Extreme Speed 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 Extreme Speed Zone was busy from the start, with live chats packed full of space questions. Lots of students wanted to know about what will happen when the sun burns out and about black holes and life on other planets. There were loads of questions submitted, with 119 approved on the first day. Throughout the event the number of questions coming through did slow down, but the live chats didn't!

Number of page views in the 3 weeks surrounding the event

Zone page	Page views
Total zone	25,486
ASK page	1,801
CHAT page	3,085
VOTE page	1,369
Sam Geen	1,119
Rob Woolfson	759
Matt Pankhurst	665
Kate Husband	612
Claire Lee	837

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	491	372	6,697
% of active students (used ASK, CHAT, VOTE or commented)	71%	83%	-
Questions asked	1,182	963	17,337
Questions approved	528	309	5,558
Answers given	1,050	533	9,597
Comments	173	73	1,306
Votes	340	276	4,962
Live chats	16	13	240
Lines of live chat	7,749	4,735	85,225
Schools	9	8	138

Popular topics

In the live chats the students were very interested in space, wanting to know what would happen if a star exploded, whether it would be possible to build bridges to other planets, and whether we'd be able to live on other planets. Both Sam and Kate's work relates to galaxies and stars, so these questions weren't unrelated to the zone theme. Students were also really interested in Sam's work on super computers, asking how they're different to normal computers.

Space was also a big topic in the questions, as can be seen from some of the sample questions below, along with '*What is a cosmic ray detector?*' and '*If there is a mars expedition into space how will no gravity affect their anatomy so they can never return to earth?*'

As well as space, scientist Matt's work on volcanoes was a big hit with the students. Volcano questions included '*Are there different types of volcanoes?*' and '*Precisely how hot is it in a volcano?*' And of course speed was also popular with students, with questions including, '*Is there a certain speed when your body can't take it?*' and '*What's the average speed of a penguin?*'

Sample questions
Is there something astronomical about bananas?
What thing has the most atoms in it and particles?
What is a worm hole and how does it work?

If lightning produces so much energy, couldn't mankind harness it?
How fast can lava get when spurting from a volcano? What is its fastest speed?
Do you think scientists sooner or later will be able to create something faster than the speed of light and prove Einstein wrong?
If you had a fantastically built space ship, provisions for 5 years, and you simply flew up into space, where would you go? Do you know any galaxies you may run into?

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)

animal22 behaviour7 black hole8 body15 brain11 career8 collision7 colour22 computer10 discovery6 earth26 emotion7 energy13 eruption7 experiment8 food12 force7 future10 galaxy26 gravity8 heat6 human13 invention6 life20 light13 moon8 personal20 planet12 plant9 research17 science17 scientist8 sense16 space32 speed16 sun7 technology15 temperature11 travel11 universe20 volcano29 water16 weather9 work14

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

Examples of good engagement

There was some great engagement between students and scientists. Tarbert Academy students even asked scientist Sam if he'd like to become a teacher at their school:

archiandlaura: would you like to work as a physics teacher in Tarbert Academy?
samgeen: Ha, maybe if I get bored of research I could be a teacher!
aaronjohnstone: we have a very interesting school! no getting bored here

In another live chat a scientist learnt something new from a student:

jamesagrear: If you have a full memory stick and an empty one, will the full one weigh more?
robertwoolfson: A full memory stick won't weigh more, but it will contain more energy as information is a form of energy. The full memory stick will be less stable than the empty one
jamesagrear: but dont trapped electrons have a mass?
robertwoolfson: An empty memory stick has the same number of electrons, they're just more disordered
jamesagrear: check this link out http://news.softpedia.com/news/A-KindleLoaded-with-eBooks-Is-Heavier-than-an-Empty-One-Says-Scientist-230897.shtml
robertwoolfson: You learn something every day.
robertwoolfson: Wow, I did not expect that. I guess that makes sense as information is energy and energy is a form of mass.

Scientist winner: Sam Geen

Sam's plans for the prize money: "*How does making your own galaxy and then flying through it in 3D with VR goggles sound?*" Read Sam's thank you message here.

Student winner: wizzyg12

For asking some great questions, ***wizzyg12*** 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…

"wooo! I'm a true budding scientist and can't wait for this fun-filled exhilirating chat!"– phoro, student

"sooooooooooo inspiring!" – brazt001, student

"You asked so many great questions (SO MANY QUESTIONS) and I learned a lot Googling for the answers…The live chats were great fun, even if there were like five back-to-back and it was 35 degrees." – Sam Geen, scientist

"thank you so much for all your answers it has really helped" – jellybeanfun, student

"Thank you so much guys! I think that we all enjoyed it here!" – mrsattwood, teacher

"Wow this is awesome! Scientists, thanks for what ur doing" – wizzg12, student