

What did the students say about working on the novel in a different way?

Students in all 4 groups studying the novel 'the EMC way' completed questionnaires. A first question asked them how much they'd enjoyed the novel itself. This allowed us to make the distinction between pleasure in the novel itself and *the way* of studying it, which was the key thing we were trying to elicit their views on.

122 students filled in questionnaires:

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| 65 liked the way of studying more | (53%) |
| 46 liked the way of studying about the same | (38%) |
| 11 liked the way of studying less | (9%) |

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| 76 thought they'd been learning more (not all the same students as above) | (62%) |
| 35 thought they'd been learning about the same | (29%) |
| 6 thought they'd been learning less | (5%) |
| 5 didn't respond to that question | (4%) |

There was some variation across groups. In one group, for instance, 87% of students said they'd enjoyed the way of studying more and 70% thought they'd been learning more. In all the groups by far the largest number said they either enjoyed studying this way either more, or about the same and felt they'd learned either more, or about the same.

Here's a flavour of what they said in their explanatory comments. Bearing in mind the statistics above, we've included some of the more doubtful comments as well as those that expressed enthusiasm for the new ways of working.

Group work, talk and interaction

'I'm enjoying the way we've been studying more because, 'we aren't just writing down everything we hear or is on the board anymore. We are being asked questions in the lessons. We are getting involved more and interacting with our table more.'

I have really enjoyed the way we've been studying mainly because as we read we stopped and shared our opinions, ideas and had a discussion whereas normally it would be writing so it's different.'

'I've enjoyed the way we have been studying this more because I like discussing topics and when we discussed I understood more.'

'I've enjoyed it thoroughly as it gave us students a chance to really engage and talk about the book. Rather than writing for most of the time, we've got to understand the book and sympathise for Enaiat.'

'I like when there is more discussion as you get to interact more and I feel like I learn more from discussion than writing but I love fictional writing and I would like to do that this year.'

'I enjoyed that we were doing group work more.'

'I've enjoyed it more because we are doing more group work which I find useful as we are discussing ideas that I might not have thought of.'

'I've enjoyed the way we've been studying because whilst we study we go over different things to make sure we understand.'

'The fact that we have worked in groups affected the way we studied on the novel. We expressed our opinions on this topic.'

'I've learnt to work as a group, tell and listen to each other's opinions in the class.'

'We can listen to other people's opinions and put our ideas together.'

The agenda and the linking of ideas

'We made an agenda of our ideas and we linked the ones that had a connection.'

It's been a good experience on learning about a *true* novel. It helped my literature skills a lot, as I am now able to link one part of the text to another part of the text.'

'We've learnt how to infer better and to analyse whole novels instead of small extracts'.

'The whole class participated during the lessons on the book.'

PEE and PEETAL

'I enjoyed doing more group work and discussing ideas instead of writing lots and doing PEETAL paragraphs. Learning more about what's characteristic. Have a deeper understanding of the novel.'

'Normally, we would have to study a lot of technique (like PEETAL) but now we keep the techniques in mind but also enjoy it by doing different writing activities instead of PEETAL's.'

'I like the way we've studied the novel rather than doing PEETAL paragraphs.'

'We have written more and studying this book is like having a cliff-hanger every lesson and it's like, oh what's going to happen next. Also it is better not doing PEETAL all the time because it lets us write however we like and write creatively.'

I've enjoyed it more because:

'usually when we do different topics, sometimes we have to do PEEL paragraphs but not creative writing, so that's why.'

'As we have been doing exploratory writing I think that I am learning more.' BUT 'I like the exploratory writing but I think we should do some PEETAL paragraphs to help our understanding more.'

'I would've preferred to do some more PEETAL work or something else.'

What's different?

'It gets harder and more interesting.'

'We kind of look deeper into it & everything more.'

'Before we would read the book and look at the type of sentences they use but now we look at how they write, as in language etc.'

'I've been enjoying the way we've been studying it more because we could write the next chapter, not like the others.'

'The way we have been studying the novel has been different in the sense that everyone is studying it all together and I felt that we were doing more classroom rather than individual work which made it quite boring.'

'We haven't really changed the way we look at the novels.'

'We do the same thing with other topics but we talked more this time.'

'We had to annotate more and it is too adventurous for me.'

What we've been learning

'I enjoy it because Geda has a different style of writing. We have been learning how he structures his stories and we can use them to improve our own.'

'I've learnt more of the language techniques and tones of how to make the reader feel the way you want to.'

'I've learnt different writing techniques, also ways in which people write and why they write like that. And also, having a fiction and non-fiction book all in one.'

'I've learnt the way Geda writes and how he added himself into the story which is a very different style of writing from what I am used to.'

'More, because we some how did it efficiently.'

'I've learnt a lot about the book and its structures and the way of the author's tricks'.

[...] I've learnt more about an in-depth annotation and different techniques of a non-fiction novel.'

