Silver Zone, June 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 Silver Zone was busy to begin with but tailed off towards the end of the event. The second week was a lot quieter, however live chats still generated questions in Ask.

Number of page views in the 3 weeks surrounding the event

Zone page	Page views	
Total zone	15,110	
ASK page	1,145	
CHAT page	1,242	
VOTE page	1,119	
Sarah-Jane Walsh	1,023	
Ravi Kopparapu	621	
Kinda Al-Hourani	464	
Jane Paget	483	
Andrew Manches	648	

Key figures from I'm a Scientist June 2013 for the zone, the average of all 18 zones, and the whole event

	Zone	Zones average	Whole event
Registered students	314	372	6,697
% of active students (used ASK, CHAT, VOTE or commented)	81%	83%	-
Questions asked	817	963	17,337
Questions approved	239	309	5,558
Answers given	314	533	9,597
Comments	34	73	1,306
Votes	233	276	4,962
Live chats	14	13	240
Lines of live chat	2,807	4,735	85,225
Schools	7	8	138

Popular topics

The main theme in the live chats was marine wildlife, relating to Sarah-Jane's research, with questions including everything from singing whales to growing coral:

acidandbudgies: Can you grow coral above water

sarahjanewalsh: you can grow corals in tanks but they need to be in water to live

bubble5: Is it true that whales sing? If so how do they sound?

sarahjanewalsh: you know in nemo when dory does a whale impression, thats how they sound!

In the questions, topics were a lot broader, as can be seen from the sample questions below.

Sample questions

Why do biscuits go soft and cakes go dry and is there anything in the middle?

How hard is it to identify coral reefs in water?

What's your favourite shark?

Why is the moon sometimes visible in the day?

What's the benefit in using toothpaste when brushing your teeth?

Is it possible to re-create a human being once they are dead with a sample of their DNA?

What is the fastest computer?

Are children's brains the same as adults?

What type of plants might you be wanting to find on a planet and if a specific type then on what planet?

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)

alien2 brain5 cancer3 children2 computer2 creatures1 digital1 disease2

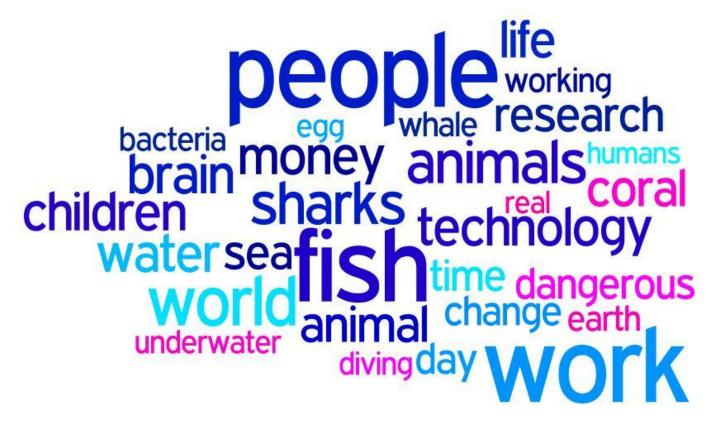
diving2 environment4 expedition1 experiment3 food5 friction1 gaming1 global warming2 how science

works2 job3 marine22 microbiology1 money4 ocean1 personal 10 photon1 planet2 plants3

qualifications1 reefs1 research7 revision2 school2 science8 shark1 space17 star

trek3 technology9 toy2 uv light1 viruses1 vote1 waste2 wildlife3 Win9 WOrk23

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



Examples of good engagement

There was some really good engagement in chats, with both short friendly answers and much longer in-depth ones:

supascientist02: how much science have you done so far today?
sarahjanewalsh: Not much because i've been answering all the questions left on my wall from all you guys!

tobyseely14: There is an organism that lives on the sea bed and eats plants and algae - after a certain amount of times eating just this plant, it gathers enough chlorphyll to survive on the energy made by in built chloraplasts. Would there be a way to inbuild this genetic capanility into other animals through some kind of somatic gene therapy- so many animals could simply survive without food? **sarahjanewalsh:** thats what corals do, they have single celled algae inside which photosynthesise and translocate their energy to the coral host. However the coral cannot survive on this alone they need

nutrients which they get from feeding on plankton, which the algae also needs, so its symbiotic, they both need each other. There are several other organisms that have formed these relationships, giant clams for example have the same algae as well as some jellyfish.

Scientist winner: Sarah-Jane Walsh

Sarah-Jane's plans for the prize money: "To buy some high tech underwater camera equipment and build a new website focused on education and outreach." Read Sarah-Jane's thank you message here.



Student winner: soggysheepy

For asking lots of good questions and demonstrating great scientific thinking, *soggysheepy* will receive a £20 WH Smith 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...

"That is amaze balls I did not know that" - storm002, student

"My mind has been bombarded with questions I have never even thought of and have made my brain work harder than it has in a while. It's so refreshing to get such a fresh view from science and I'm glad to have given you guys just a small insight in to my world and the world of science." — Sarah-Jane Walsh, scientist

"We have learned so much thank you <3" - mazzasayshowjumper, student

"Some really insightful questions about our work... A lot of these students are smarter than I was at their age!" – scientist

"Thank you all you scientists you have inspired me a lot!" – spoderman1, student