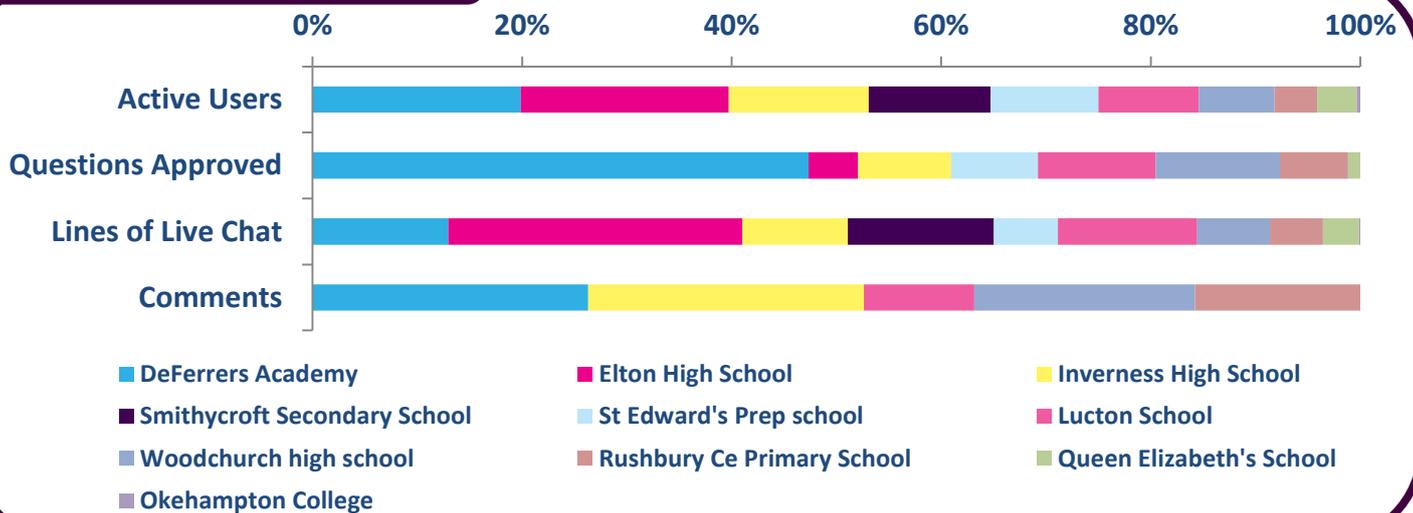




March 2015

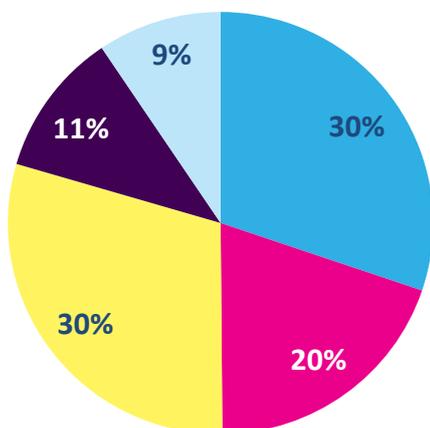
This zone included scientists whose research followed the theme of the Wellcome Trust's 'Sustaining Health' strategic plan. This scheme aims to bring together different disciplines researching how to improve the health of the growing global population, resulting in a zone consisting of scientists from varied fields connected to biology, such as plant archaeology and water purification technology. Students asked many questions referencing these areas, and the top three scientists engaged strongly in both ASK and CHAT. This made it one of the most focused zones during March, and 92% of students asked a question, voted or attended a live chat. The Zone winner, Sam, in particular was very active in live chats, providing 39% of the scientists' activity across the 18 live chats.

School data at a glance

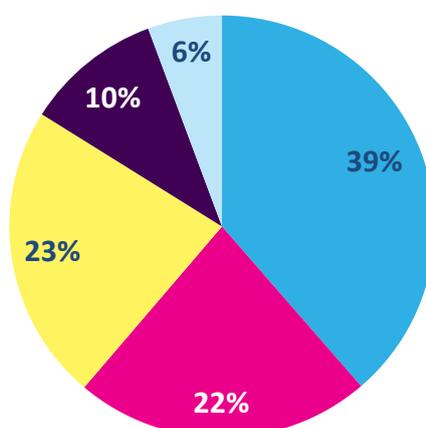


Scientists activity

Answers



Lines of live chat



| Scientist | Profile views | Position |
|--------------------|---------------|----------|
| Samuel Ellis | 1,280 | Winner |
| Richard Simmons | 1,068 | 2nd |
| Nikolai Adamski | 1,005 | 3rd |
| Christiane Calixto | 671 | 4th |
| Nicki Whitehouse | 641 | 5th |

Key figures from the Sustaining Health Zone, and the average of the March zones

| PAGE VIEWS | SUSTAINING HEALTH ZONE | MARCH '15 ZONES AVERAGE |
|------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Total zone | 28,614 | 36,564 |
| ASK page | 1,757 | 2,481 |
| CHAT page | 4,124 | 4,878 |
| VOTE page | 1,794 | 2,422 |

| | SUSTAINING HEALTH ZONE | MARCH '15 ZONES AVERAGE | IAS AVERAGE |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Students | 324 | 383 | 338 |
| % of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE | 92% | 87% | 83% |
| Questions asked | 248 | 496 | 713 |
| Questions approved | 169 | 238 | 297 |
| Answers given | 371 | 495 | 540 |
| Comments | 40 | 45 | 86 |
| Votes | 262 | 299 | 270 |
| Lines of live chat | 4,513 | 5,467 | 4,437 |
| Live chats | 18 | 17 | 13 |
| Average lines of live chat | 251 | 331 | 335 |
| Schools | 10 | 10 | 8 |

Popular topics

Although a smaller zone, the proportion of students active was above average. Discussions in the Zone were focused on the topic of ‘Sustaining Health’ and the different challenges that faced the planet’s growing population. Questions in this zone often reflected the research of the scientists, leading to topics such as bacteria, plant genetics and archaeology. Students demonstrated that they had read the scientists’ profiles carefully and were keen to know more, asking specific questions about their research, for example ‘ There were also questions about wider aspects of biology, such as evolution and exercise, and general science questions, for example, about time travel or Mars.

The students were interested to find out about the personalities of the scientists and would often ask questions about their likes and dislikes in both scientific and non-scientific areas, and what their daily lives were like. Students also took the opportunity to ask for advice on making a career in science and also for help with their current science subjects at school.



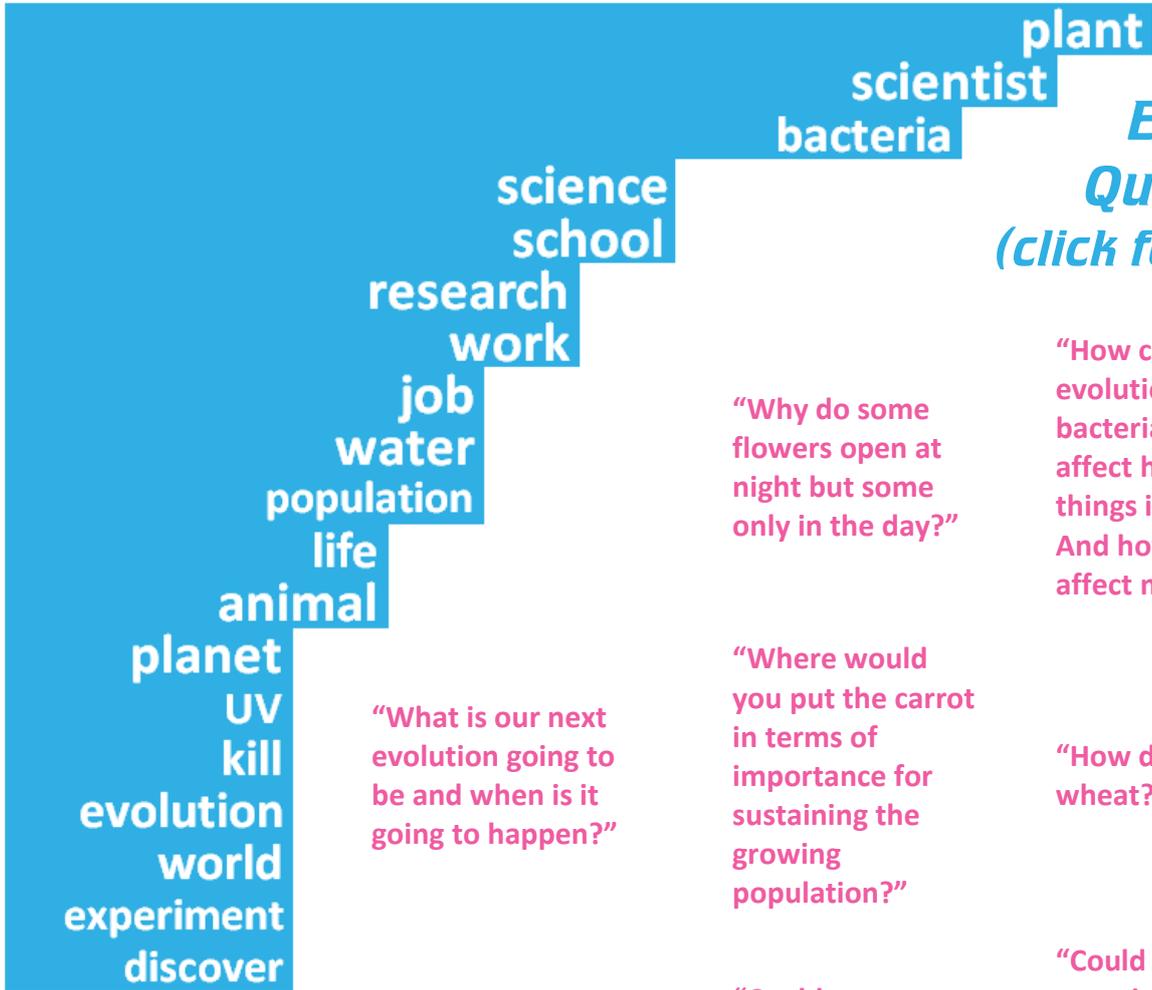
Keywords from live chats in the zone, size of the word represents its popularity





Keywords of questions asked in the zone, length of bar represents frequency of use

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12



Example Questions (click for links)

“How could the evolution or resistant bacteria and diseases affect how we treat things in the future? And how could it affect medicine?”

“Why do some flowers open at night but some only in the day?”

“How do you modify wheat?”

“Where would you put the carrot in terms of importance for sustaining the growing population?”

“What is our next evolution going to be and when is it going to happen?”

“Could you genetically change a plant so that they could be larger so you could have more food around?”

“Could your research prolong the shelf life of food?”

“Do you believe that plants have souls?”

“How does the UV light kill bacteria?”

“How many pathogens can 1 memory cell remember? And does venom and poison have pathogens?”

“Are you able to make plants taste like other foods like popcorn flavoured wheat?”

“If you could have any piece of scientific equipment, what would it be?”

“Is it true that a new kind of dark chocolate will be able to make you younger?”

“In what way will giving education to less fortunate people in the world, aid the growing population?”

“Do you believe the whole earth’s population should be culled via a virus to ease stress on resources?”

“Do ever find yourself procrastinating from your work?”

“Do you think that there will ever be a cure to mental illness?”

Examples of good engagement

The scientists were generally very well engaged in this zone and questions in ASK often received thoughtful detailed responses from them, particularly from Nikolai, Sam and Richard.

“Do you believe that plants have souls?” – Student

“They better not have souls, as I have sent many across the river Styx. :) But seriously, this is a tricky topic. You can approach this from different angles. As a scientist I try to be very rational about everything and use the Scientific Method to explain the world around me. As such I would ask: How do you define a soul? Do people have souls and what is the scientific evidence for that? If people have souls and we can’t measure it, why shouldn’t plants have a soul?” – Nikolai, scientist

Live chats were lively and students were genuinely interested in the scientists, seeing them as real people:

“What was the biggest mistake in your career so far?” – Student

“Well like any job you make little mistakes all the time. Fortunately I have never done anything too serious, because some things in science are very expensive! I did accidentally make a solution of caramel in the lab last week, forgot I had added glucose (sugar) to something and heated it too much! Ha!” – Sam, scientist

“Everyone makes mistakes.” – Student

Scientist winner: Samuel Ellis

Sam’s plans for the prize money: *“Donate it to a selection of charities and organisations which promote scientific education, either here in the UK or in developing countries. If I win, I think it would be great to invest the money in helping less fortunate students in other parts of the world get access to better science (and general) teaching. I am still trying to decide which charities might be best for this (there are many good options) but some of the ones I am looking to include: The African Science Truck Experience, Africa Educational Trust, Read International, The Wulugu Project.”*



Read Sam’s [thank you message](#).

Student winner: Hatty

For great engagement during the event, this student will receive a gift voucher and a certificate.

Feedback

We’re still collecting feedback from teachers, students and scientists but here are a few of the comments made during the event...

“Thank you for your time and answering our strange questions, I hope we get to ask more in the future” – Student

“Thanks for a gr8 chat/ lesson, it has been amazing talking to you.” – Student



Nikolai Adamski
@NikolaiAdamski

First week of I'm a Scientist imascientist.org.uk is over. Really enjoy it so far. Great questions from many bright young minds.