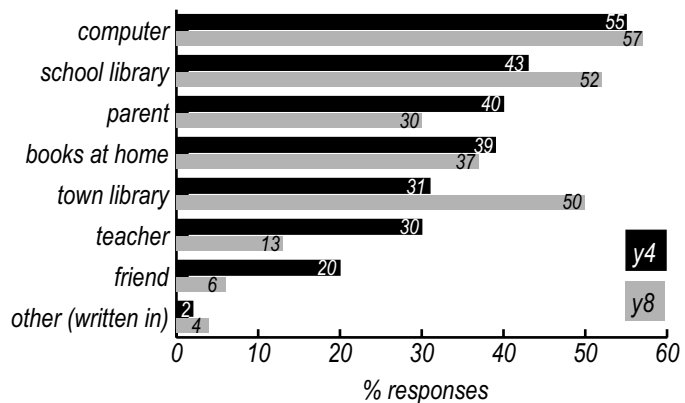


The information skills survey sought information from students about their strategies for, involvement in, and enjoyment of information gathering activities. The questions were the same for year 4 and year 8 students. The survey was administered to the students in an independent tasks session (four students working individually on tasks, supported by a teacher). The questions were read to year 4 students, and also to individual year 8 students who requested this help.

The survey included five items which invited students to record a rating response by circling their choice, two items which used a yes/no response format, and three items which invited students to tick up to three options from a list (including an "other" option where students could describe an additional response).

**Source**

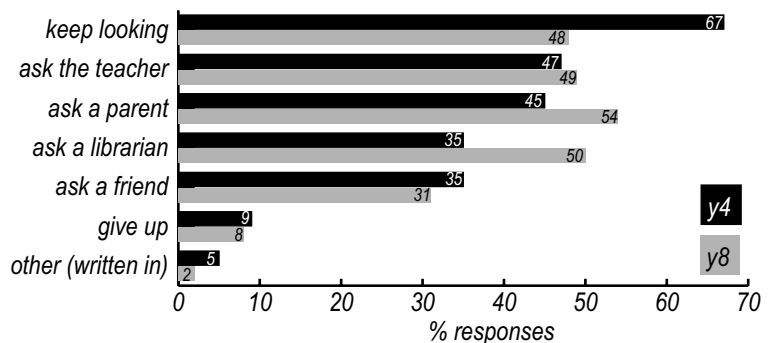
One item asked students to indicate where they usually go when trying to find information. They could tick up to three options. Their responses are shown below, in order of popularity for year 4 students.



For both year 4 and year 8 students, computers were the most popular information source, followed by school libraries. Among the remaining options, year 8 students were markedly more inclined than year 4 students to use town libraries, and markedly less inclined to use their teachers.

**Strategy**

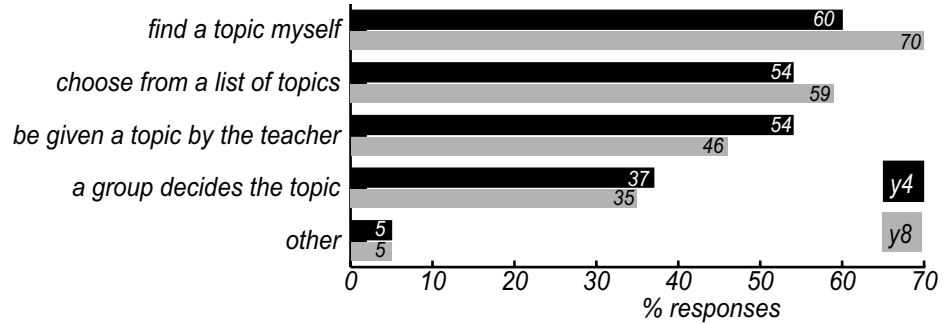
Another item asked students to indicate what they do when they can't find information they need. They could tick up to three options. Their responses are shown here, in order of popularity for year 4 students.



Compared to year 4 students, year 8 students placed markedly less emphasis on keeping looking themselves, and markedly more emphasis on consulting a librarian.

**Method**

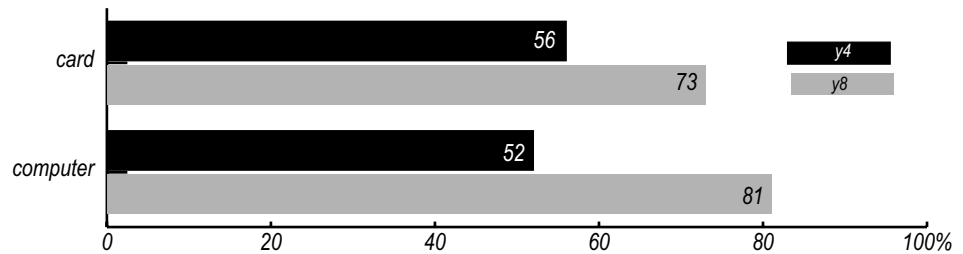
A third item asked students to indicate their preferred way to get a topic for a study or project. They could tick up to three options. Their responses are shown here, in order of popularity for year 4 students.







Both year 4 and year 8 students appeared to appreciate individual choice, with year 8 students holding this view rather more strongly.





A pair of questions asked students if they had used library card or computer catalogues. Among year 4 students, 56 percent reported that they had used a card catalogue and 52 percent that they had used a computer catalogue. The corresponding percentages were considerably higher at year 8 level, with 73 percent stating that they had used a card catalogue and 81 percent that they had used a computer catalogue.

**Library catalogue use**



The remaining five items used a rating format. The percentages of students choosing each response to these five questions are shown in the two tables below.

YEAR 4 INFORMATION SKILLS SURVEY RESPONSES				
	<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>never</i>
1. How often do you have to find information for a project or topic?	13	33	53	1
2. How often do you have a really interesting project for which you have to find information?	14	27	51	8
3. How often do you look for information because you want to, not because you have been told to?	15	23	45	17
				
4. How much do you like hunting for information?	38	38	14	10
5. How much do you like writing down what you find out?	41	32	14	13

YEAR 8 INFORMATION SKILLS SURVEY RESPONSES				
	<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>never</i>
1. How often do you have to find information for a project or topic?	18	52	29	1
2. How often do you have a really interesting project for which you have to find information?	8	27	61	4
3. How often do you look for information because you want to, not because you have been told to?	9	19	60	12
				
4. How much do you like hunting for information?	18	51	24	7
5. How much do you like writing down what you find out?	16	35	34	15

A substantially greater proportion of year 8 than year 4 students reported that they had to find information for a project or topic *heaps* or *quite a bit* (question 1). Perhaps as a consequence of being given such tasks more frequently, year 8 students were much less inclined than year 4 students to be enthusiastic about hunting for information (question 4) and about writing down the information they found (question 5). While year 4 students responded similarly to questions 1 and 2, the pattern was quite different for year 8 students, suggesting that many of the information finding projects which year 8 students were asked to attempt were not viewed as “really interesting”.