

## Space Zone, March 2013



This report has been compiled by the I'm a Scientist team as a summary, containing moderator observations and our web data, to provide some meaningful information on the zone.

The Space Zone was busy throughout, with most questions received in the first week yet lots of live chats in both weeks.

### Number of page views in the 3 weeks surrounding the event

Zone page	Page views
Total zone	17,422
ASK page	954
CHAT page	1,808
VOTE page	879
Usman Kayani	443
Shawn Domagal-Goldman	388
Martin Archer	673
Grant Kennedy	535
Amy Tyndall	642

### Key figures from I'm a Scientist March 2013 for the zone, the average of all 11 zones, and the whole event

	Zone	Zones average	Whole event
Registered students	301	339	3,731
% of active students (used ASK, CHAT, VOTE or commented)	87%	89%	-
Questions asked	342	846	9,307
Questions approved	176	356	3,921
Answers given	430	669	7,357
Comments	41	109	1,198
Votes	265	296	3,255
Live chats	18	16	179
Lines of live chat	5,538	5,088	55,971
Schools	9	9	97

## Popular topics

The chats often seemed to focus on celebrity scientists and a few of the scientists taking part in this zone had appeared on television. Naturally, *do aliens exist?* And *do you believe in aliens?* were popular questions from students of all ages. The scientists were often asked whether they had been to space, whether they wanted to and when space travel will become cheap and accessible. The students who had read Martin's profile often asked him about working for KISS FM (which he tended to professionally avoid).

Questions in Ask were predominantly about space, again with many questions on aliens and future space travel, but there were also more topical things covered, such as meteors.

### Sample questions

[How do you believe that space travel and exploration of space will develop over the years to come, and what developments will be made to rockets and the space center?](#)

[Have you ever seen meteorites?](#)

[Would you ever consider working on the sets of sci-fi films to ensure scientific accuracy within the plot?](#)

[Could you capture a comet?](#)

[Why is your reflection the wrong way around in a spoon?](#)

[Where does the energy for electron degeneracy come from in the cores of white dwarf stars?](#)

[Can anyone send a space camera or something to another solar system to see life in other solar systems?](#)

[Is it possible to be dyslexic when reading Braille?](#)

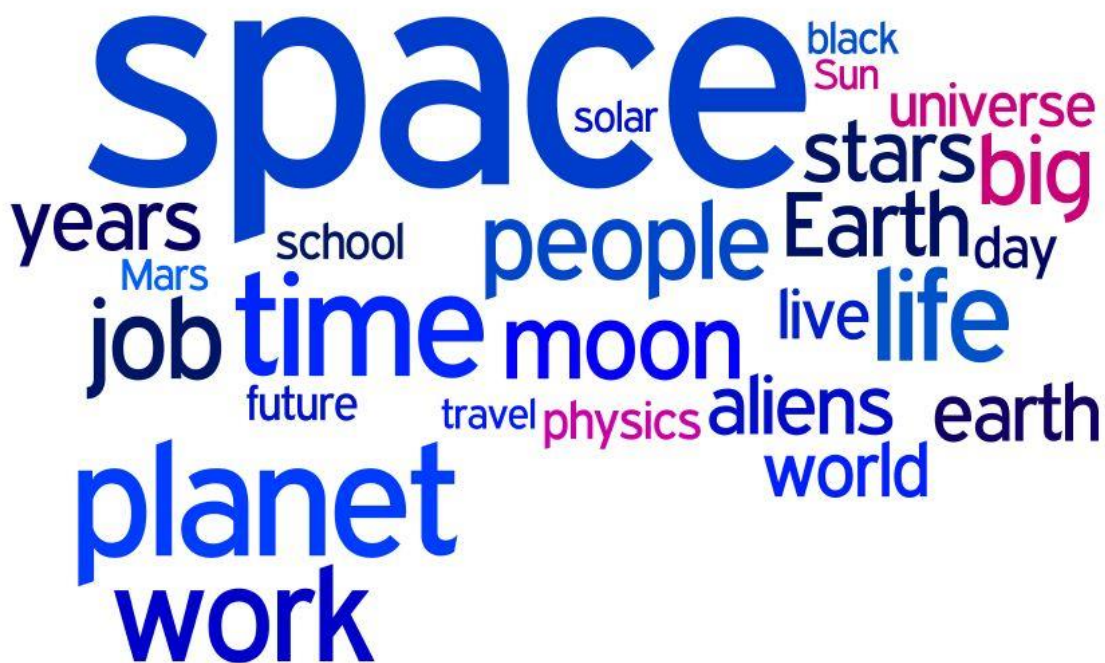
[What do you think the biggest mystery about space is?](#)

[How fast can comets fly and why does the tail of a comet always face away from the sun?](#)

Keywords of questions asked in the zone (the size of the word represents its popularity; the number indicates the number of times it was tagged as a keyword)

achievement<sup>5</sup> alien<sup>4</sup> animal<sup>4</sup> apocalypse<sup>2</sup> asteroid<sup>2</sup> black hole<sup>4</sup> camera<sup>2</sup> cure<sup>2</sup> discovery<sup>2</sup> disease<sup>3</sup> earth<sup>7</sup>  
education<sup>5</sup> energy<sup>2</sup> environment<sup>2</sup> film<sup>2</sup> future<sup>5</sup> galaxy<sup>3</sup> gas<sup>2</sup> human<sup>2</sup> inspiration<sup>2</sup> life<sup>2</sup> medicine<sup>2</sup> music<sup>4</sup> nebula<sup>2</sup>  
personal<sup>12</sup> planet<sup>4</sup> quirky<sup>7</sup> religion<sup>3</sup> science<sup>5</sup> scientist<sup>2</sup> solar system<sup>2</sup> space<sup>20</sup> spoon<sup>2</sup> star<sup>9</sup>  
subatomic<sup>3</sup> SUN<sup>8</sup> technology<sup>4</sup> time travel<sup>2</sup> universe<sup>25</sup> work<sup>30</sup> work routine<sup>2</sup>

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



### Examples of good engagement

The question above on sci-fi films proved popular with the scientists, and was also asked again a few times in the live chats. Amy was popular in the live chats, and always tended to answer everything positively and honestly: *shona14: do you believe god created the world or the big bang theory? @amytynall: Both! I am a christian AND scientist, so I believe in the Big Bang Theory, but believe there must have been a reason for that to happen in the first place.* She tended to answer the more personal questions that the other scientists sometimes avoided, such as *what are you doing for Easter?* Amy was chatting from Chile, which often prompted Spanish, and questions about the weather!

### Scientist winner: Grant Kennedy

Grant's plans for the prize money: *"I thought a good use of the prize money would be to make some time-lapse movies of what it's like to go observing at a telescope, by buying a camera for our institute that astronomers can take away with them."*



## ***Student winner: aliahana***

For asking some good questions, including one that was particularly honest, aliahana will receive a £20 WHSmith 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 so much! This has been fascinating!" – 10jenkinsm, student*

*"Awwwww.... I had a blast doing this. I just wish I could have spent more time answering all your awesome questions! Thanks for getting me to think outside my science box for a week!!" – Shawn Domagal, scientist*

*"Just to say how much my class enjoyed the live chat yesterday with Grant from Space Zone. Please thank him for his time." – Sue Pickerill, Varndean School, teacher*

*"I got a kick out of (almost) every question, whether it was some kind of convoluted Back-to-the-Future-like time travel scenario, or wonderment at why our Moon should exist when Venus doesn't have one (the answer is that we don't know, but because it's science, we have some ideas!" – Grant Kennedy, scientist*

*"It'll be weird not answering questions anymore when the event is over" – Amy Tyndall, scientist*