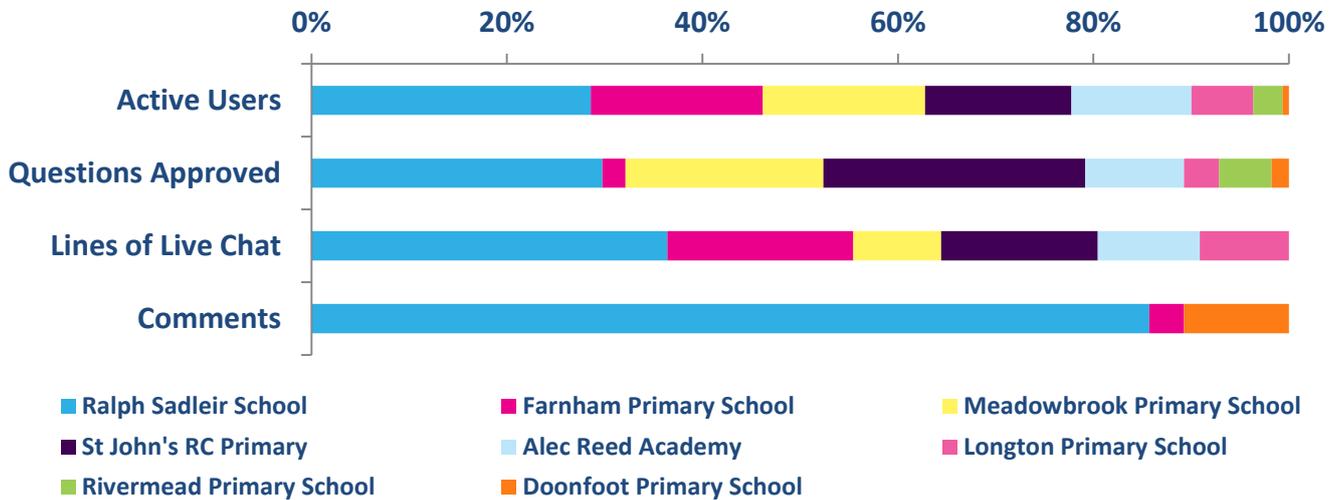




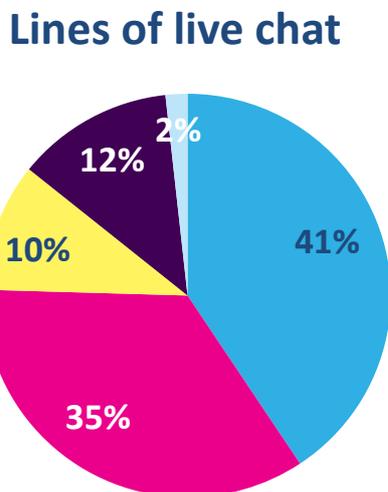
## March 2015

The Evolution Zone was a primary zone run as part of a University of Reading research project that is working with primary schools to create effective strategies for teaching evolution. In line with the project aims we ensured that the zone included scientists with and without a religious faith and asked students additional survey questions on this and other themes addressed in the research. Popular topics were animals and the process of evolution, and the live chats were very busy, with the average chat producing 458 typed lines, well above the average for March (331). Thad and Thomas between them accounted for the majority of both the answers in ASK and lines of live chat.

### School data at a glance



### Scientists activity



Scientist	Profile views	Position
Thomas Clements	1,581	Winner
Thaddeus Aid	949	2nd
Stephanie Bryant	739	3rd
Adam Milligan	724	4th
Emily Seward	536	5th

Key figures from the Evolution Zone and the average of the March zones

PAGE VIEWS	EVOLUTION ZONE	MARCH '15 ZONES AVERAGE
Total zone	32,760	36,564
ASK page	2,914	2,481
CHAT page	3,863	4,878
VOTE page	2,506	2,422

	EVOLUTION ZONE	MARCH '15 ZONES AVERAGE	IAS AVERAGE
Students	379	383	338
% of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE	81%	87%	83%
Questions asked	424	496	713
Questions approved	168	238	297
Answers given	306	495	540
Comments	43	45	86
Votes	289	299	270
Lines of live chat	5,042	5,467	4,437
Live chats	11	17	13
Average lines of live chat	458	331	335
Schools	8	10	8

Students had the option of answering survey questions about how science and religion relate before and after the event. The students were self-selecting, resulting in small post-event sample sizes

The largest change seen in attitudes was in response to the statement: **‘Science and religion disagree on so many things they both can’t be true’**.

After the event, 70% of students disagreed with this statement (n=10), compared with 28% who disagreed before the event (n=57). This indicates that these students were now less likely to see science and religion as being locked in conflict with each other.

### Popular topics

Questions in the live chat were generally based around basic evolution, but there were also lots of questions about animals in general. In the ASK section there were some very interesting questions about religion and science being compatible, as well as about the use of animals in research. The scientists dealt with these potentially sensitive topics very well.

Other popular topics of the zone were fossils, dinosaurs and human evolution. The scientists were often asked about their hobbies and research. For example, questions about fossils were generally asked to Thomas, showing the students had read the scientists’ profiles.



# Ask ?

Keywords of questions asked in the zone, length of bar represents frequency of use

0 2 4 6 8 10



## Example Questions (click for links)

"What do you think the human race will be like in 10000 years time?"

"Would you say a shark tooth is a fossil?"

"What would a tornado do if it went through a volcano?"

"Is every living thing evolved from something?"

"Why do bees have stingers?"

"What was birds before the evolved or did they even evolve and what different types of birds were there?"

"If people came from monkeys what did monkeys come from?"

"Why are dinosaurs extinct?"

"How do you know if dogs are right or left handed?"

"What was the first animal on earth at all?"

"Why do you want to find mutations for humans?"

"What do you believe in more science or Christianity?"

"Will we evolve further?"

"If people came from monkeys what did monkeys come from?"

"What did fish evolve from?"

"Do you agree with the fact that people think that humans are special enough to have product tested on animals before themselves?"

"Do you work with fossils or bones?"

## Examples of good engagement

Thomas was great at engaging the students, often asking them questions too. For example:

*"@steph What is the difference between an octopus and a squid?" – Teacher*

*"Can I be cheeky and answer that for @steph! Octopus and squid are my favourite animals and I have found many fossil ones! 😊" – Thomas, scientist*

*"Haha go for it @Thomas, I know they're both cephalopods but I'll let Thomas take over from there" – Steph, scientist*

*"So interesting question for you and the students: how many tentacles does an octopus have?" – Thomas, scientist*

*"8 😊 impressed?" – Student*

*"The answer is none! Octopuses have 8 ARMS. Squid have 8 arms two, but they have two extra arms that have special attachments called 'clubs' that are covered in hooks. These are actually tentacles!" – Thomas, scientist*

*"How many are there then? Even our teachers didn't know the answer!" – Student*

*"Aghhhhhh you got us, but we are assuming you mean squid have 8 arms too not two 😊 hehehe" – Teacher*

*"Yes! Squids have eight arms and two tentacles (so ten appendages)" – Thomas, scientist*

## Scientist winner: Thomas Clements

Thomas's plans for the prize money: *"I love to go out to schools and talk about what I do and how I got into it. I love my job so much, but when I was growing up I didn't know you could do the science with fossils, let alone of rotting things. For those schools too far away, I would love to start a virtual lab webpage and create videos blogs to answer any questions about what palaeontologists do." I want to show students everywhere that anything is possible if you keep your mind open and keep asking 'why?' all the time.*



Read Thomas' [thank you message](#).

## Student winner: 425evnb35

For great engagement during the event, this student will receive a gift 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...

*"I hope you enjoy reading my question #awesome. You are the best scientist ever" – Student*



Thaddeus Aid  
@ThadIsNotFood

#IASUK chat 1 done, possibly the most hectic experience of my life! I loved it!

