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Listen to me!

The voices of some students with dyslexia

Jane Mullen and Jean Hatton



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My earliest memory of school was of the teacher asking me to come up to the board and do some maths in front of the other children. I felt really uncomfortable and upset at having to do this because I felt so stupid because I couldn't do it ...I remember just being stood there because I didn't know what to do and when I look back on it, it was a very painful experience

Perhaps I'm not really stupid....

With my assignments I am totally exhausted when I have finished

Degrees of Independence Conference

April 17th 2009



The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education

‘Students may come to university already **predisposed** to think of themselves as needing help with any changes and do not find it **problematic to ask for ‘help’**. ... Now everyone looks for a difficulty to declare, like the hundreds of students who register themselves as ‘dyslexic’ when the problem, if it exists, is exceptionally rare.’

Ecclestone and Hayes 2009:89

Statistics

- 2006-2007 199 new students with dyslexia made contact with the Disability Office
- 2007-2008 this figure had risen to 299

- 2007-2008 declared dyslexics -approximately 4% of the undergraduates
- 2007-2008 declared dyslexics on the FdA and BA part time course 23%

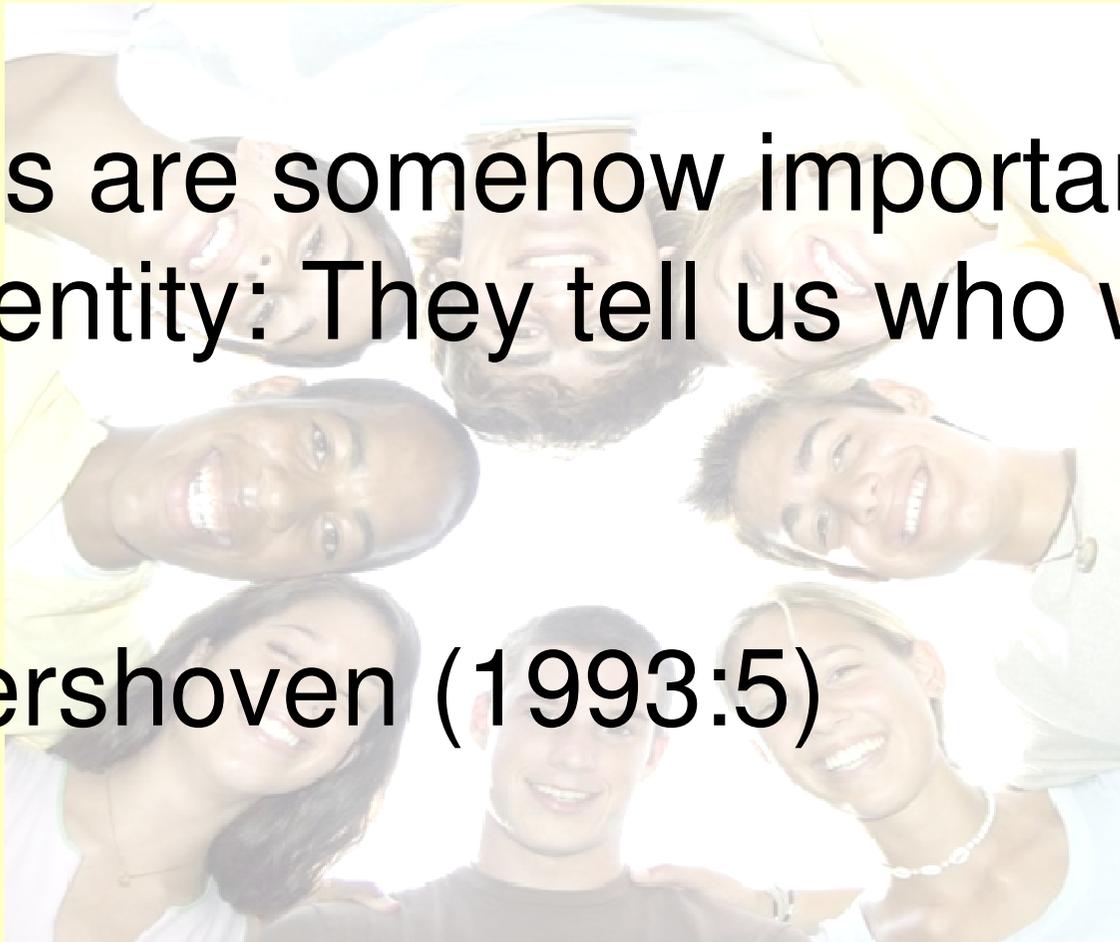




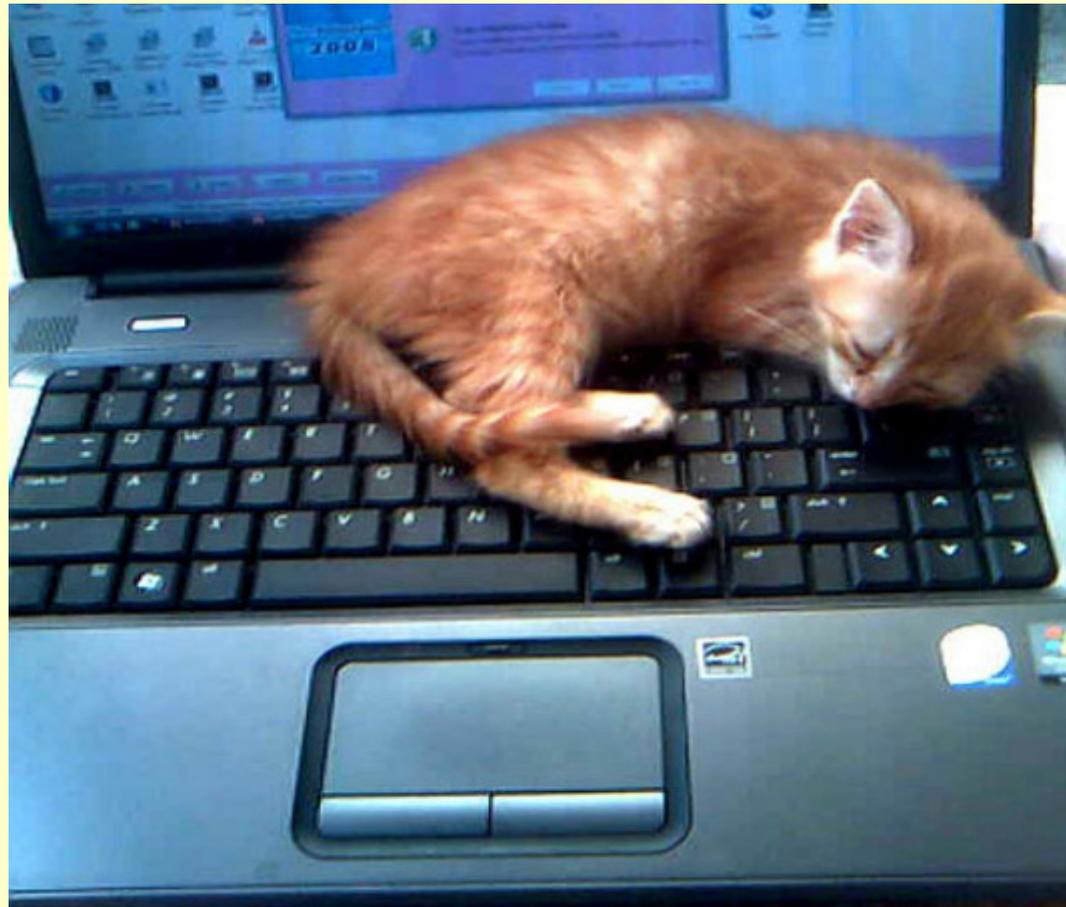
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‘stories are somehow important for our identity: They tell us who we are’

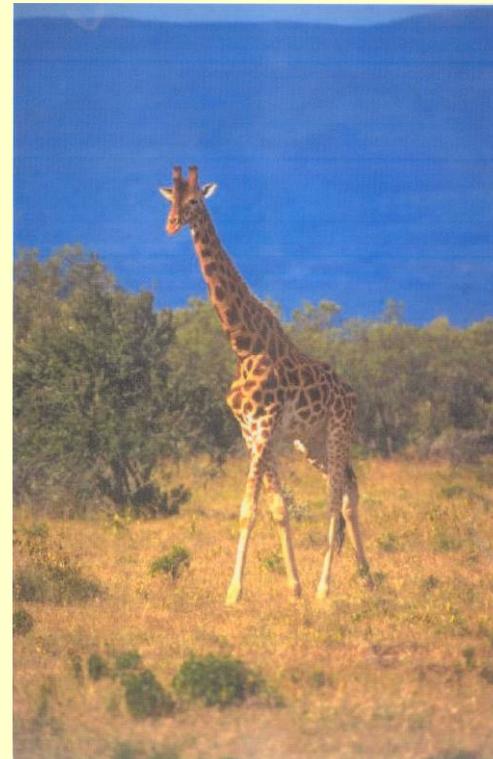
Widdershoven (1993:5)



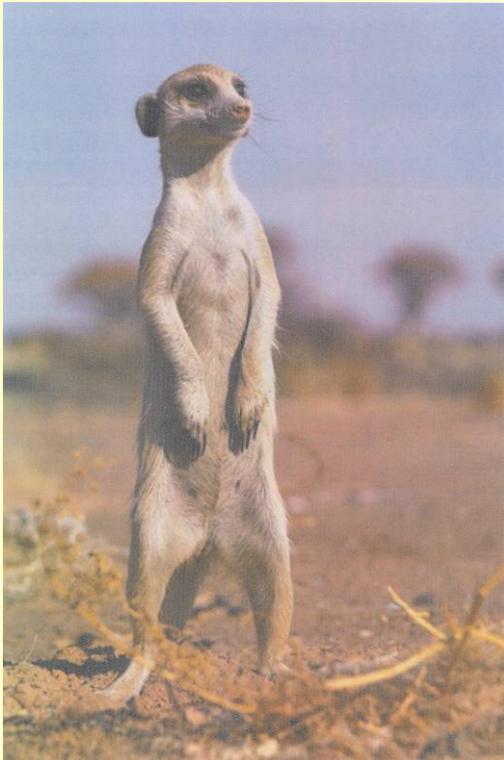
What animal are you?



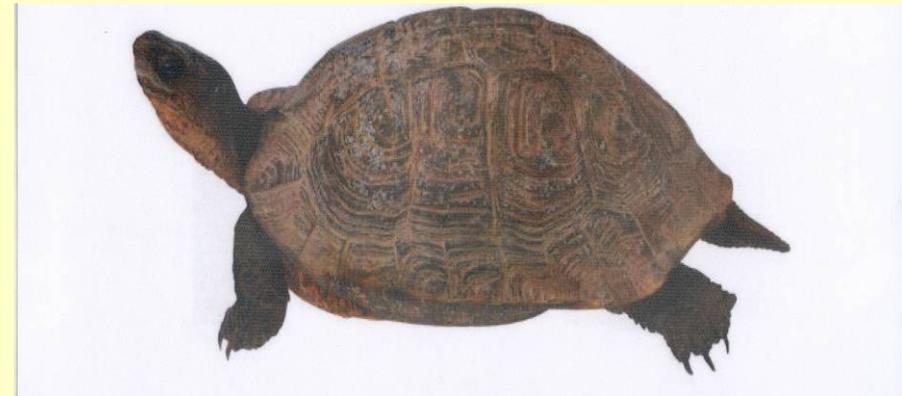
Humour/head in clouds



Timid



Spikes and Shells



The big black monster



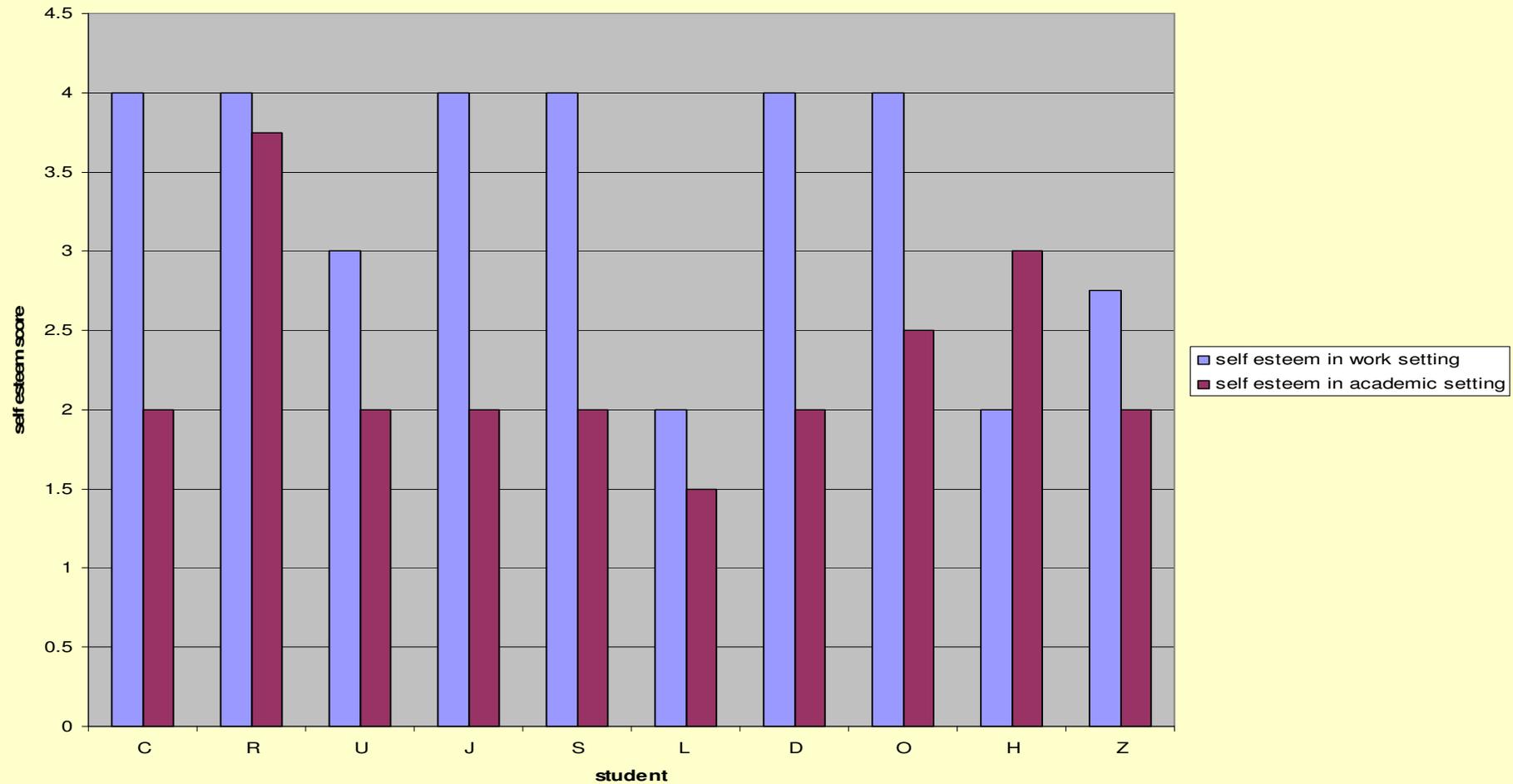
The developing self

I feel the school system failed me (S)

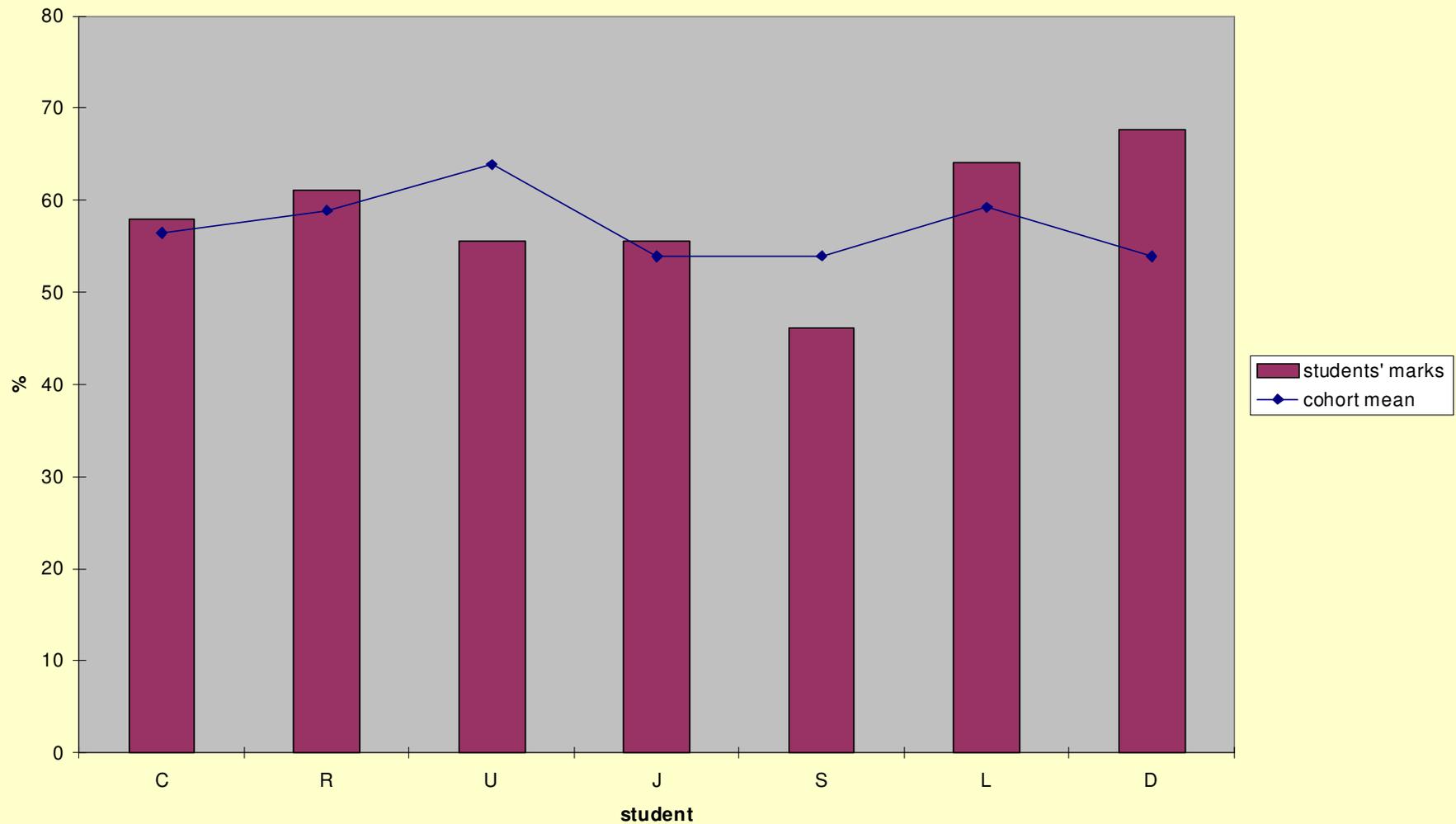
Nowadays I probably would have an ASBO (J)

I remember one particular instance where a teacher asked me to read in front of a class and I knew I couldn't do it - I had done it before when people would giggle and laugh, but it was year 10 and I knew I couldn't get away with missing words and getting it wrong, so I just said I did not feel well and ran out of the room. Those feelings of insecurity and inadequacy still haunt me today. (R)

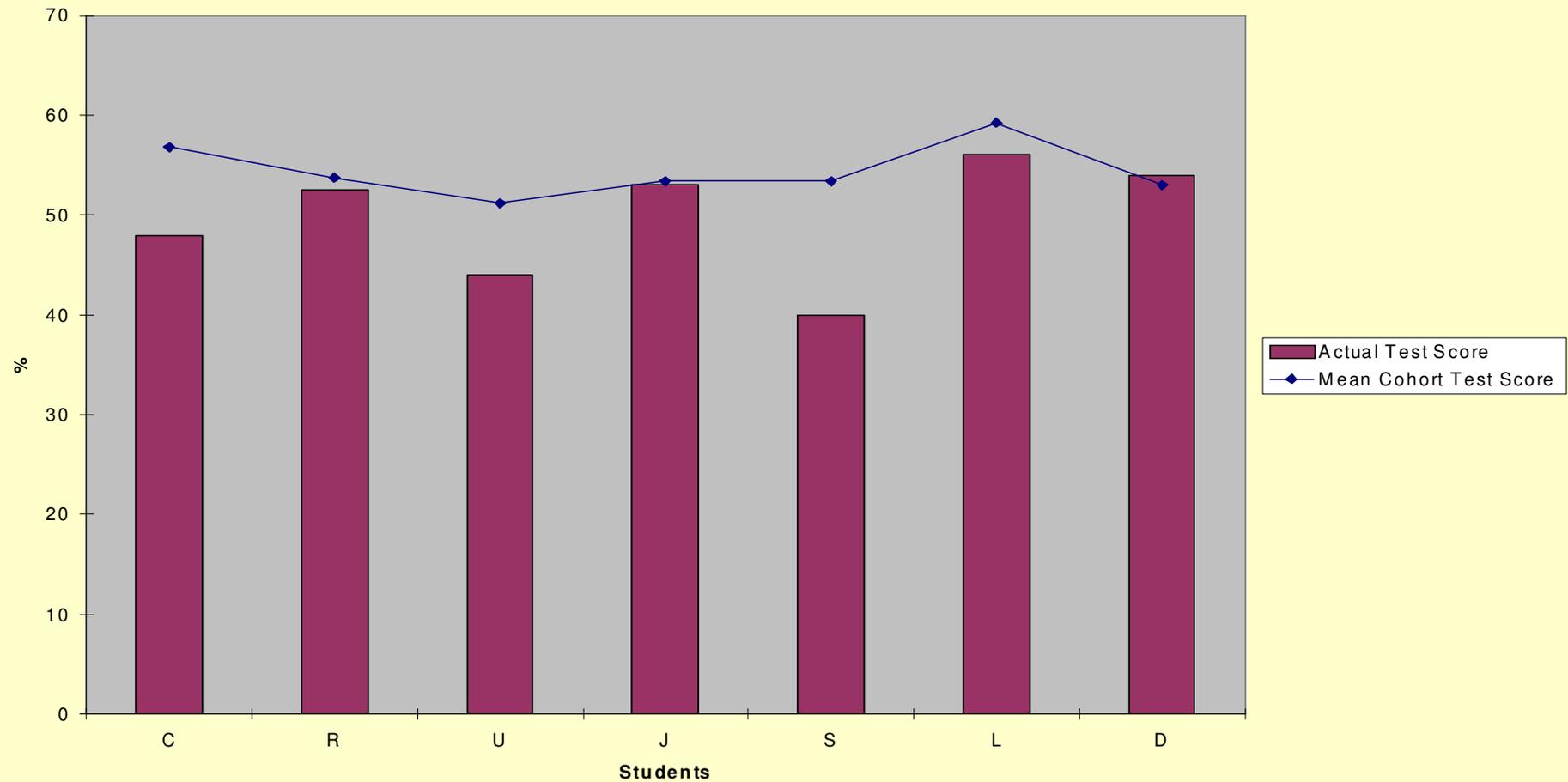
Self esteem in different settings



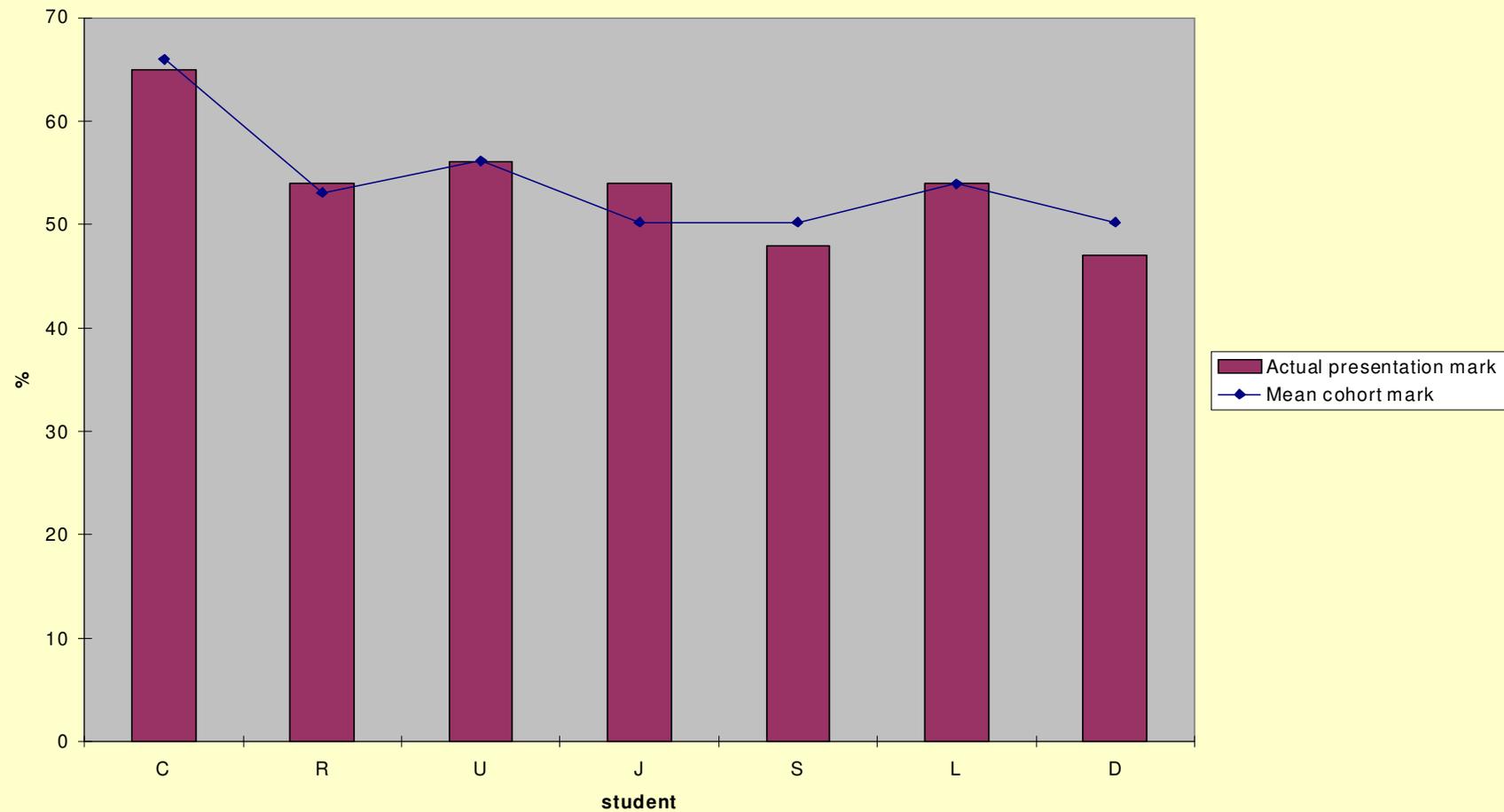
Comparison of marks for written assignments



Comparison of scores for timed tests



Comparison of marks for presentations



Help!

‘in many cases dyslexic adults have to be assertive about their entitlement for support. For some adults this is difficult to achieve’ (Reid and Kirk 2001:153).

Normally I don't have a problem asking for help, but because I was out of my comfort zone I felt I couldn't ask for help from anybody because I didn't want to look a fool (D)

Journeying towards a comfortable identity:

It used to be my dyslexia and me and certainly over the last few years, and hopefully it will continue, we have amalgamated into one and this is who I am and it just lets me get on with my life, so it's less debilitating I guess! (R)