

New Materials 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 New Materials Zone had chats spread relatively evenly over the two weeks. There were a lot of students registered in the zone, and a good number of questions submitted.

Number of page views in the 3 weeks surrounding the event

| Zone page | Page views |
|------------------|------------|
| Total zone | 21,175 |
| ASK page | 2,072 |
| CHAT page | 2,624 |
| VOTE page | 1,082 |
| Stuart Archer | 1,271 |
| Simone Sturniolo | 748 |
| Serena Corr | 866 |
| Josh Makepeace | 1,009 |
| Alex Munnoch | 624 |

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 | 447 | 372 | 6,697 |
| % of active students (used ASK, CHAT, VOTE or commented) | 70% | 83% | - |
| Questions asked | 1,537 | 963 | 17,337 |
| Questions approved | 304 | 309 | 5,558 |
| Answers given | 384 | 533 | 9,597 |
| Comments | 92 | 73 | 1,306 |
| Votes | 221 | 276 | 4,962 |
| Live chats | 11 | 13 | 240 |
| Lines of live chat | 2,418 | 4,735 | 85,225 |
| Schools | 8 | 8 | 138 |

Popular topics

Most of the live chats were dominated with talk of the effects of the scientists' research on the environment. Some students even suggested their own improvements to the hydrogen car Josh was researching. One class was very interested in how the ear works, how sound travels to the ear, and what causes hearing loss, despite the fact this wasn't directly related to any of the scientists' research.

Hydrogen-powered cars were a popular topic in the questions too, with students keen to find out about the advantages and disadvantages of using hydrogen as a power source. Lasers were also a popular topic, with questions about their production, power and uses.

Sample questions

[What elements, compounds and chemicals are the artificial leaves made from?](#)

[What is the weirdest material you have made?](#)

[How do you make a laser?](#)

[Can a candle burn without gravity?](#)

[How does Febreze actually kill dirty smells?](#)

[If you were to give someone a ring what would be the worst metal to put on their finger and how quickly will they die?](#)

[Do you think it would be possible to create new elements/future materials with a greater understanding of atoms?](#)

[Could cars run on air in the future?](#)

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)

[animal](#)7 [artificial leaf](#)8 [atom](#)6 [biology](#)7 [body](#)14 [car](#)15 [chemical](#)9
[chemistry](#)17 [colour](#)6 [computer](#)7 [discovery](#)7 [earth](#)13
[element](#)12 [engineering](#)4 [environment](#)7 [experiment](#)11 [family](#)5 [fuel](#)7
[future](#)16 [galaxy](#)5 [geology](#)4 [history](#)5 [human](#)6 [hydrogen](#)17 [invention](#)5
[laboratory](#)5 [laser](#)12 [life](#)7 [medicine](#)4 [nature](#)5 [personal](#)15 [philosophy](#)10
[physics](#)6 [preference](#)11 [quirky](#)9 [research](#)9 [society](#)8 [space](#)15
[sun](#)6 [technology](#)28 [universe](#)6 [use](#)6 [win](#)4 [work](#)34 [world](#)5

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



Examples of good engagement

The scientists all engaged well with the students, and students occasionally left comments to thank the scientists for their answers. There was an interesting question on women in science which received additional comments: *'As a young, female scientist in today's world, would you say there are a lot more female scientists than say in the 19th century? If so, who do you think inspired these women?'*

Scientist winner: *Stu Archer*

Stu's plans for the prize money: *"I'm hoping to put the money towards running workshops in some local schools so kids can have a go at making some artificial leaves using fruit juice and a few other simple materials, so they can learn a bit about some of the solar technology that's coming in the future and hopefully have a bit of fun doing it."* [Read Stu's thank you message here.](#)



Student winner: *07stoombs*

For asking lots of good questions, **07stoombs** 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...

"The chat sessions are hectic!! But lots of fun" – Josh Makepeace, scientist

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

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

"There have been loads of really interesting and thought provoking questions, ranging from cool stuff that happens every day all the way up to some of the really philosophical stuff" – Stu Archer, scientist

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

"Adios mis amigos! Thank you for the live chat!" - vilaa, student