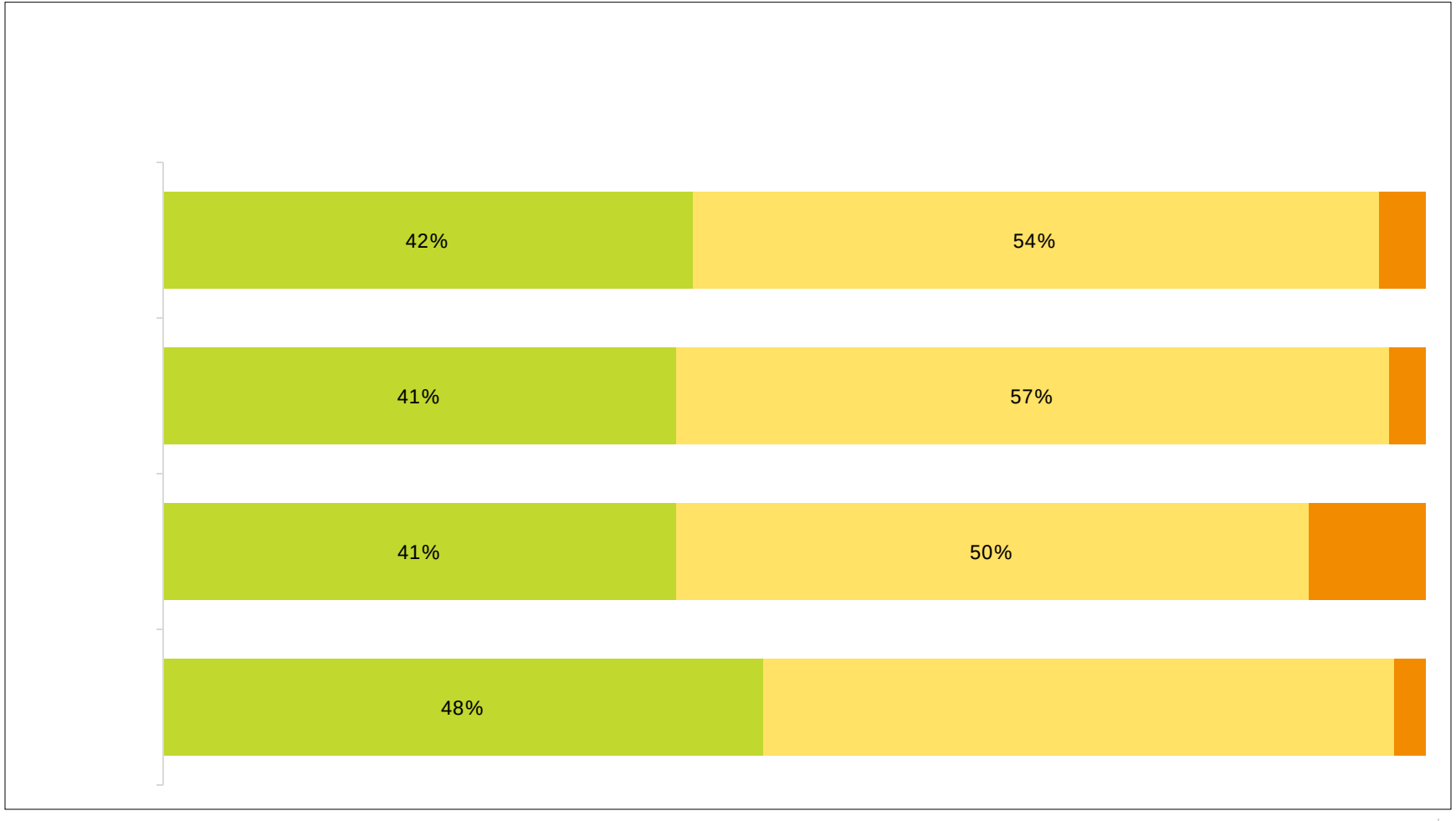
Metropolitan Adelaide forums

Additional student feedback

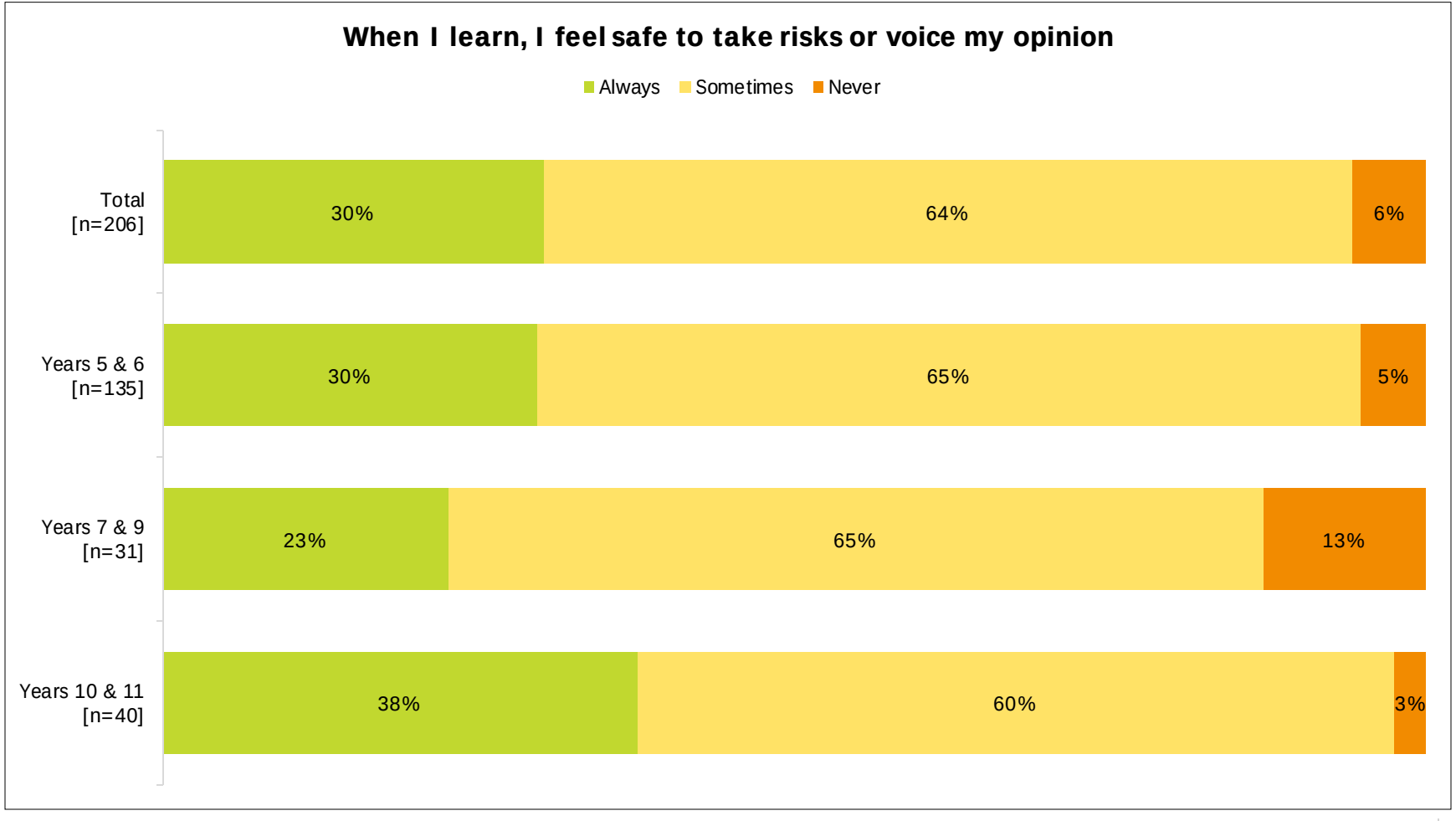
Theme	Student feedback	
High skilled educators, youth workers and social workers are needed	*f*	"The teachers here explain everything very well, doesn't matter what level you are'.
	f	"The teachers understand me more than in a mainstream school"
	f	"If you're not doing your work the teacher won't get mad at you"
	f	"A teacher in the mainstream schools have too many students to manage"
More intimate than large mainstream settings – welcoming, dignifying, encouraging of engagement	*f*	"With FLO you want to attend more than mainstream school as there is a sense of community"
	f	"You don't have to worry about being bullied as everyone is going through the sam6 (g)0.7 ((a)-32.5 (Tw 20.5 0 Td6)-50.8 ( )0.6 (sc)14.5 (h

Mentimeter Data Tabs

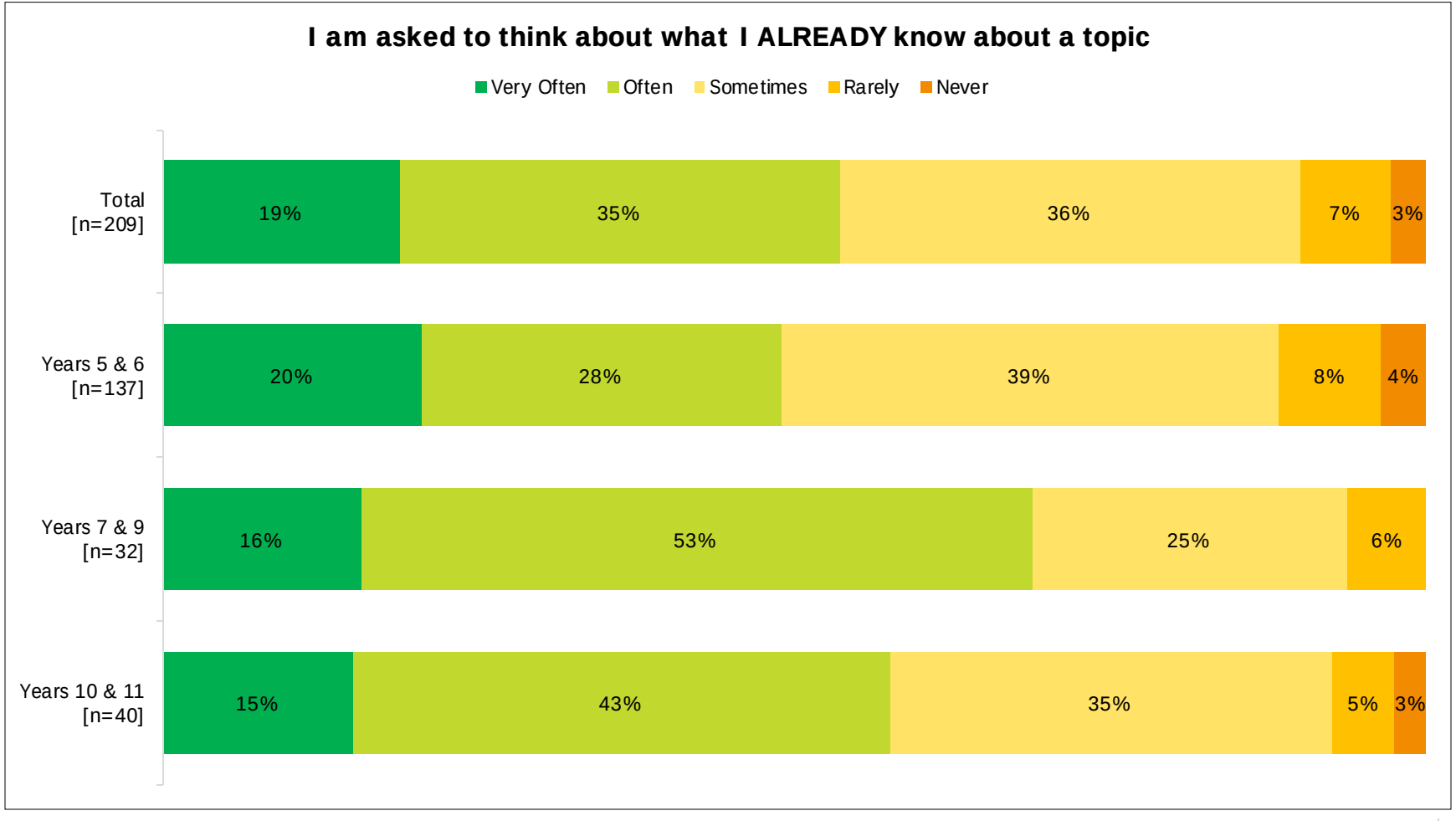
Cognitive strategies



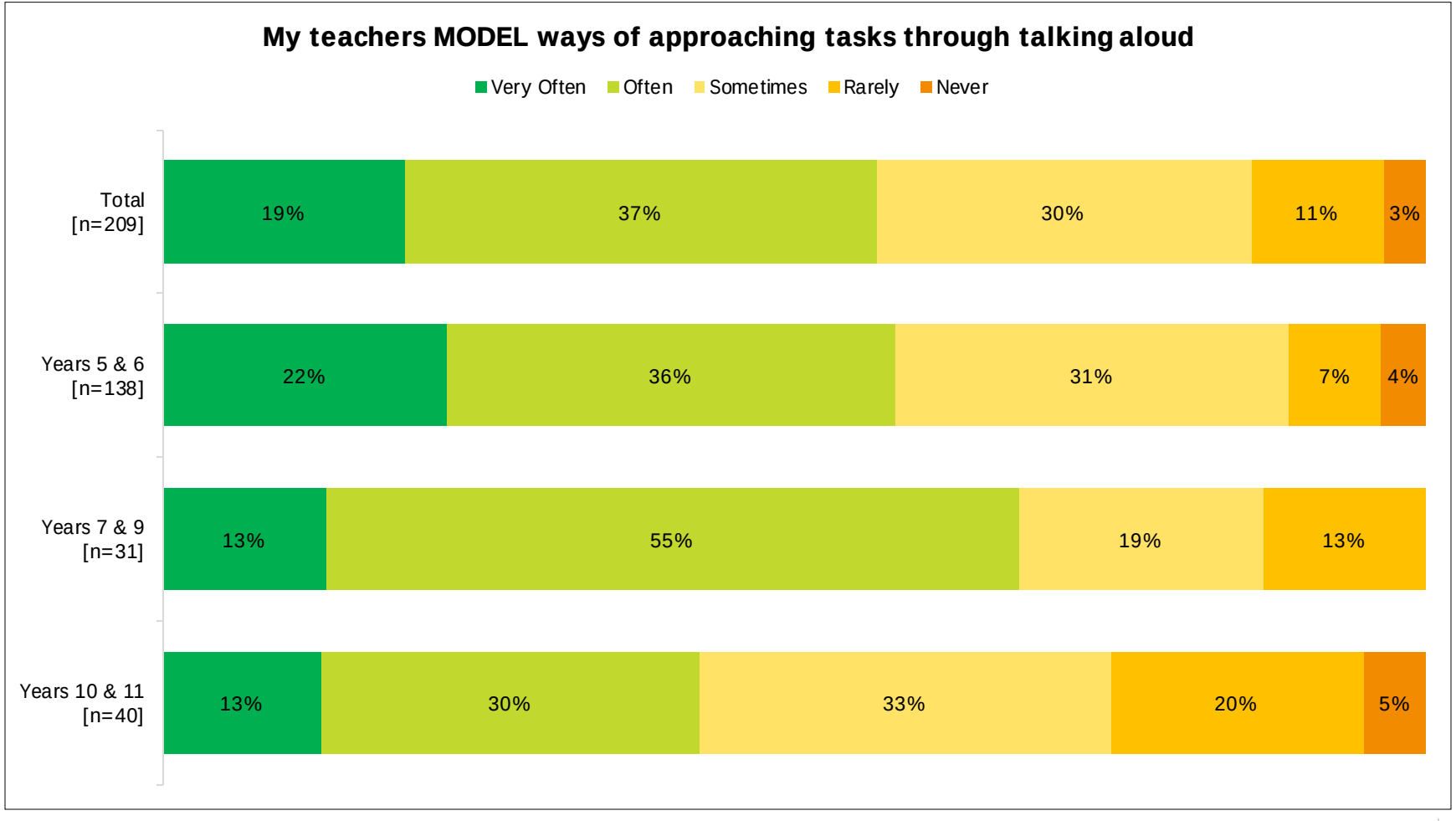
Cognitive strategies



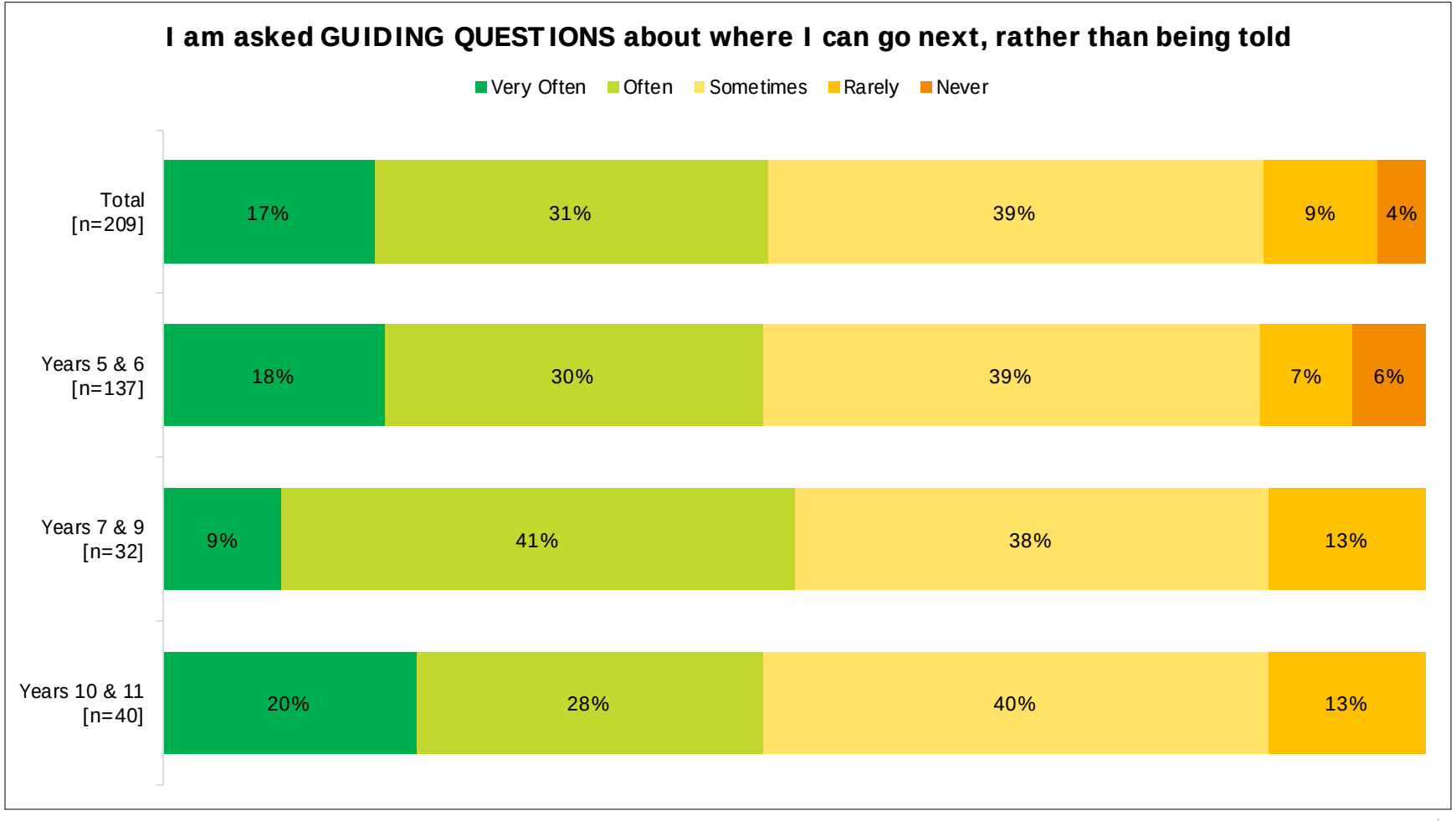
Cognitive strategies



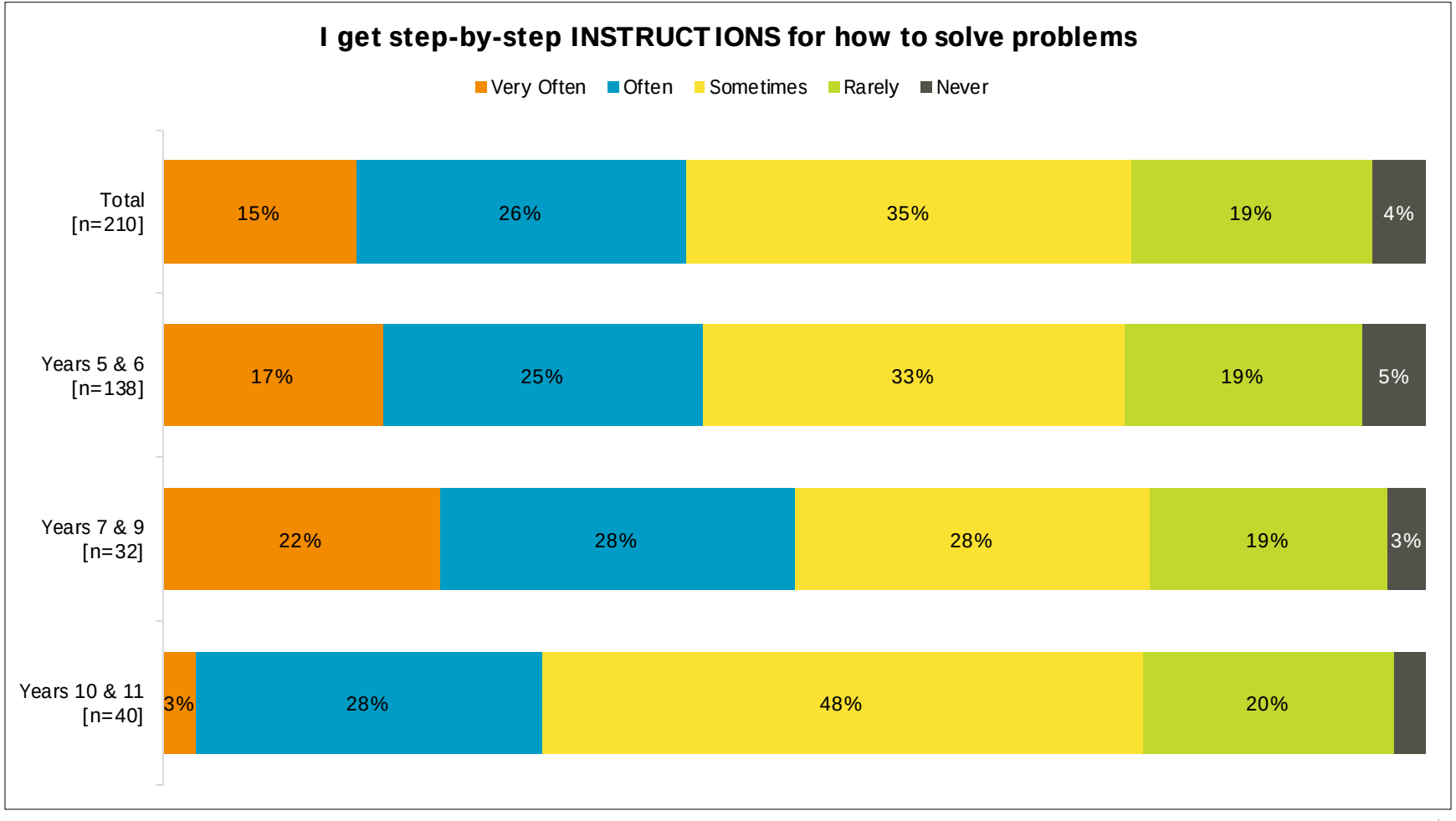
Cognitive strategies



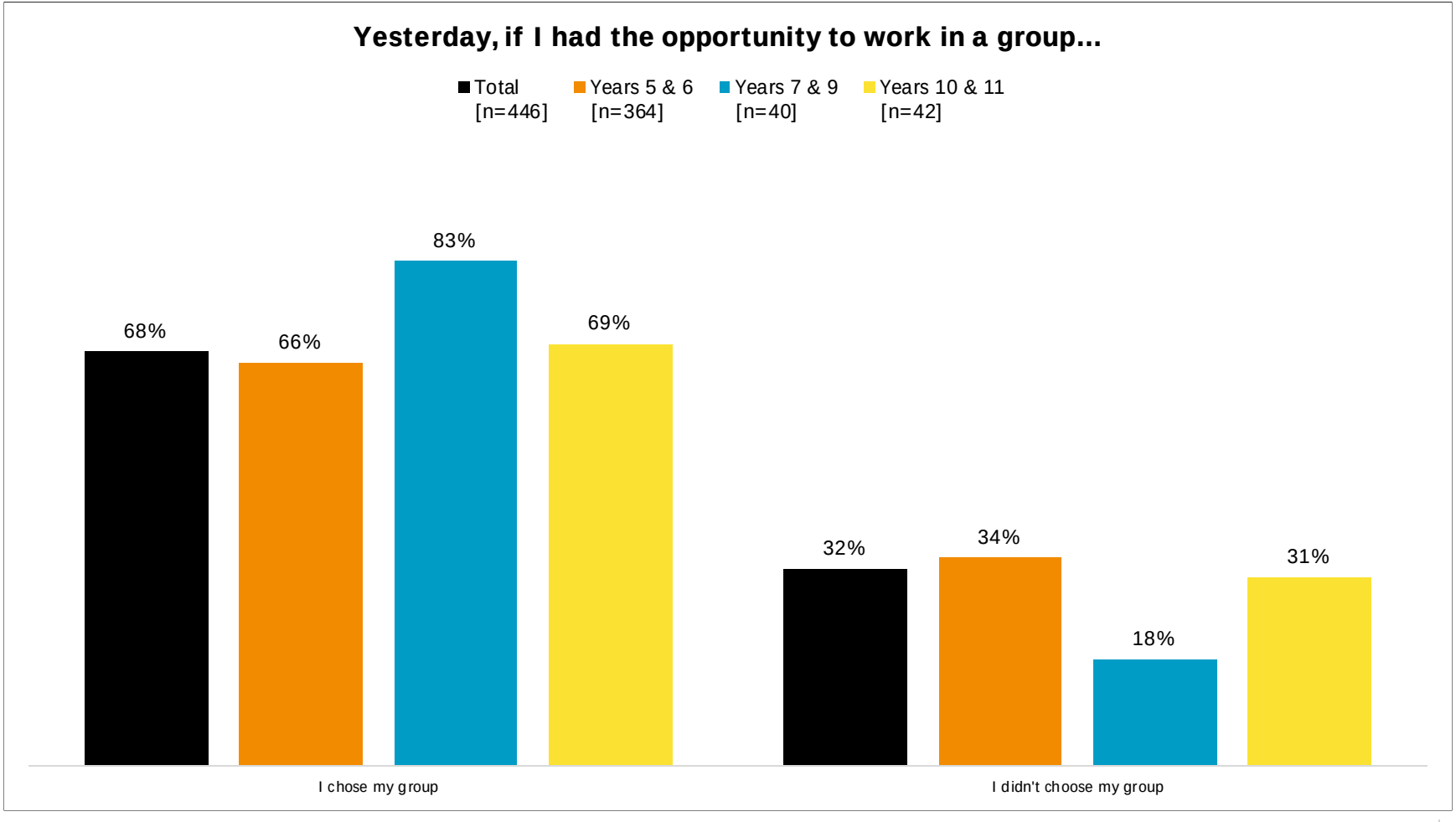
Cognitive strategies



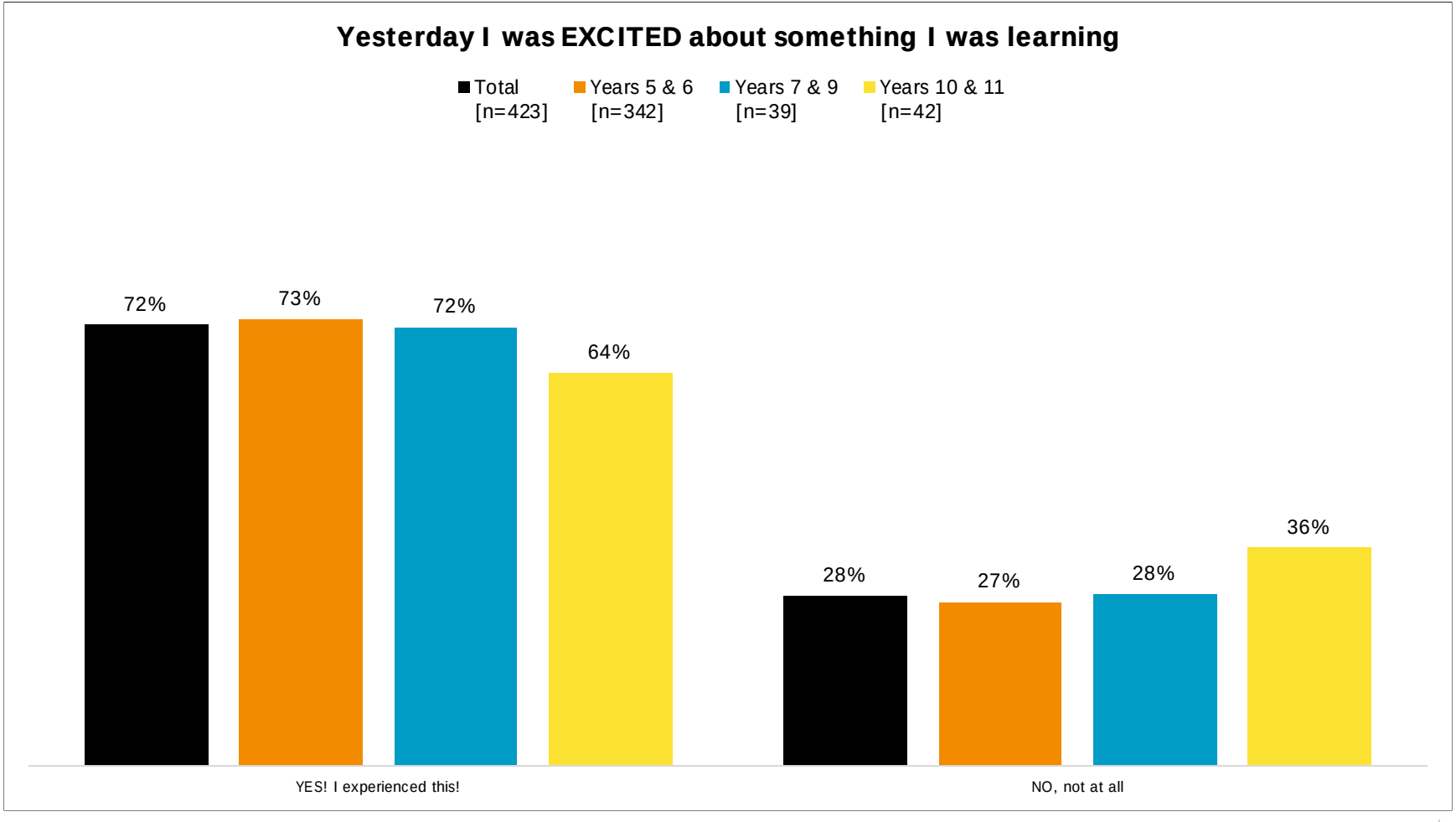
Cognitive strategies



Collaborative learning



Collaborative learning



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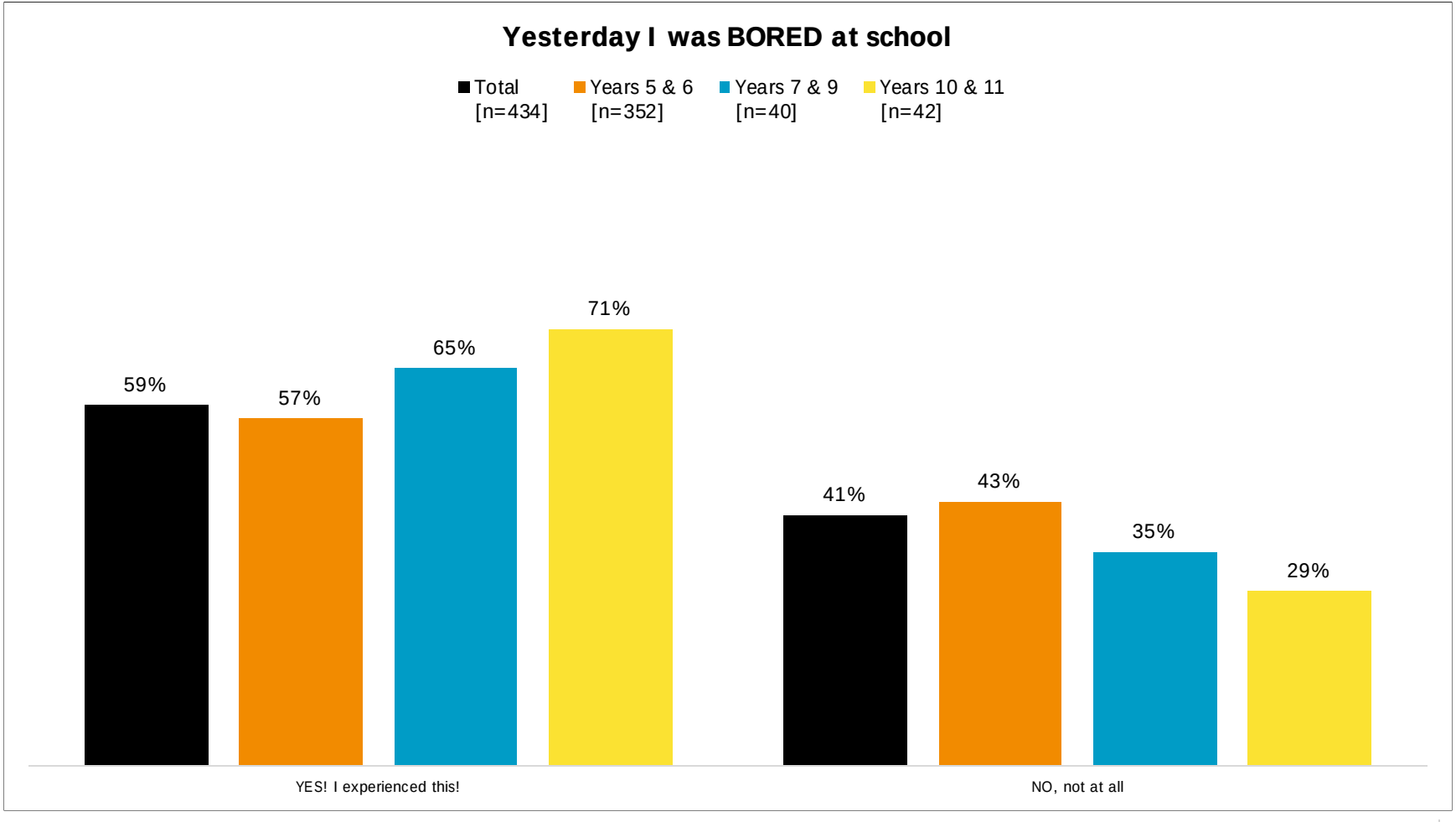
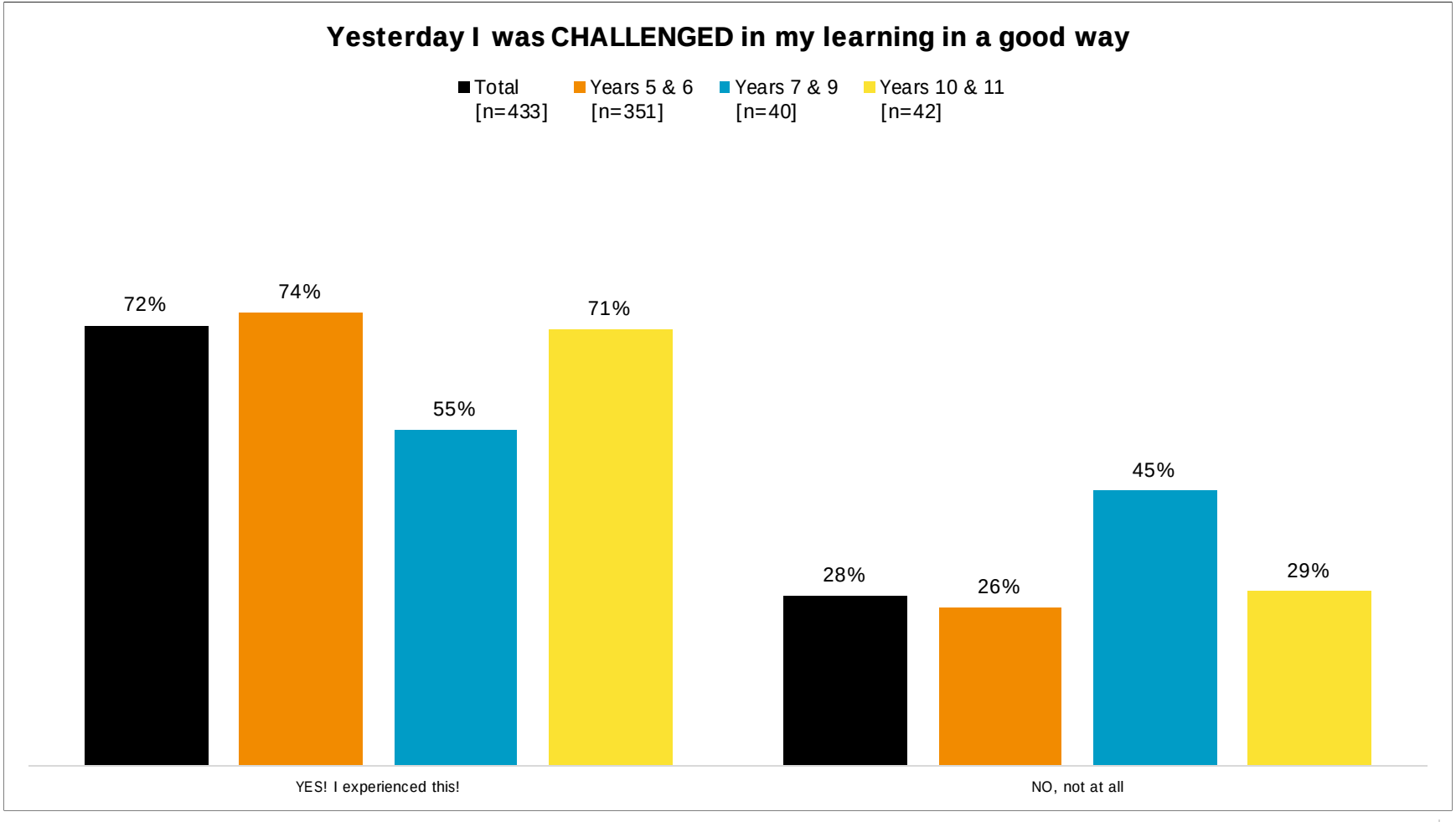


Collaborative learning



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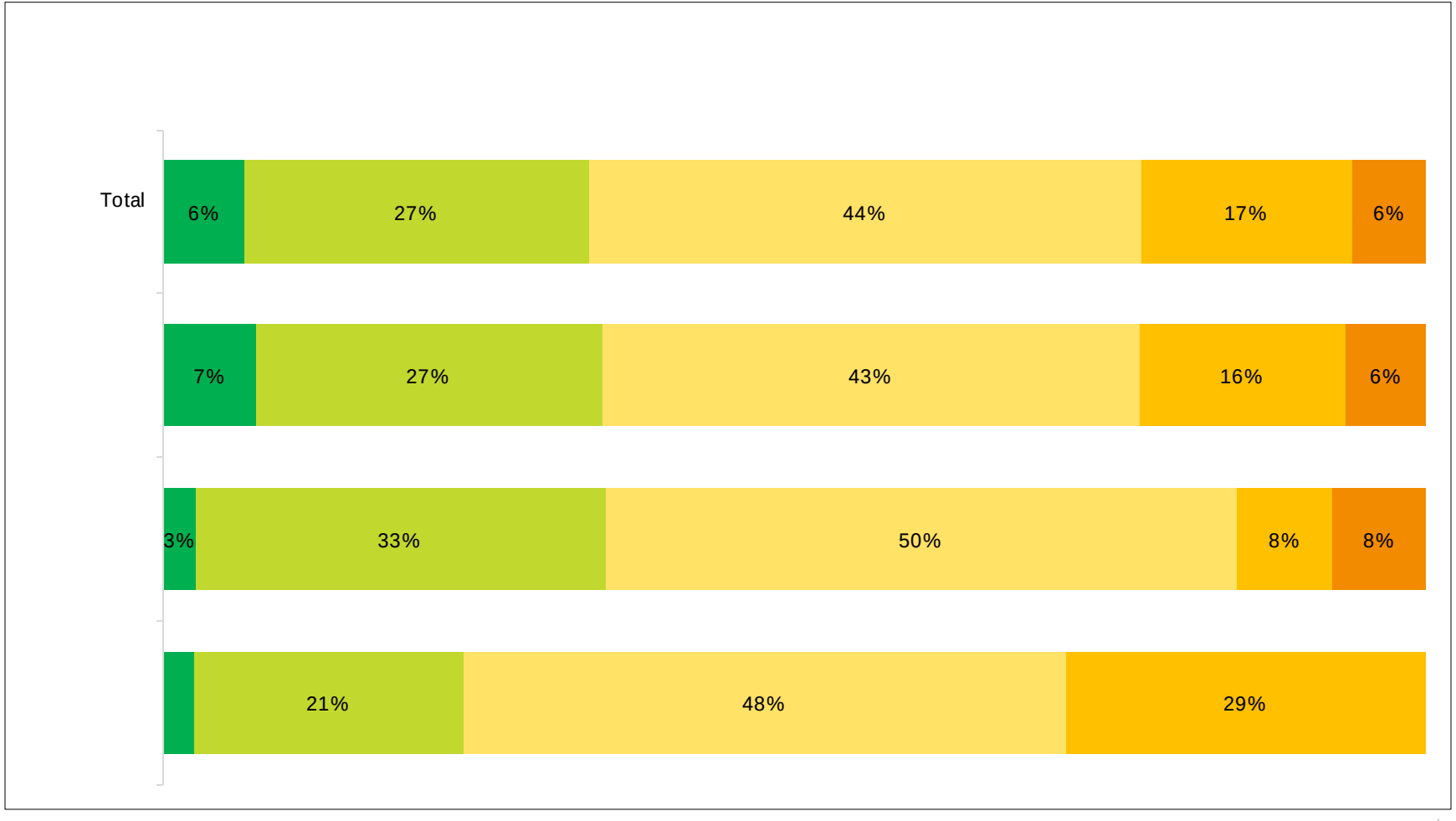

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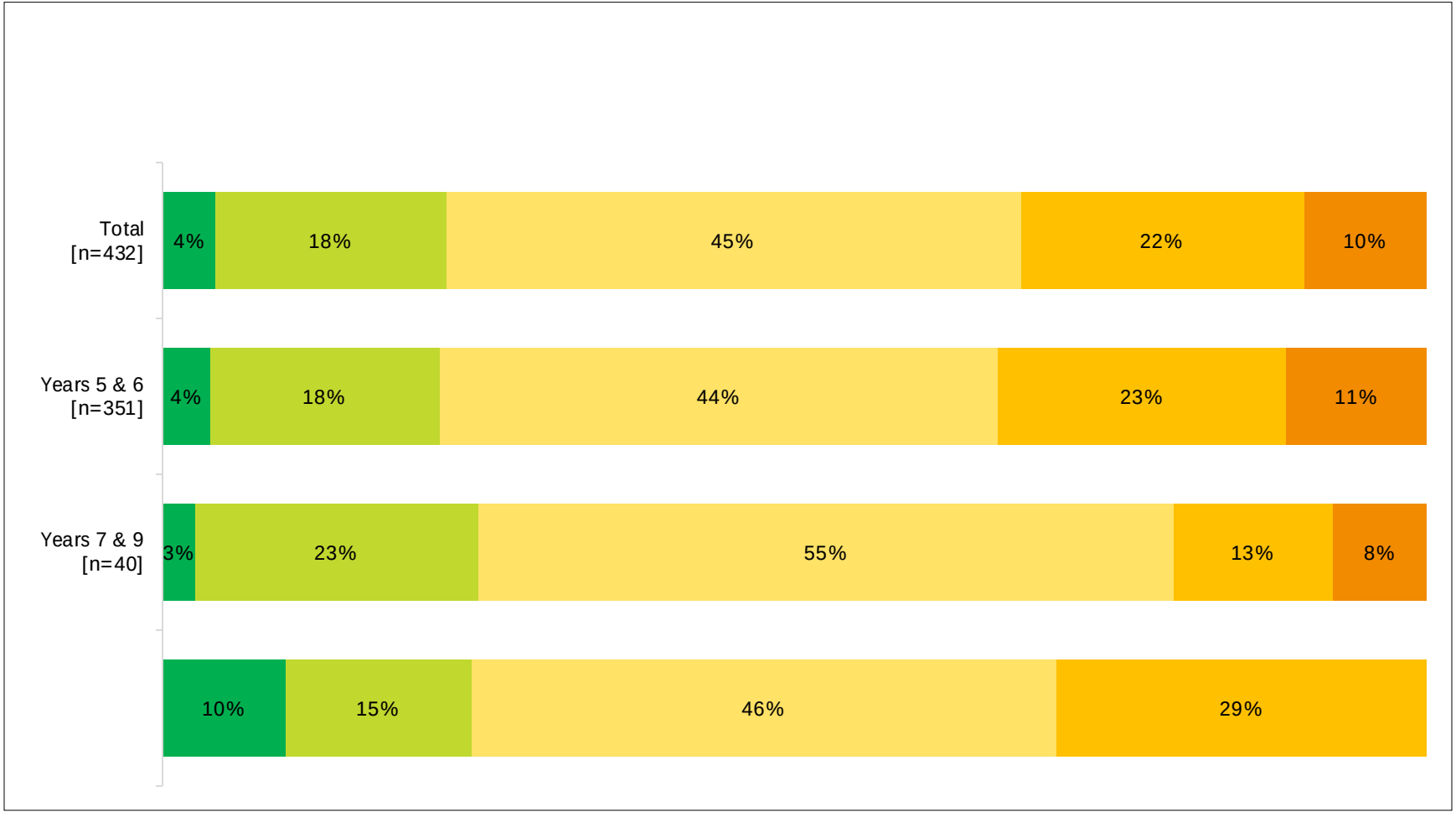
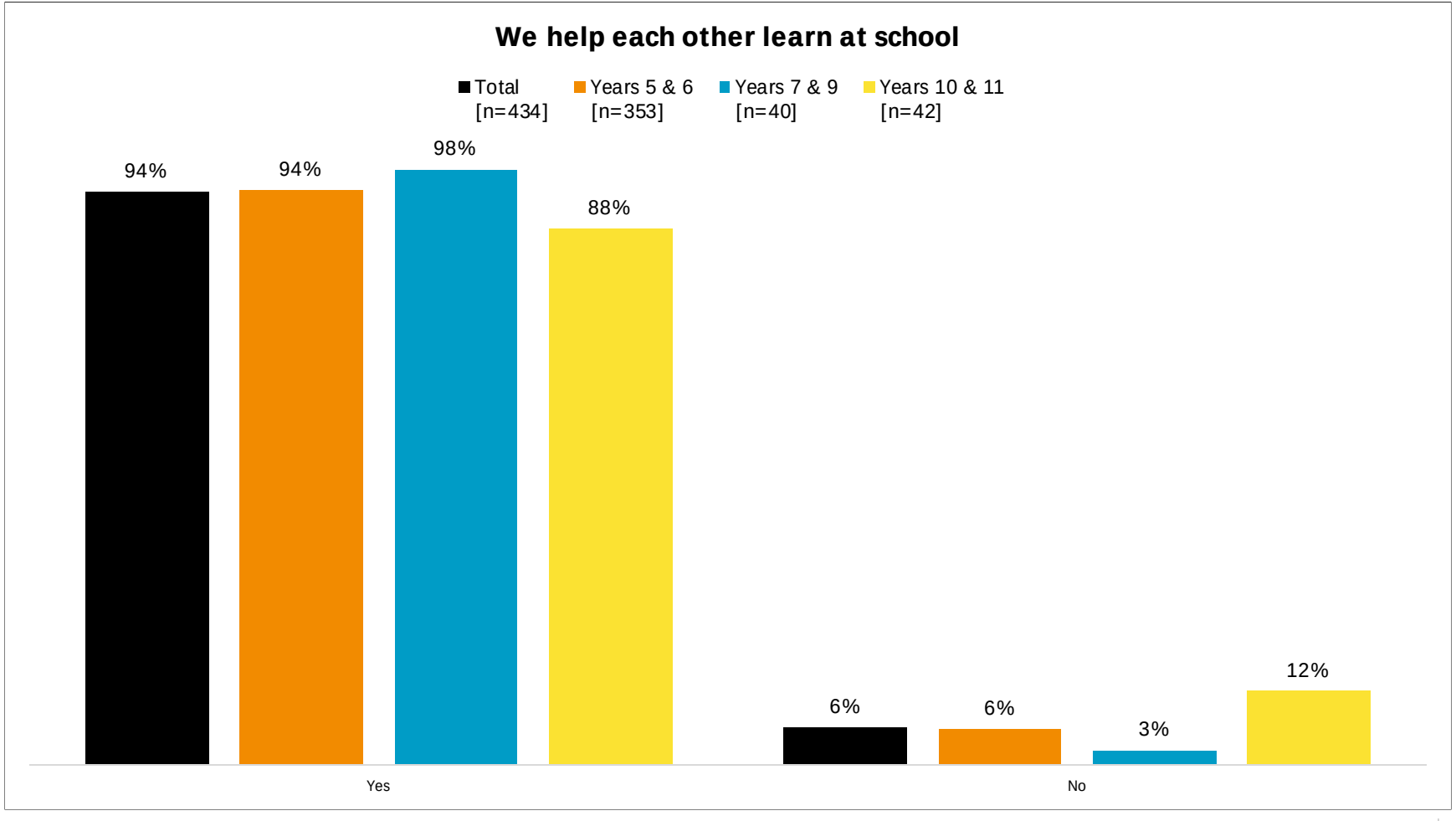
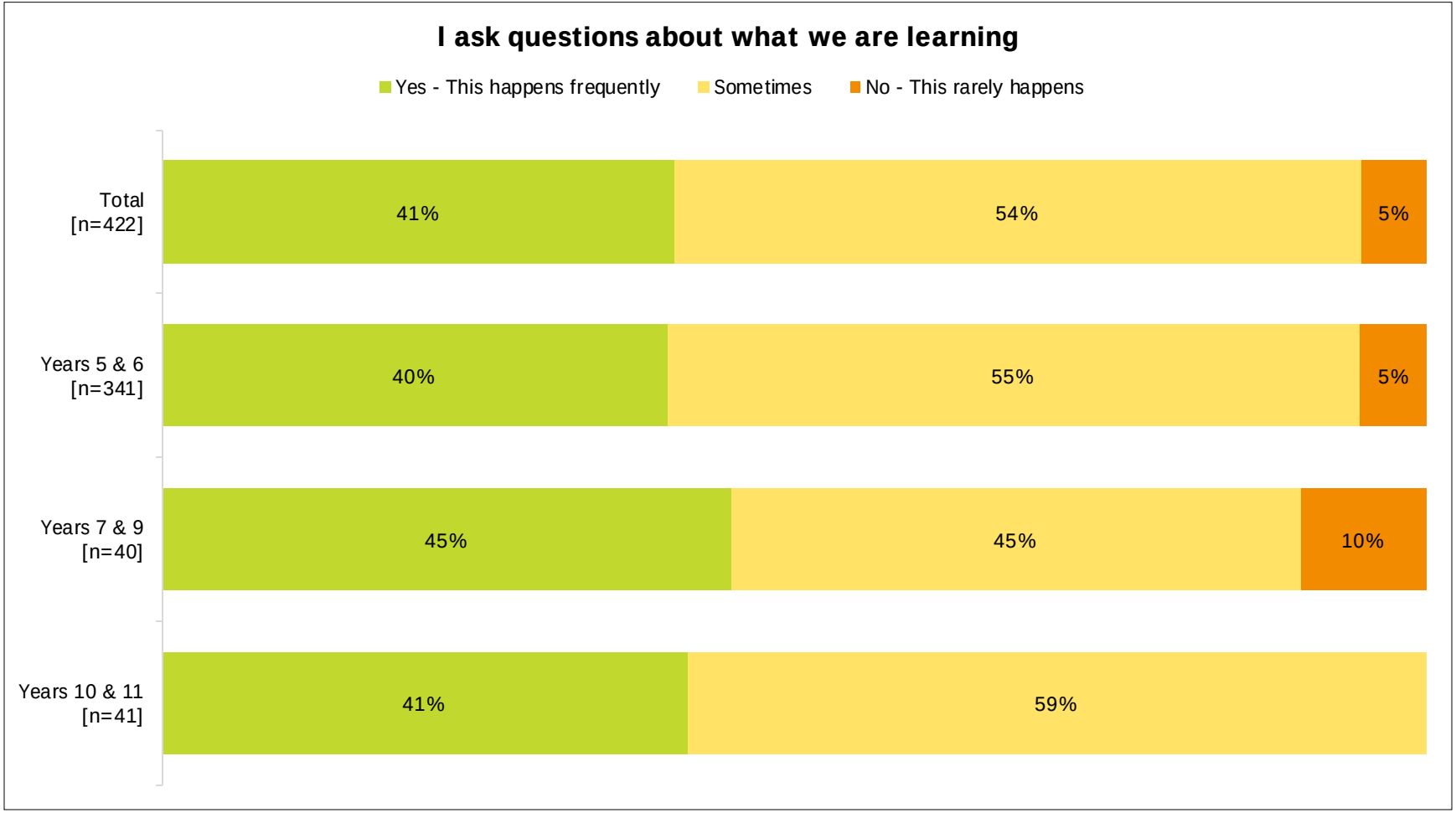


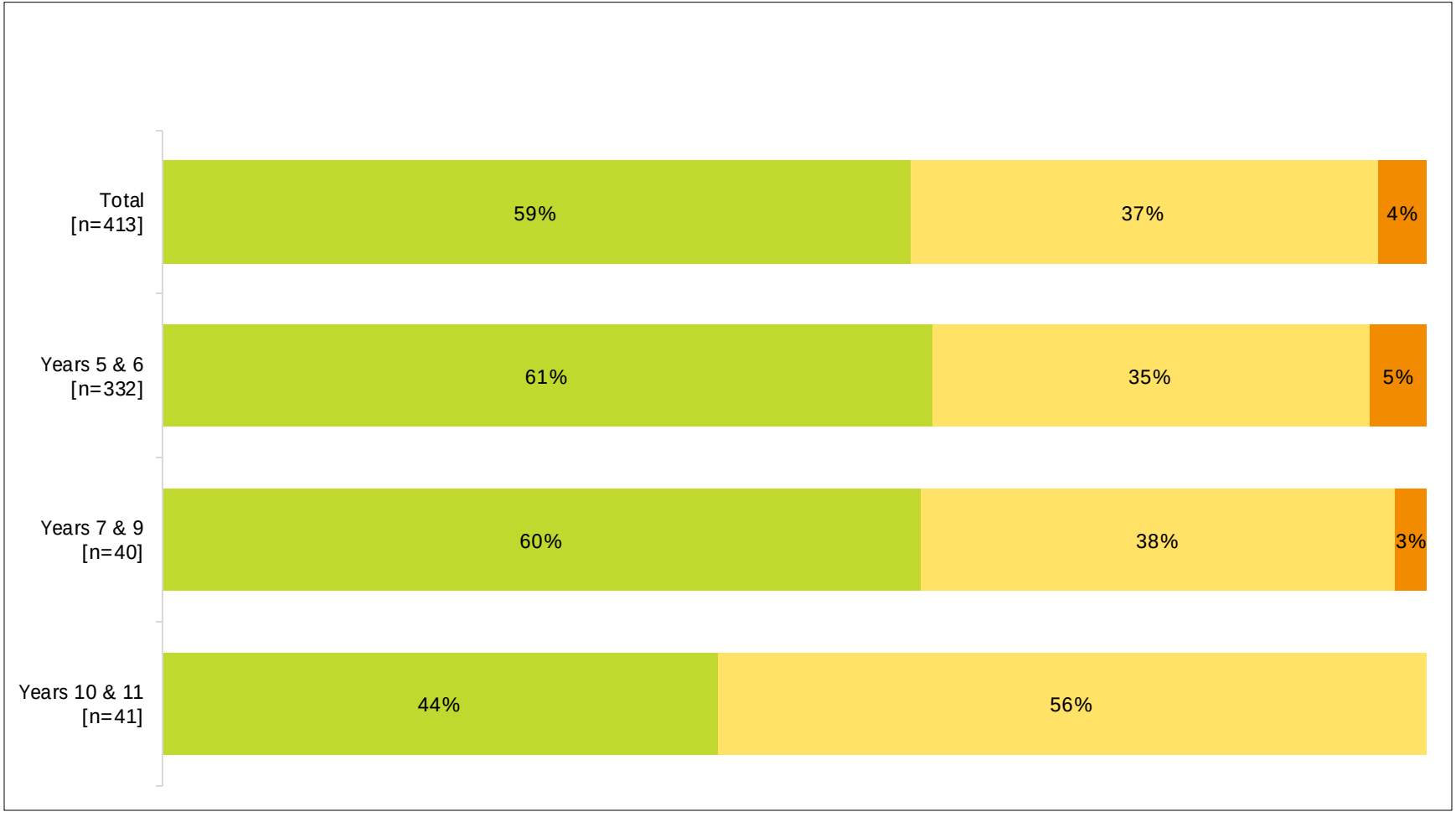
Collaborative learning



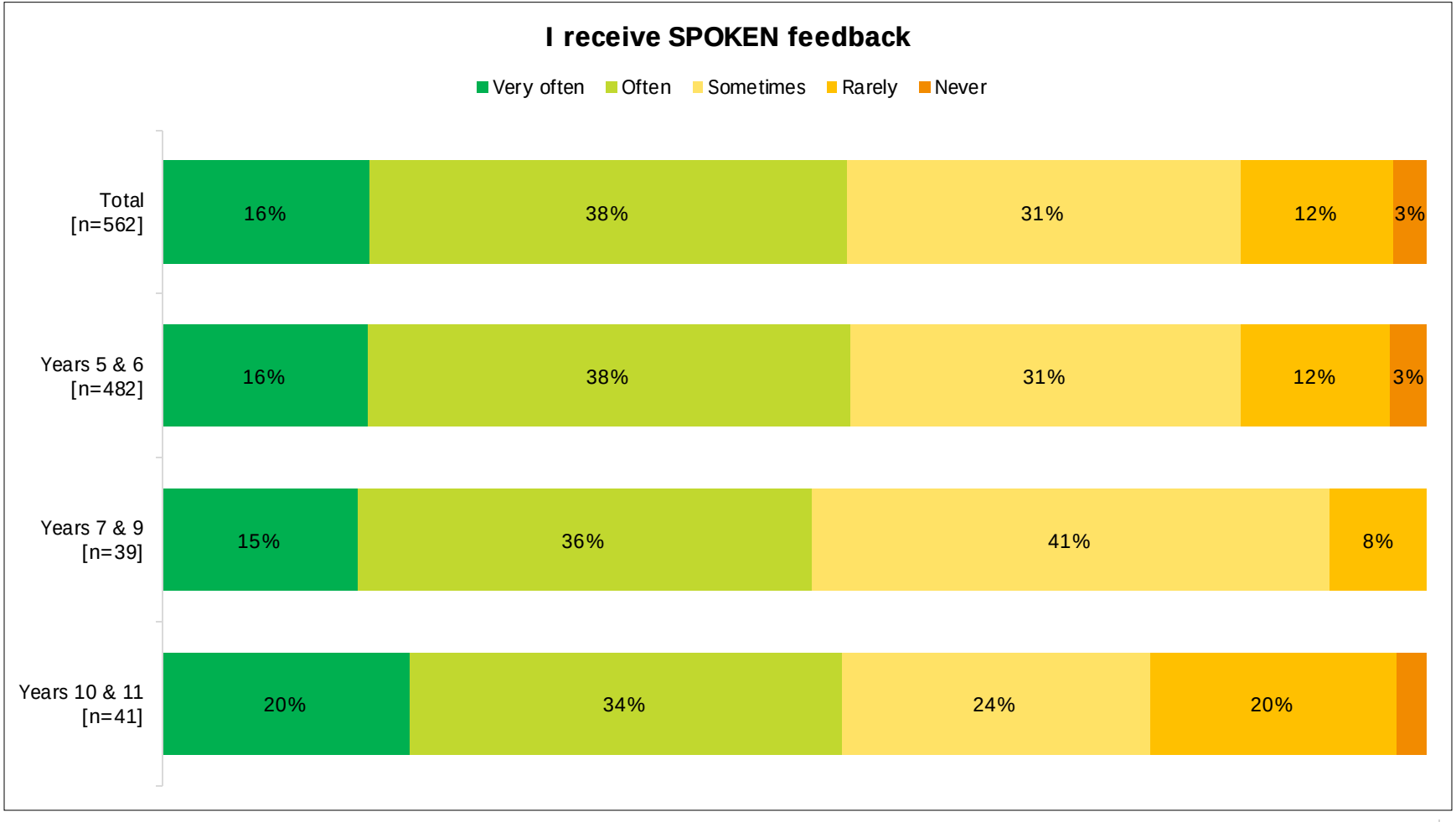
Collaborative learning



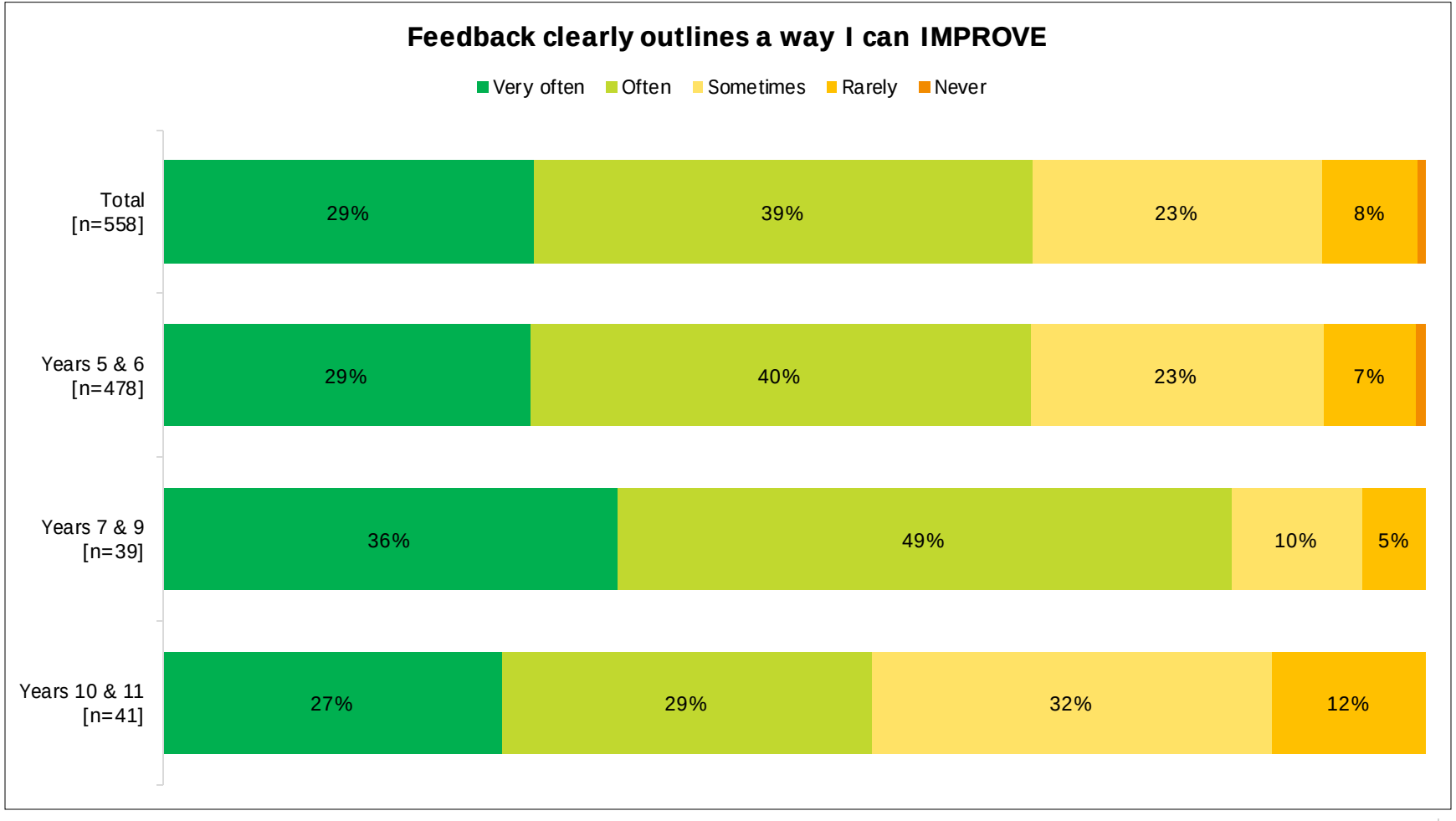
Collaborative learning



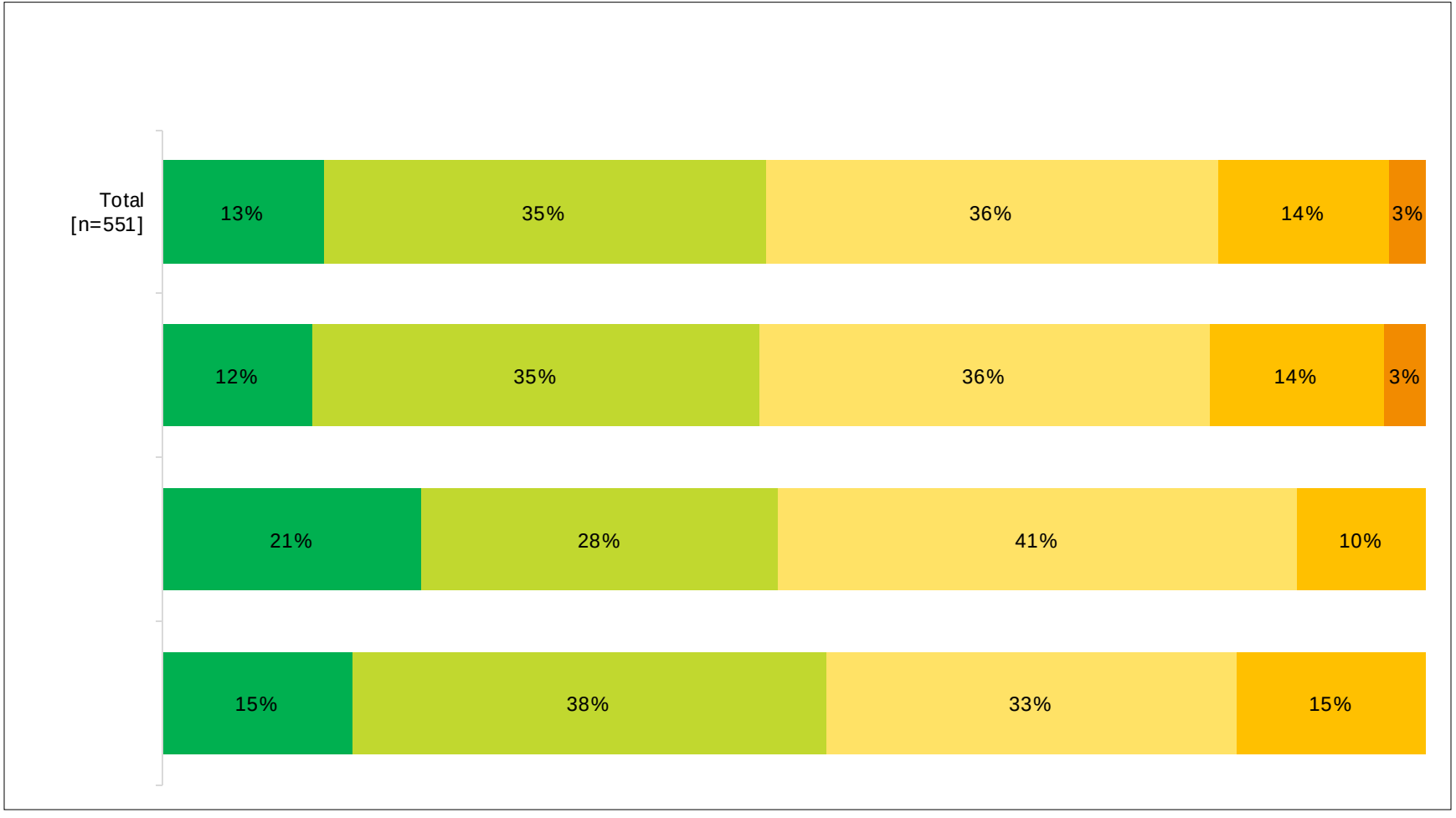
Feedback


I receive SPOKEN feedback
Very often
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never
Total [n=562]
16%
38%
31%
12%
3%
Years 5 & 6 [n=482]
16%
38%
31%
12%
3%
Years 7 & 9 [n=39]
15%
36%
41%
8%
Years 10 & 11 [n=41]
20%
34%
24%
20%

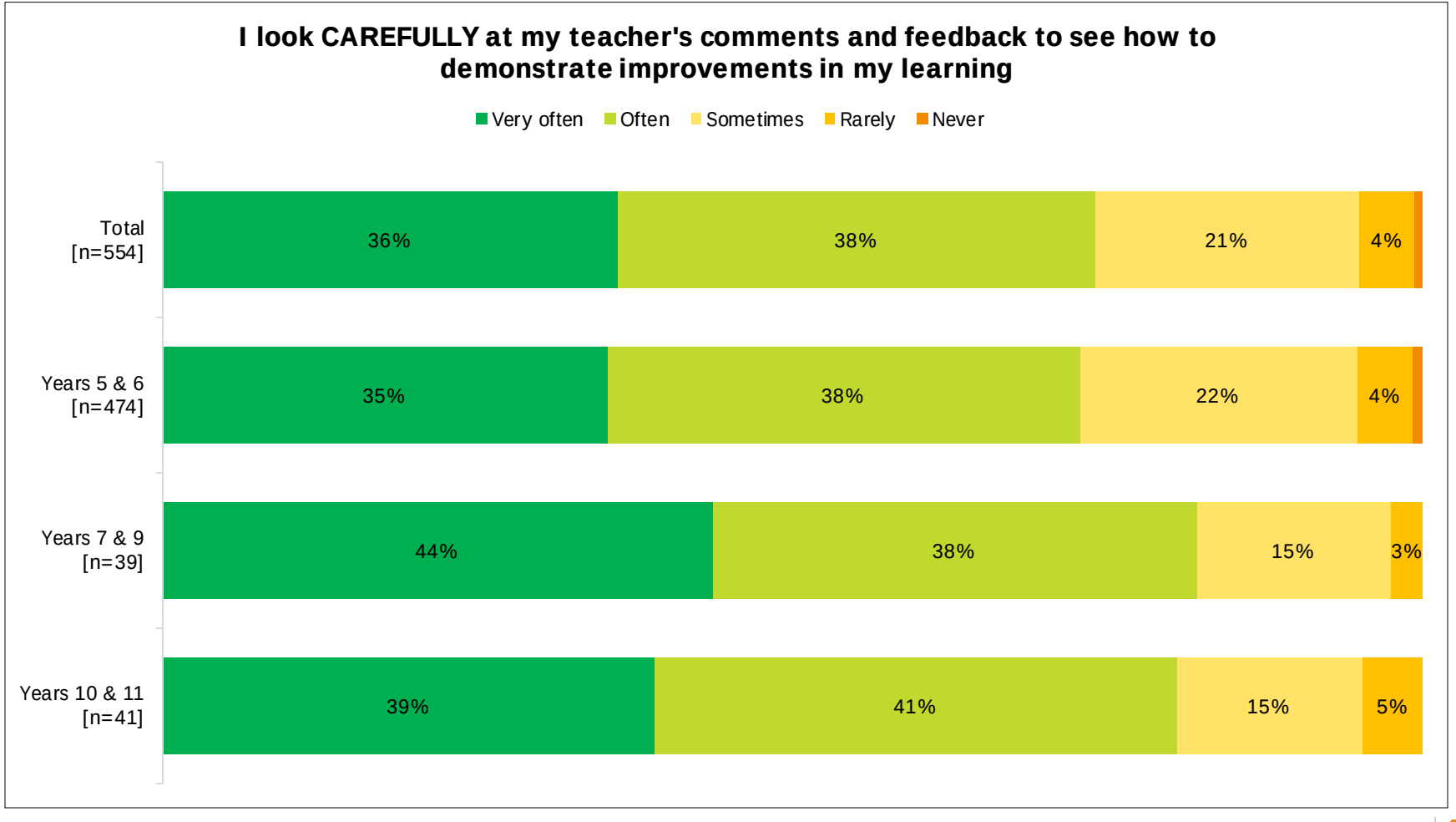
Feedback


Feedback clearly outlines a way I can IMPROVE
Very often
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never
Total [n=558]
29%
39%
23%
8%
Years 5 & 6 [n=478]
29%
40%
23%
7%
Years 7 & 9 [n=39]
36%
49%
10%
5%
Years 10 & 11 [n=41]
27%
29%
32%
12%

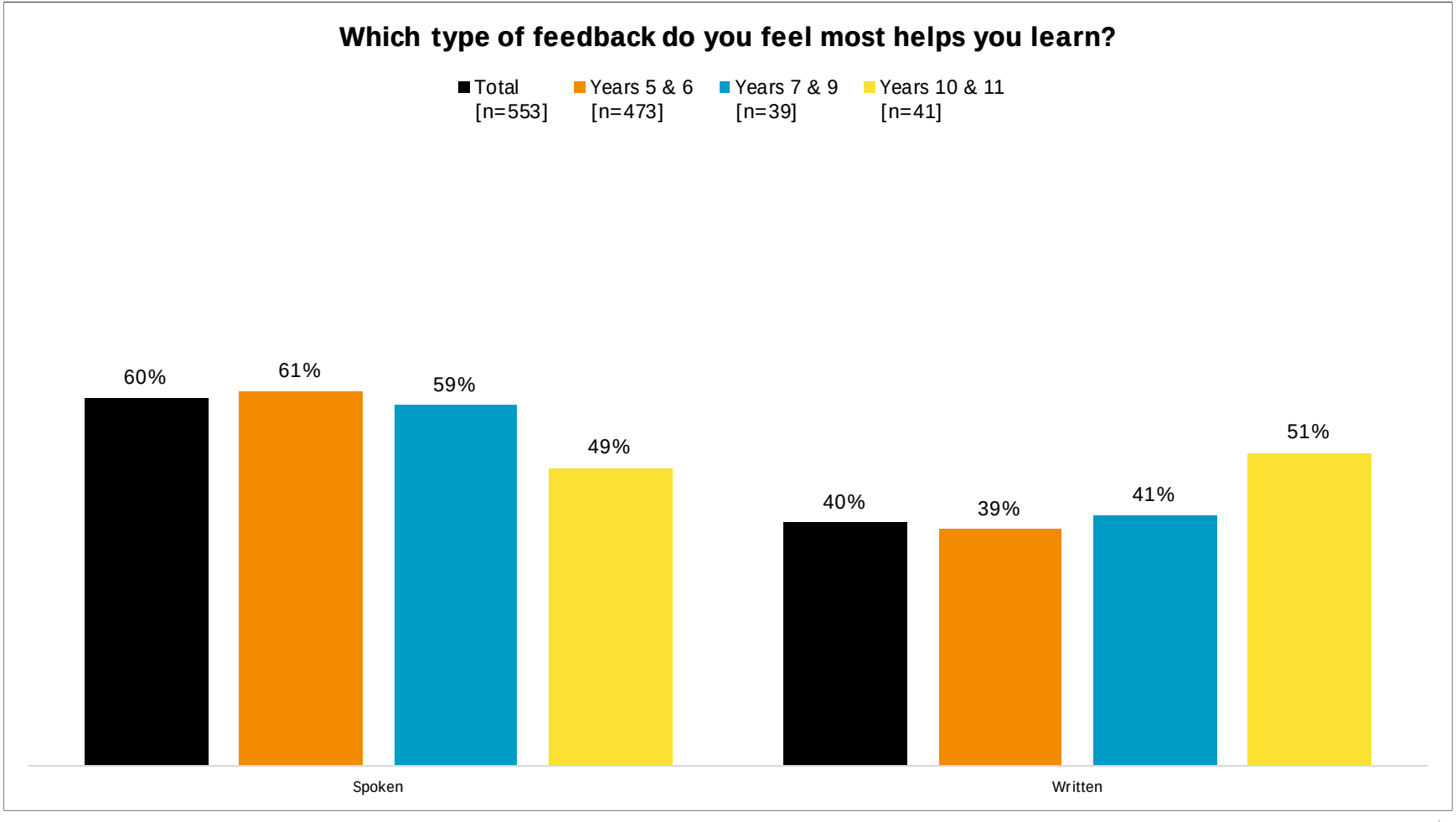
Feedback



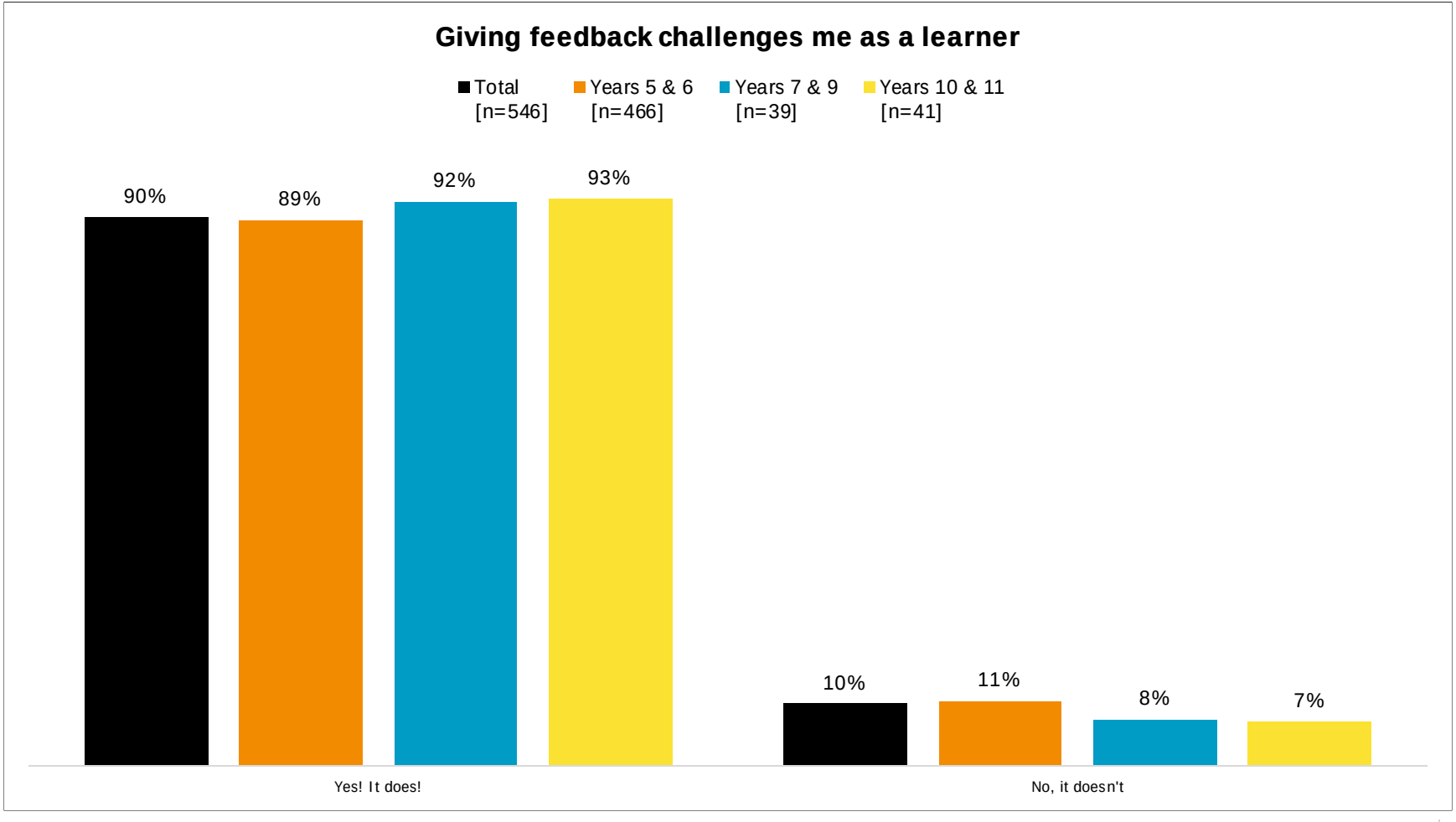
Feedback


I look CAREFULLY at my teacher's comments and feedback to see how to demonstrate improvements in my learning
Very often
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never
Total [n=554]
36%
38%
21%
4%
Years 5 & 6 [n=474]
35%
38%
22%
4%
Years 7 & 9 [n=39]
44%
38%
15%
3%
Years 10 & 11 [n=41]
39%
41%
15%
5%

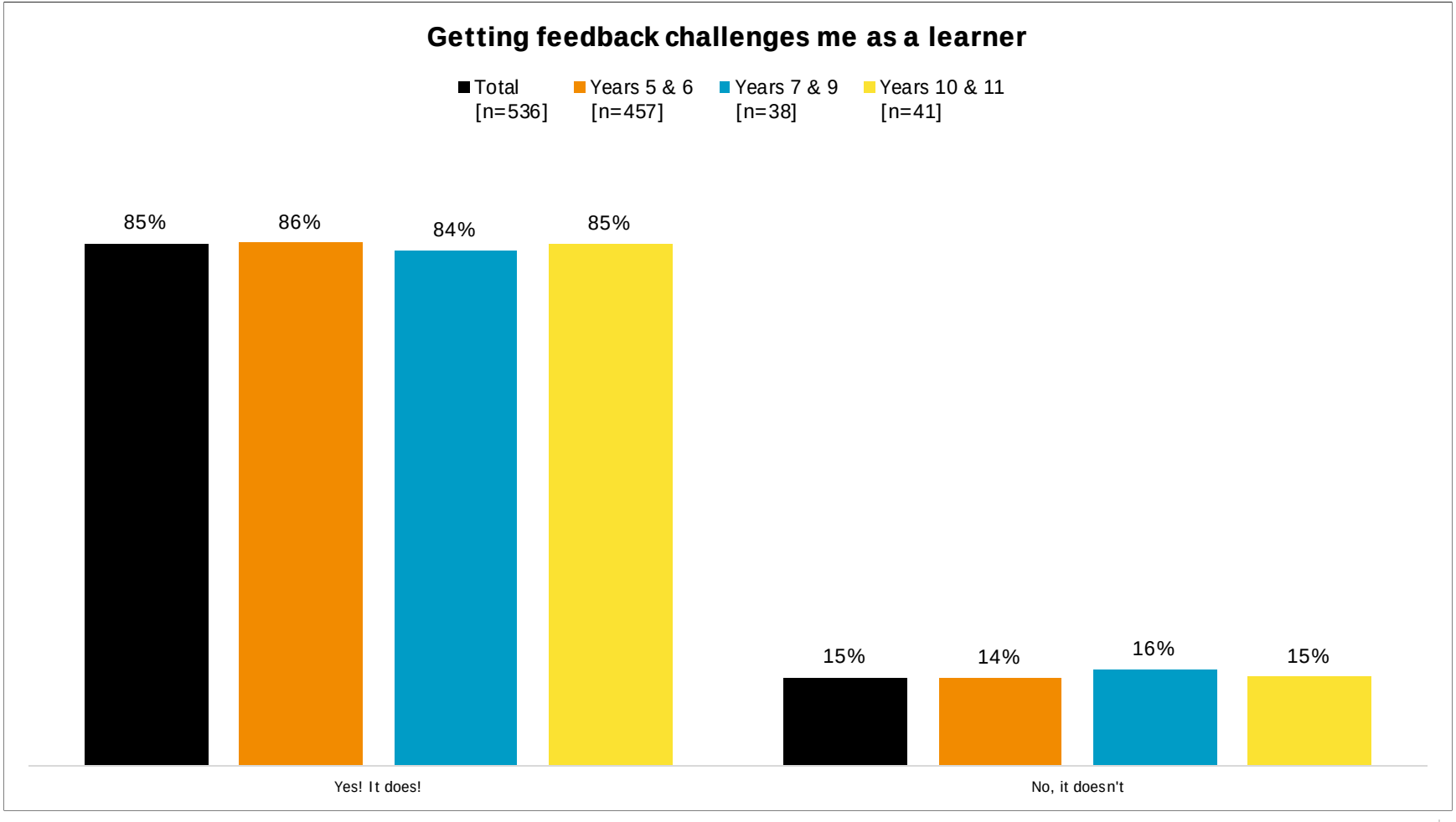
Feedback


Which type of feedback do you feel most helps you learn?
Total [n=553]
Years 5 & 6 [n=473]
Years 7 & 9 [n=39]
Years 10 & 11 [n=41]
60%
61%
59%
49%
40%
39%
41%
51%
Spoken
Written

Feedback

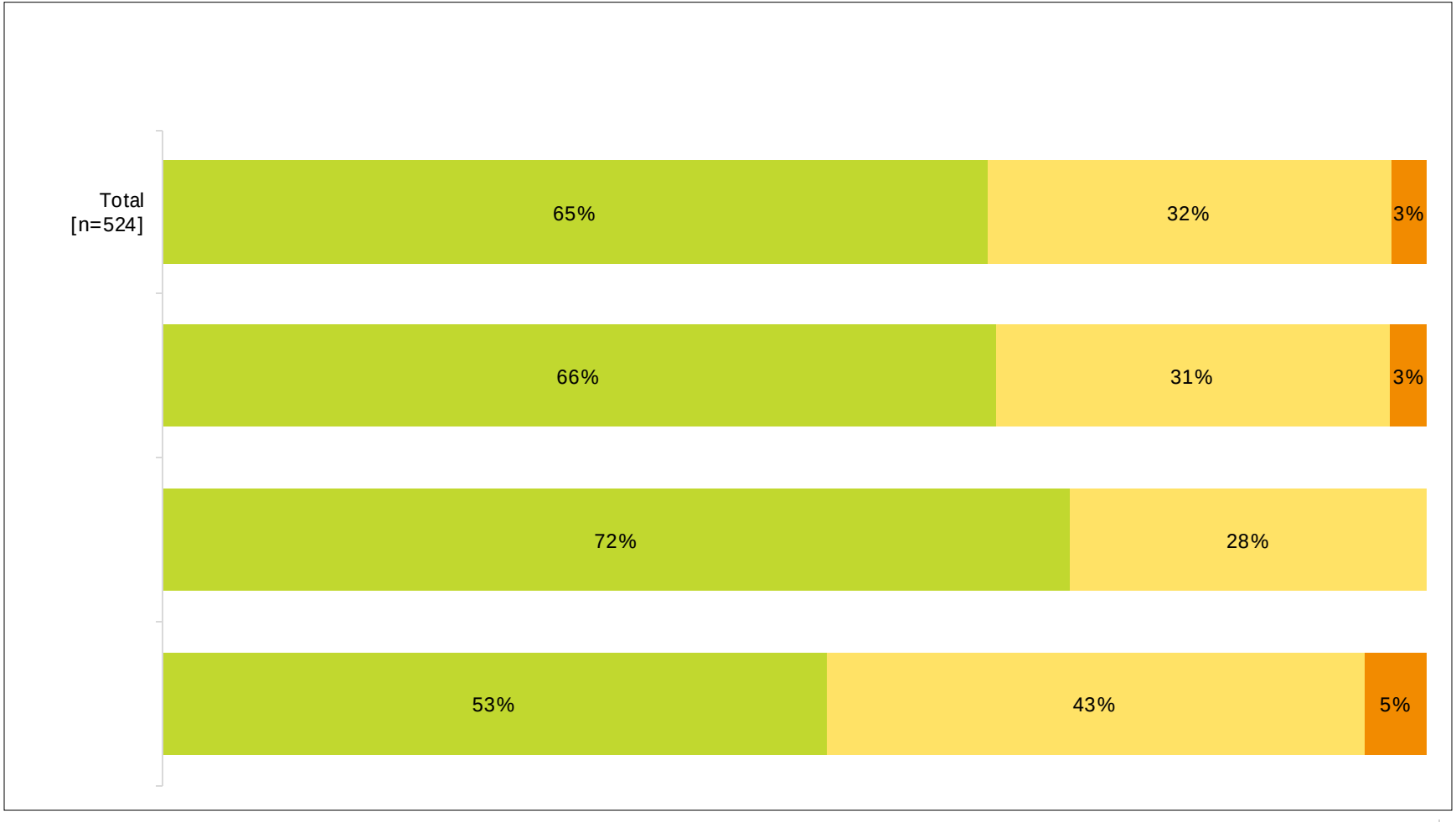

Giving feedback challenges me as a learner
Total [n=546]
Years 5 & 6 [n=466]
Years 7 & 9 [n=39]
Years 10 & 11 [n=41]
90%
89%
92%
93%
10%
11%
8%
7%
Yes! It does!
No, it doesn't

Feedback

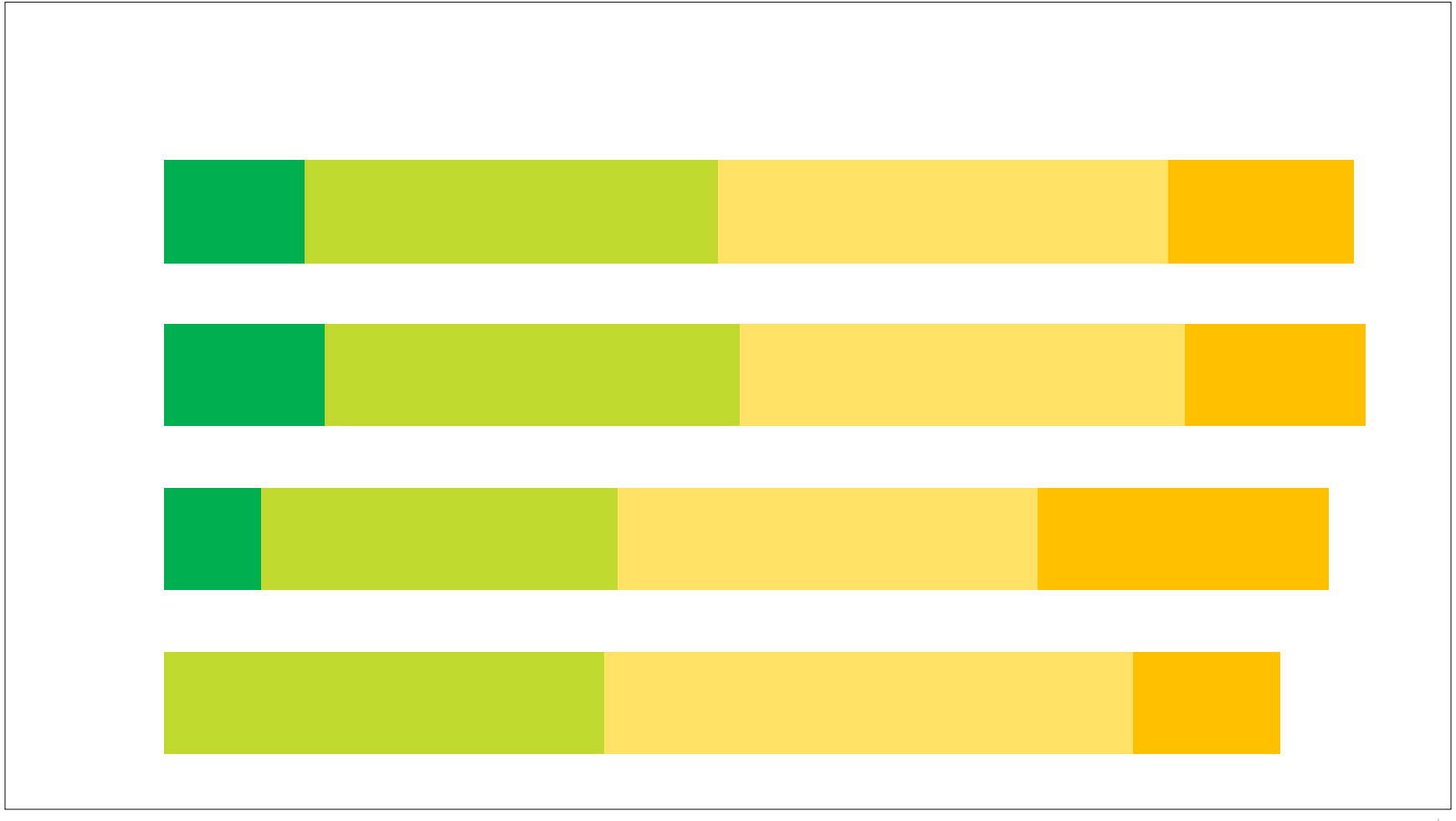

Getting feedback challenges me as a learner
Total [n=536]
Years 5 & 6 [n=457]
Years 7 & 9 [n=38]
Years 10 & 11 [n=41]
85%
86%
84%
85%
15%
14%
16%
15%
Yes! It does!
No, it doesn't

Feedback

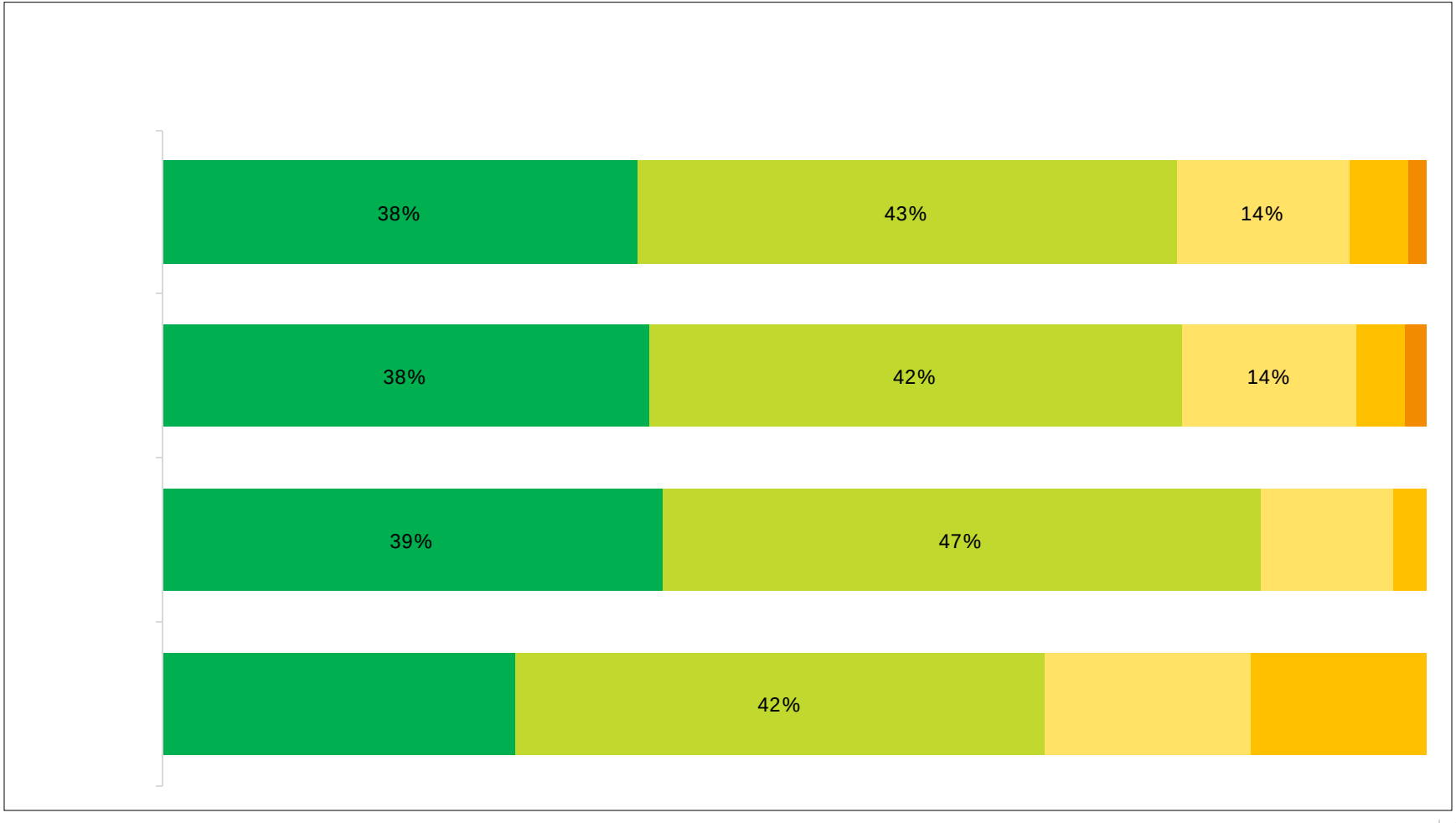
Feedback



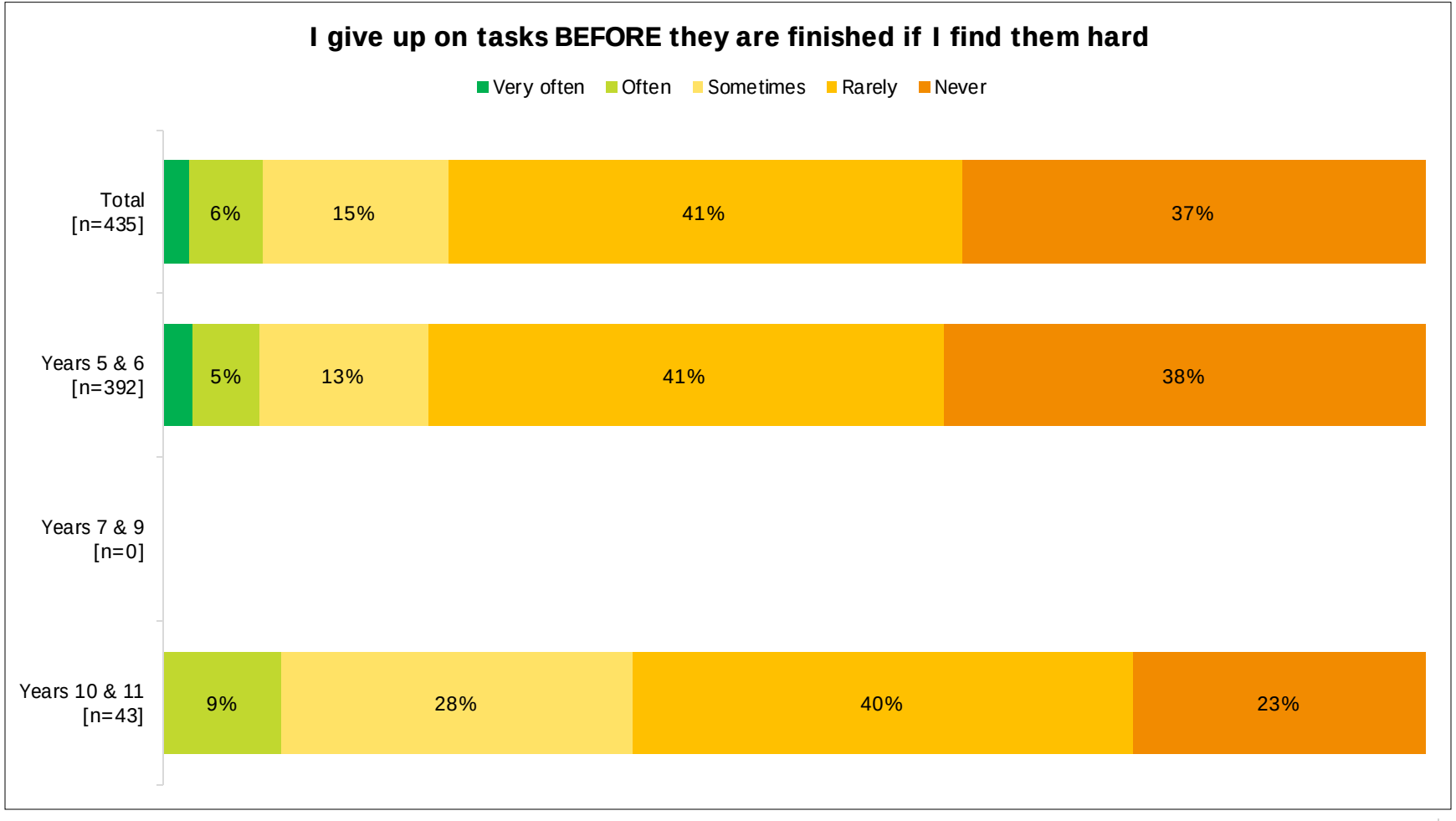
Active learning



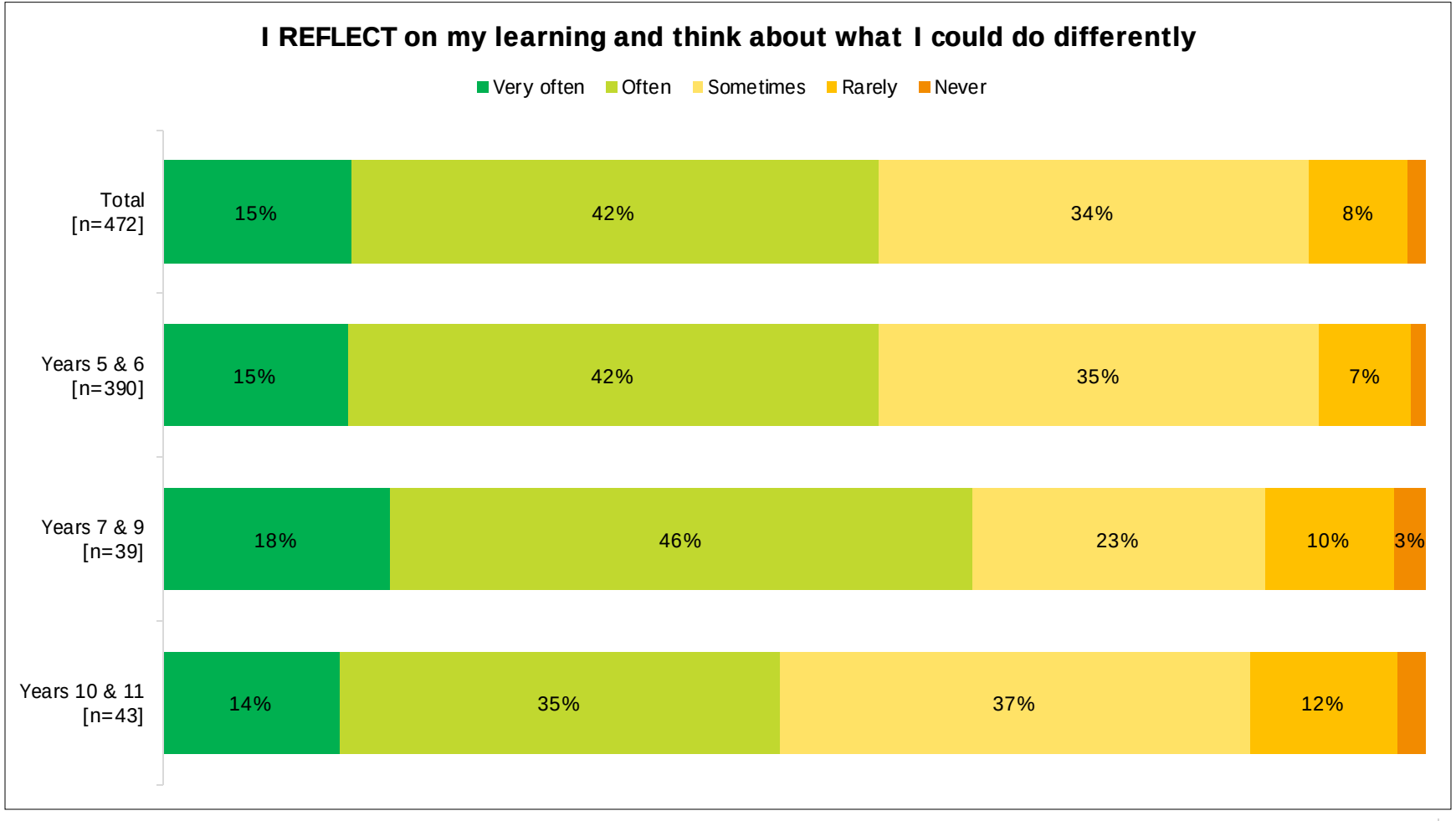
Active learning



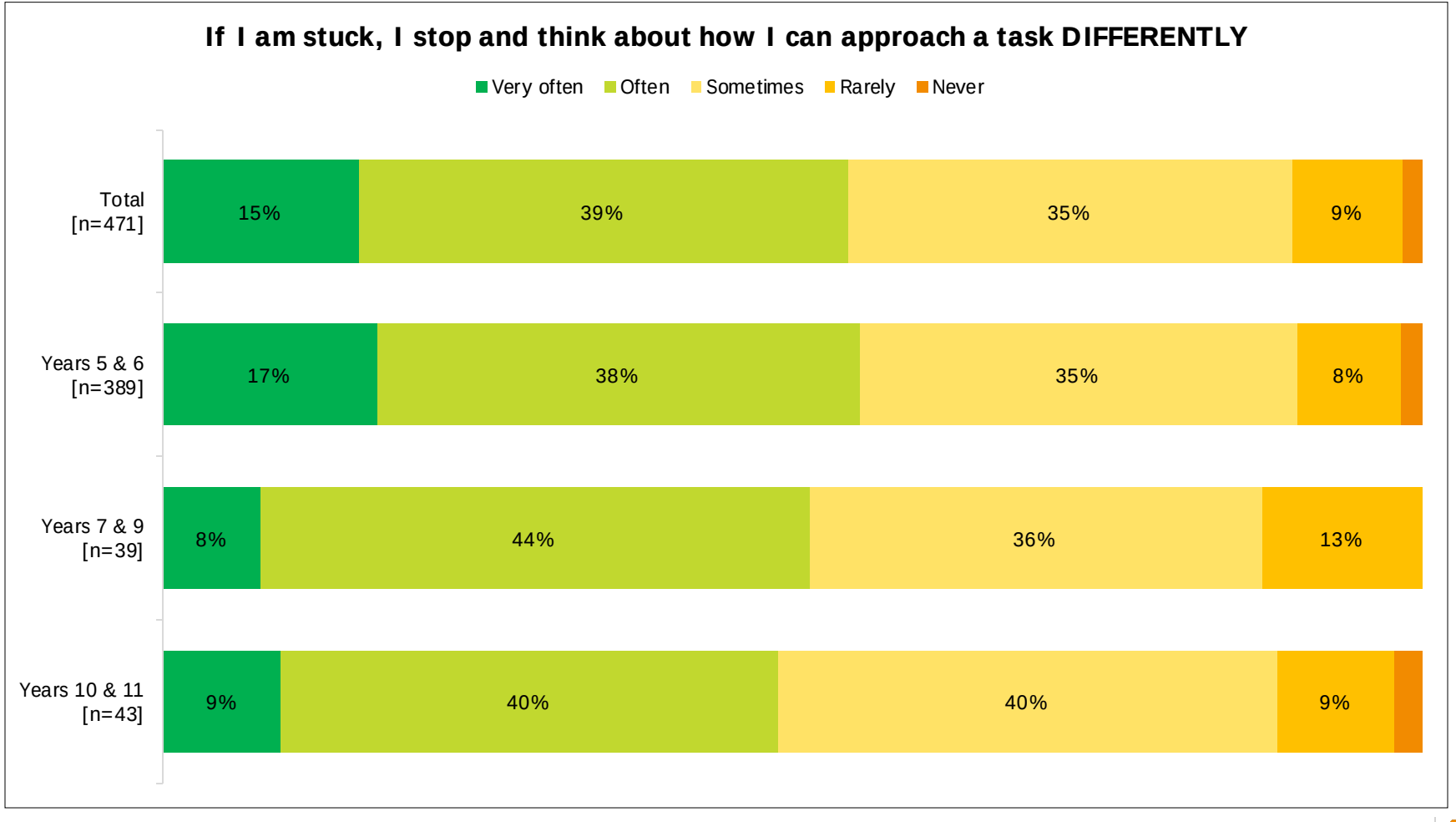
Active learning



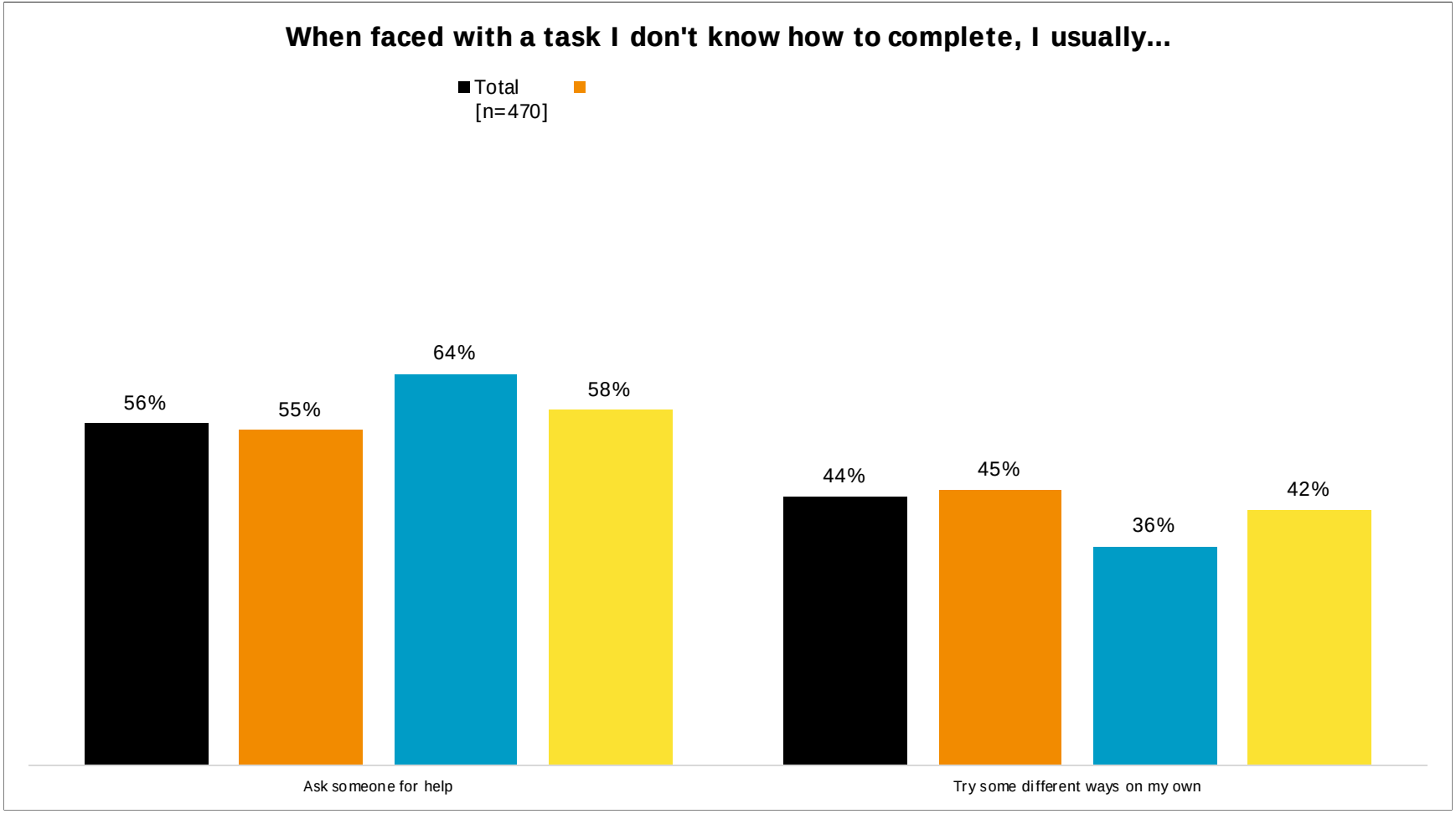
Active learning



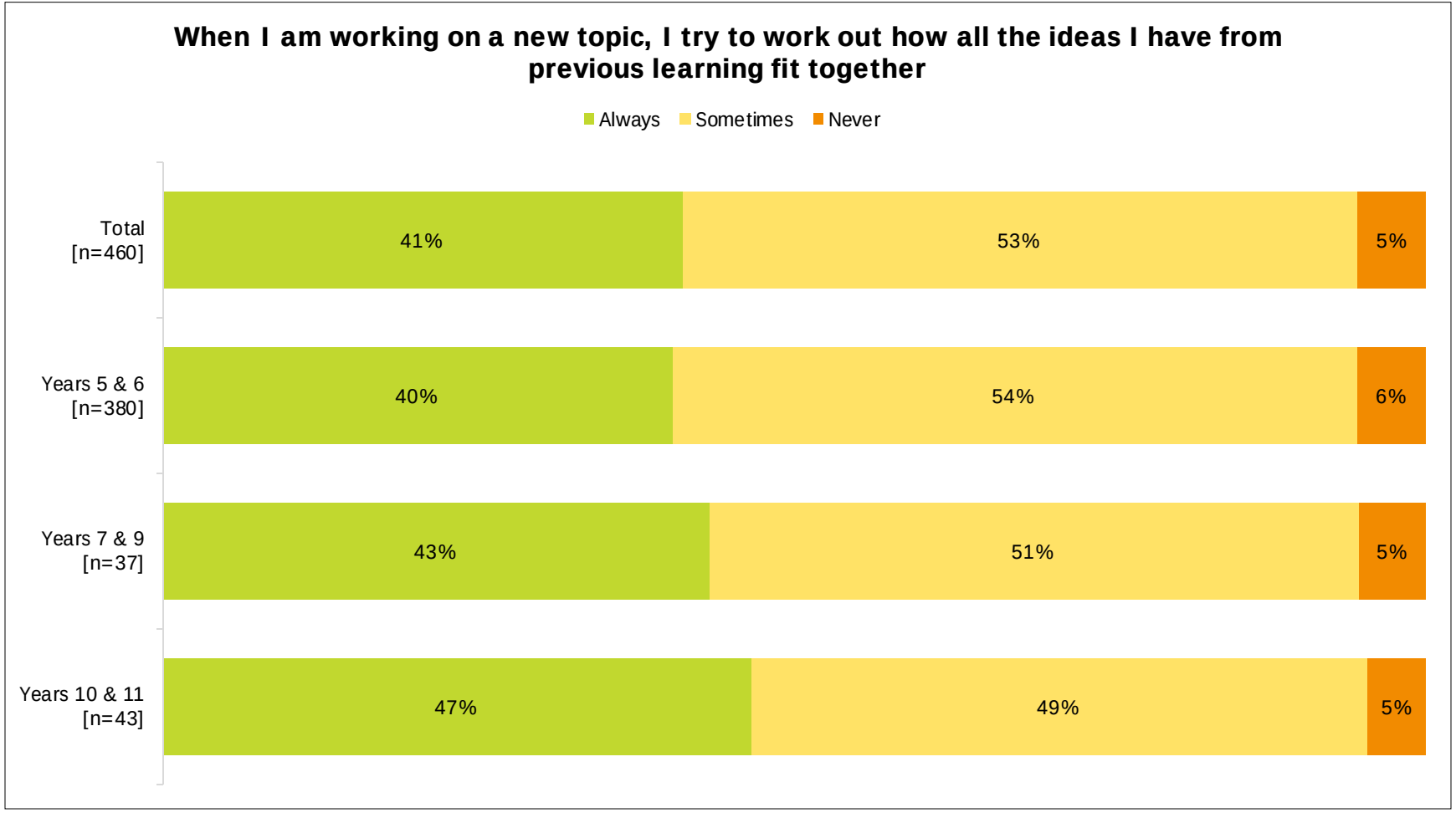
Active learning



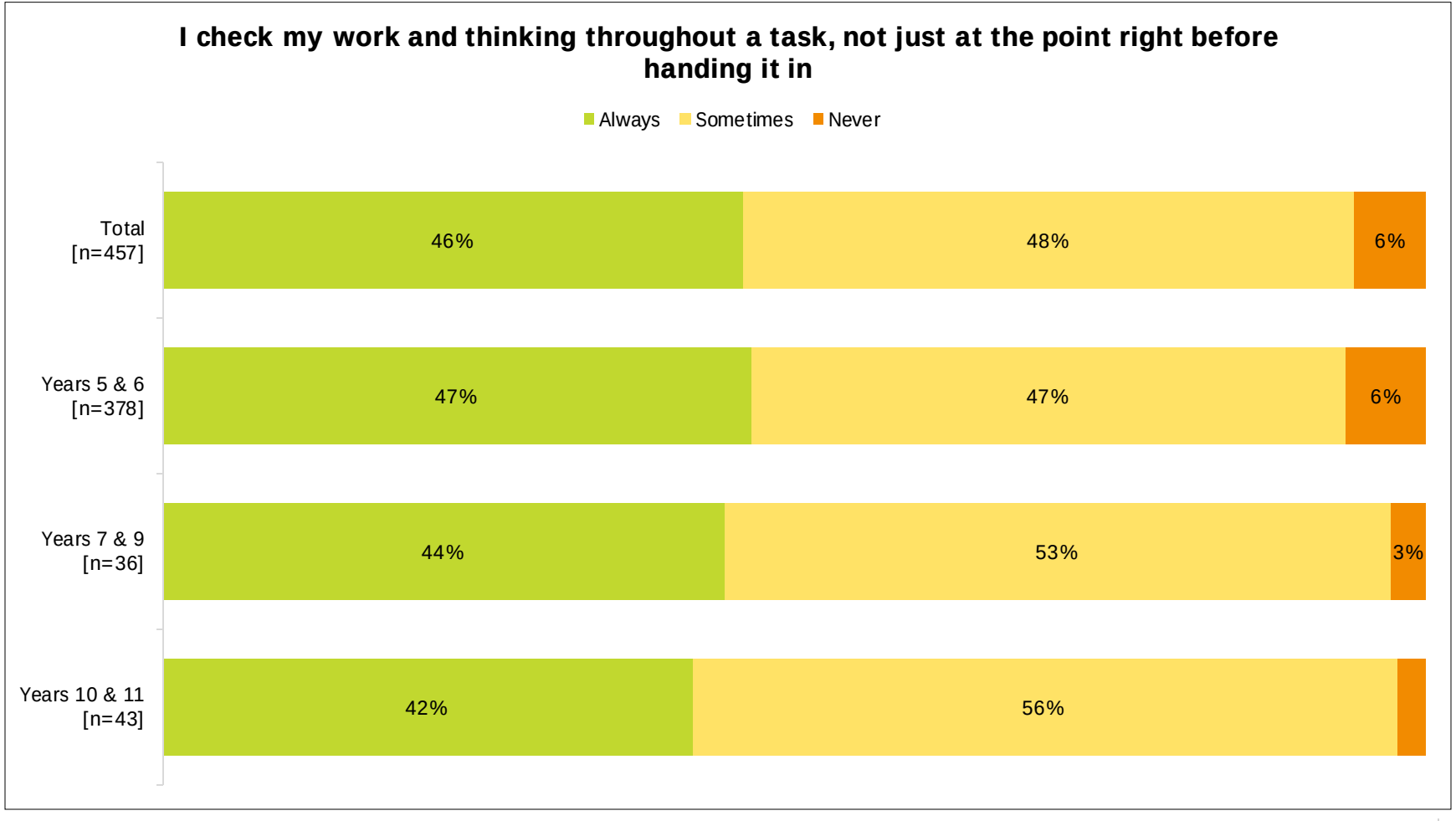
Active learning



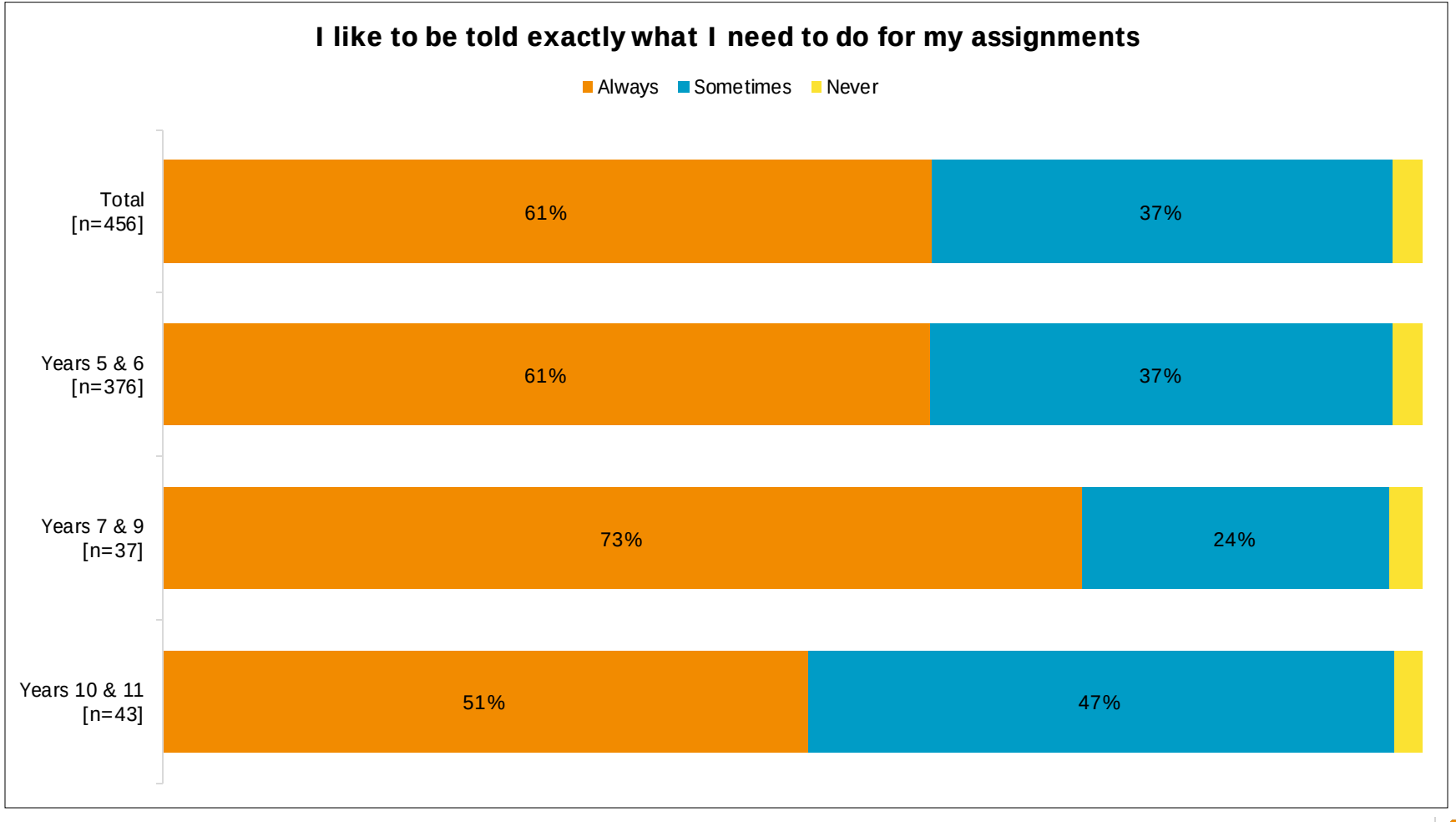
Active learning



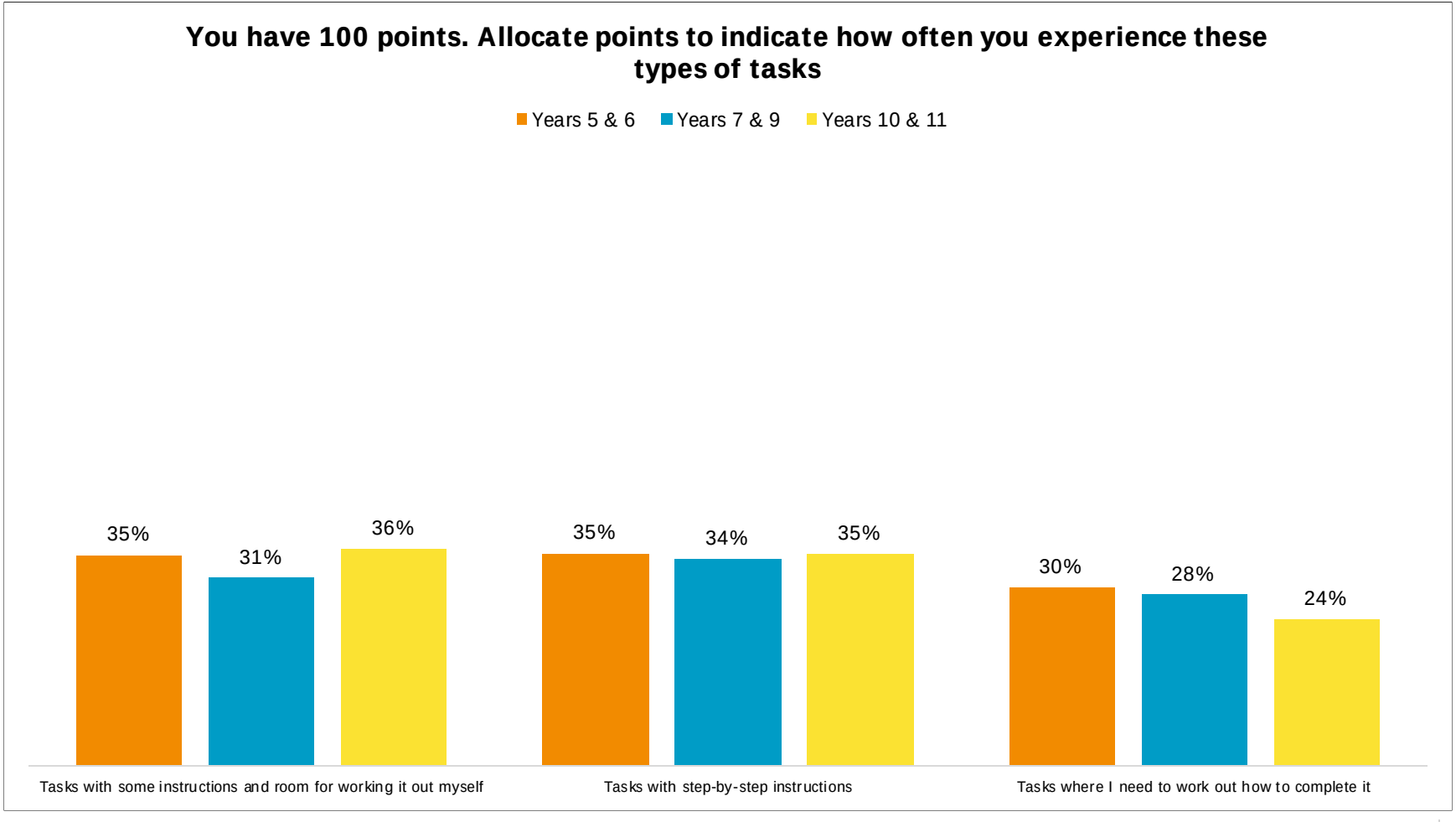
Active learning



Active learning



Active learning



Square Holes
Jason Dunstone [Managing Director] | jason@squareholes.com

Square Holes Dty q0lq-0.d (s)]TJEMC /P <</MC14 10 BDC 0 Tc 0 Tf(8( )0 -1.533 0 (-( )0 037002 Tc -49988 T 17.333 0 TdID (y)R)74)28.7 (2)-30.g2q45Hq45D DD22s