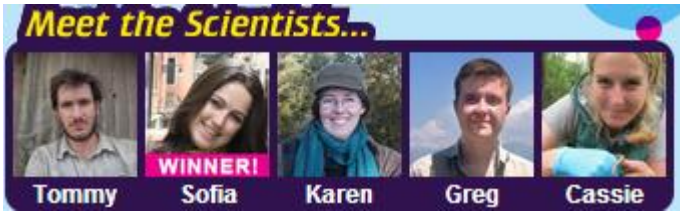
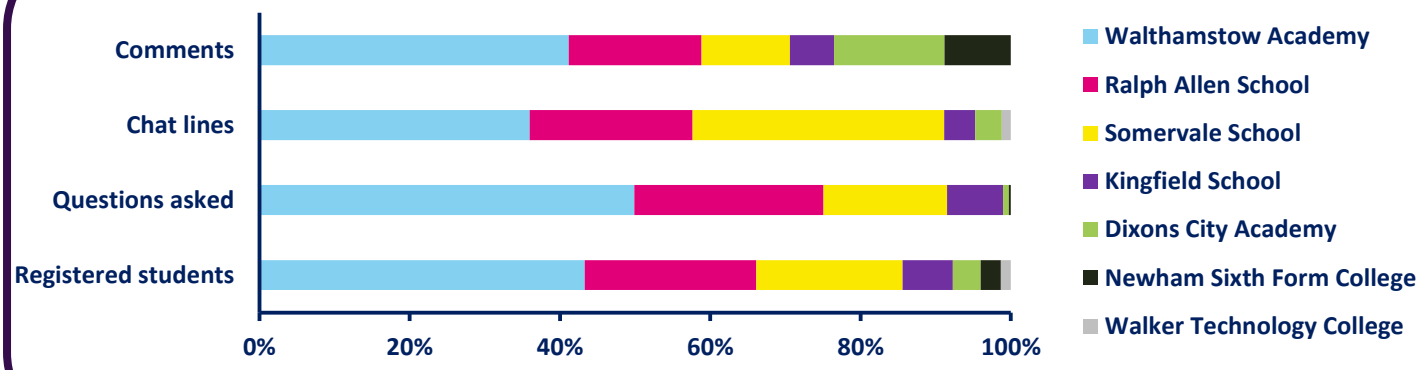


November 2013

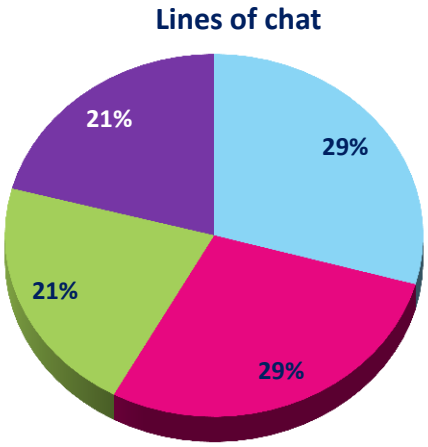
This report has been compiled by the I'm a Scientist team as a summary, containing moderator observations and our web data, to provide some meaningful information on the zone.

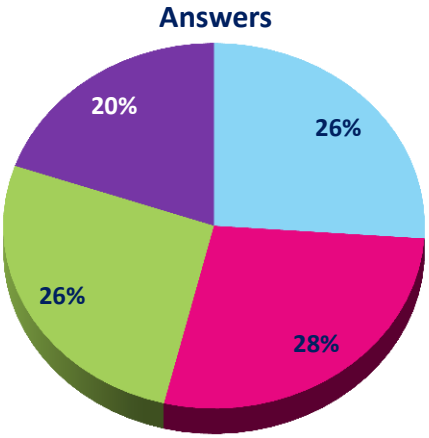
The Ecology zone had one of the highest percentage of active students of *I'm a Scientist* November 2013. Question intake slowed towards the end of the competition, but chats were always lively and busy. Students were interested in the different areas of ecology, ranging from climate change to marine biology. They were very curious to learn about the particular animals that some of the scientists' research was devoted to.

Schools' data at a glance



Scientists' activity





Scientist profile	Page views	Position
Sofia Franco	883	Winner
Thomas Doherty-Bone	918	2nd
Cassandra Raby	849	3rd
Karen Bacon	808	4th

Greg was unwell during the event.

Key figures from I'm a Scientist November 2013 for the zone, the average of all 7 zones, and the whole event

	ZONE	ZONES AVERAGE
Registered students	228	281
% of active students (used ASK, CHAT, VOTE or commented)	92%	85%
Questions asked	403	438
Questions approved	115	169
Answers given	249	380
Comments	71	64
Votes	157	205
Live chats	10	13
Lines of live chat	3,861	4,403
Schools	7	7

Number of page views during the event (plus previous and following weeks)

ZONE PAGE	PAGE VIEWS	ZONES AVERAGE
Total zone	**15,447**	**16,397**
ASK page	**704**	**953**
CHAT page	**1,639**	**1,760**
VOTE page	**808**	**872**

Popular topics

In both ASK and CHAT sections, there were a lot of questions about the various species of animals with which the scientists are working, their favourite animals, or what they had recently discovered. By far, the favourite topic of discussion was "*What is your favourite animal?*"

There was a huge interest in Cassandra's work analysing baboon societies, behaviour, and poo. Students wanted to know why she chooses to do that sort of fieldwork and research.

Other popular topics included climate change, nutritional habits, fossils or evolution. Lots of quirky questions, about flying pigs and hot ice-cream appeared too.

Chat

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

Ask ?

Keywords of questions asked in the zone (the size of the words represents its popularity)

SCIENCE

addiction1 alien3 animal29 atom1 body2 bug2 clouds1 discovery4 disease5 earth7 ecosystem 1education2 ethics2 evolution2 experiment4 fossil6 future5 gene3 harmful3 history2 howscienceworks3 immunesystem 1 marine9 microorganism3 nutrition7 plant5 research7 respiration2 scorpion1 sense 3 sky1 space3 sport1 doping1 subatomic1 technology2 underwater1 weather2

Total 110

CAREER

inspiration5 work22

Total 27

PERSONAL /OTHER

ias2personal9 preference1 quirky4 society39sport2

Total 39

Sample questions
Do you think organisms such as trees are on other planets?
Why do we laugh?
Do you like Doctor Who? If you do, who is your favourite doctor?
What is your favorite micro - organism?
How do keep my fish happy?
Did the financial meltdown affect your scientific work?
What do you think cats will evolve to look like in the next 10000 years?

Examples of good engagement

Karen appeared to put great effort to her answers, which were often long and thoughtful. This, for example is a discussion she had with a student about petrifying wood: *"Which wood petrifies the most easily?"*

There were some good debates and discussions around the ethics of Gene Therapy: *"Do you think it is possible that mutate our cells, somehow, so that we might have the athletic abilities and appearance of an animal?"*

Scientist winner: Sofia Franco

Sofia's plans for the prize money: *"Well I had no idea at first…but after starting the chat sessions I think the best thing to do is to use the money organize a few visits to schools and make a few science days! We could talk about science, maybe take some animals with us and do some activities!"* Read Sofia's thank you message here.

Student winner: tporter10

For asking numerous, very interesting questions, and for chat participation, ***tporter10*** 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…

"Thank you so much! this was so helpful, thank you," – shootingstargazer, student

"we've just had an amazing live chat with the scientists. The scientists' answers were really engaging and interesting. Absolutely brilliant stuff!" - Tom Holloway, teacher

"Thanks Sofia! That was a good answer i will deffinatly Use this "- student

" It was truly a roller-coaster, with questions coming over and over, one after the other, and each one better than the previous! You really made me crack my brain and think of things that I had not thought before" – Sofia Franco, scientist

"I had a great time! Thanks for all the students and scientists that made this such an exciting event... I'm missing it already! " – Cassandra Raby, scientist