



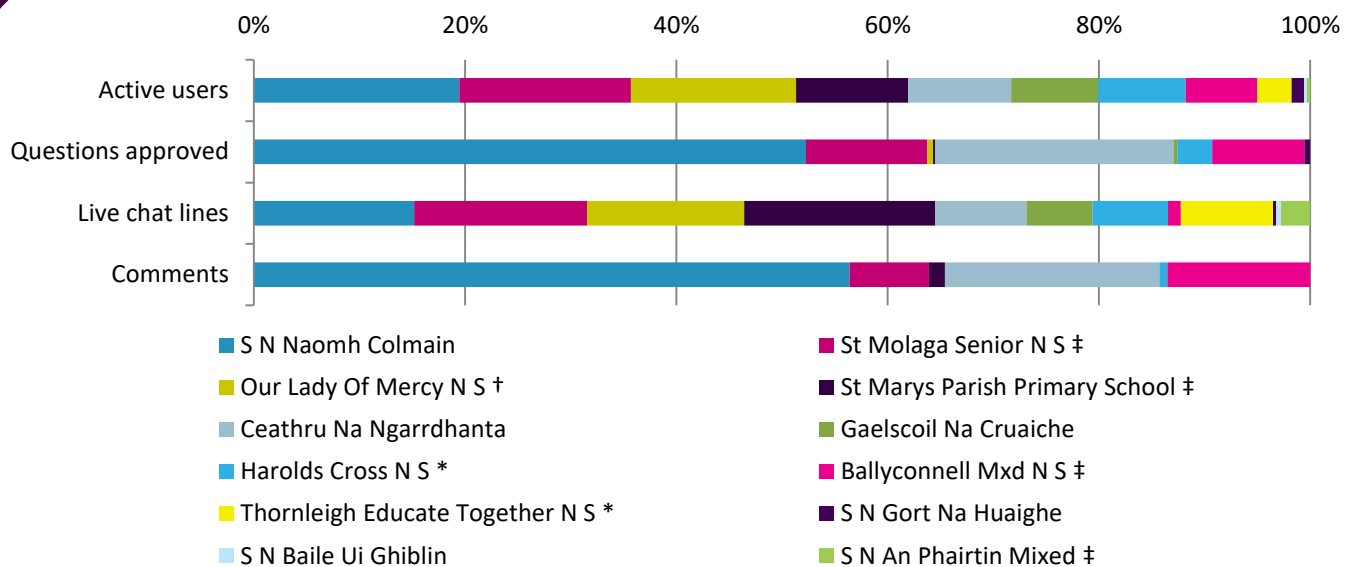
November 2017

The Food Zone was a themed Zone specifically for primary schools, and supported by Wellcome. Yvonne is a PhD student researching whether grass-fed beef is healthier than grain-fed beef, Yannis is a chemist researching how food lipids can affect cardiovascular diseases and Gonzalo works as a meat scientist at Teagasc. Golnaz is trying to find out the source of pollution in water drains at dairy farms, in order to prevent further pollution, Elaine is researching whether milk proteins can help people, in particular those with diabetes, control their blood sugar levels and Ciara, the winner of the Food Zone, is studying the gut microbes of athletes.

The Food Zone was the busiest Zone in this event, with the highest amount of votes and questions in Ask. Students engaged brilliantly with the theme and could relate to the work of the scientists through conversations about their favourite foods and nutrition. They showed a good awareness of healthy eating, as well as issues around farming and agriculture, with well thought out questions in both Ask and the Live Chats.

Scientists were open in their answers, and often disagreed with each other in controversial topics, such as **whether a vegan diet is safe for children**, or **if food can cure diseases**.

School data at a glance

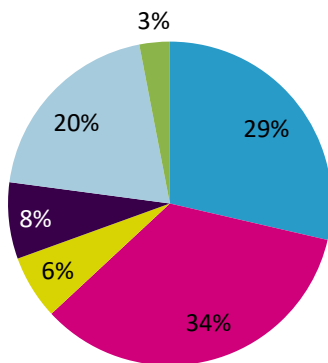


We want to increase the participation of under-represented groups going into STEM careers. Priority schools are noted above. Read more at about.imascientist.ie/2016/widening-participation/

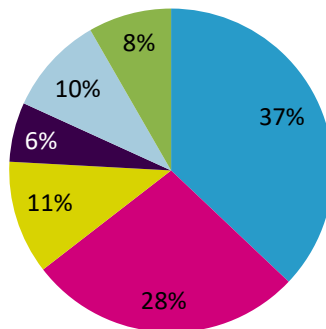
DEIS schools in SFI target counties (*), other DEIS schools (†), and other non-fee-paying schools in target counties (‡).

Scientist activity

Answers



Live chat lines



SCIENTIST	PROFILE VIEWS	POSITION
Ciara O' Donovan	964	Winner
Gonzalo Delgado-Pando	628	2nd
Yvonne Lenighan	647	3rd
Elaine Kennedy	689	4th
Yannis Zabetakis	550	5th
Golnaz Ezzati	449	6th

Key figures from the Food Zone and the averages of the November zones

PAGE VIEWS	FOOD ZONE	NOV '17 ZONES AVERAGE
Total zone	24,662	17,978
ASK page	3,152	1,807
CHAT page	1,296	1,306
VOTE page	2,222	1,696

	FOOD ZONE	NOV '17 ZONES AVERAGE	IAS 2012-17 AVERAGE
Schools	12	12	11
Students logged in	363	385	369
% of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE	93%	90%	85%
Questions asked	1,114	640	593
Questions approved	449	255	262
Answers given	891	542	497
Comments	123	51	64
Votes	548	361	300
Live chats	19	17	16
Lines of live chat	5,377	4,469	4,136
Average lines per live chat	283	261	271

Popular topics

Healthy eating was a very popular topic, with students wanting to know which foods are good for different parts of your body, which foods have the most calcium and what we should eat to prevent us from becoming ill.

There was a lot of interest in the scientists' work, with Golnaz receiving lots of questions about their work with beef and other meat, and Ciara about how athlete's bodies can differ from other peoples. Students asked Golnaz about issues within farming, with questions on pollution and whether fertilizers are safe to use on crops. Elaine was asked about her research into milk proteins and diabetes.

Students wanted to know about different allergies and intolerances, often because they themselves, or someone they know, is affected, contributing to their Science Capital. There were questions on coeliac disease, lactose intolerance and nut allergies, with students asking why they happen and how they can be managed. They asked about how foods can affect them personally, such as what they should be eating before football match, or what food they should take for climbing a mountain.

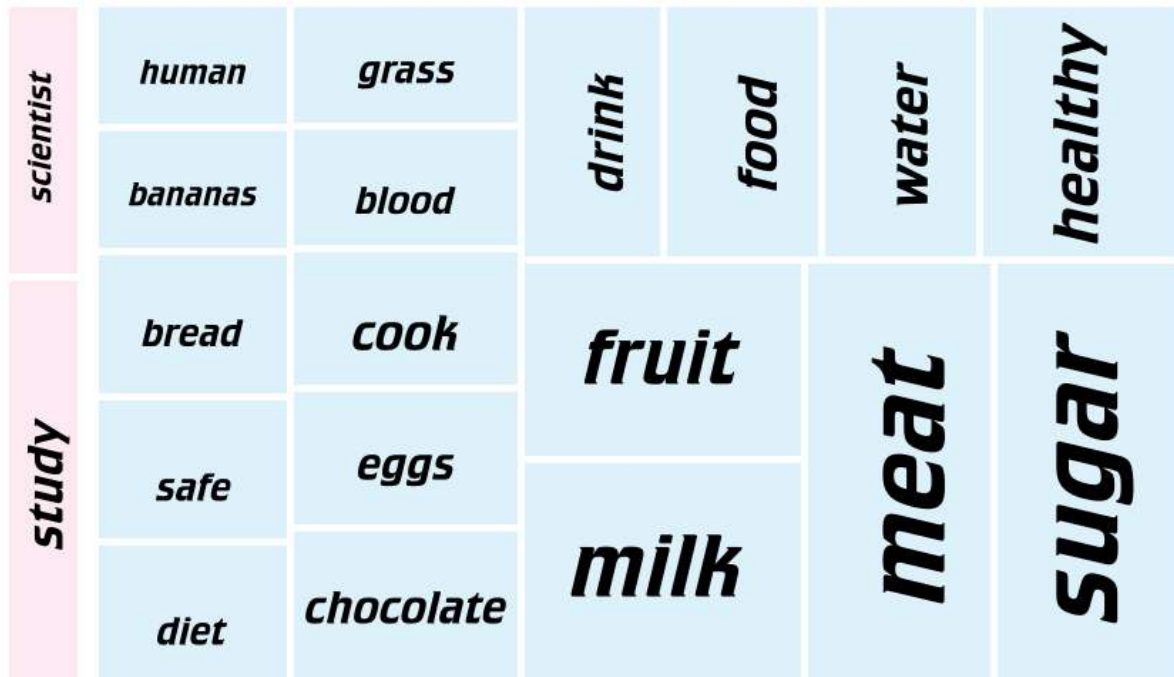


Keywords from live chats in the zone, size of the word represents its popularity



Top Keywords of questions approved in the Zone

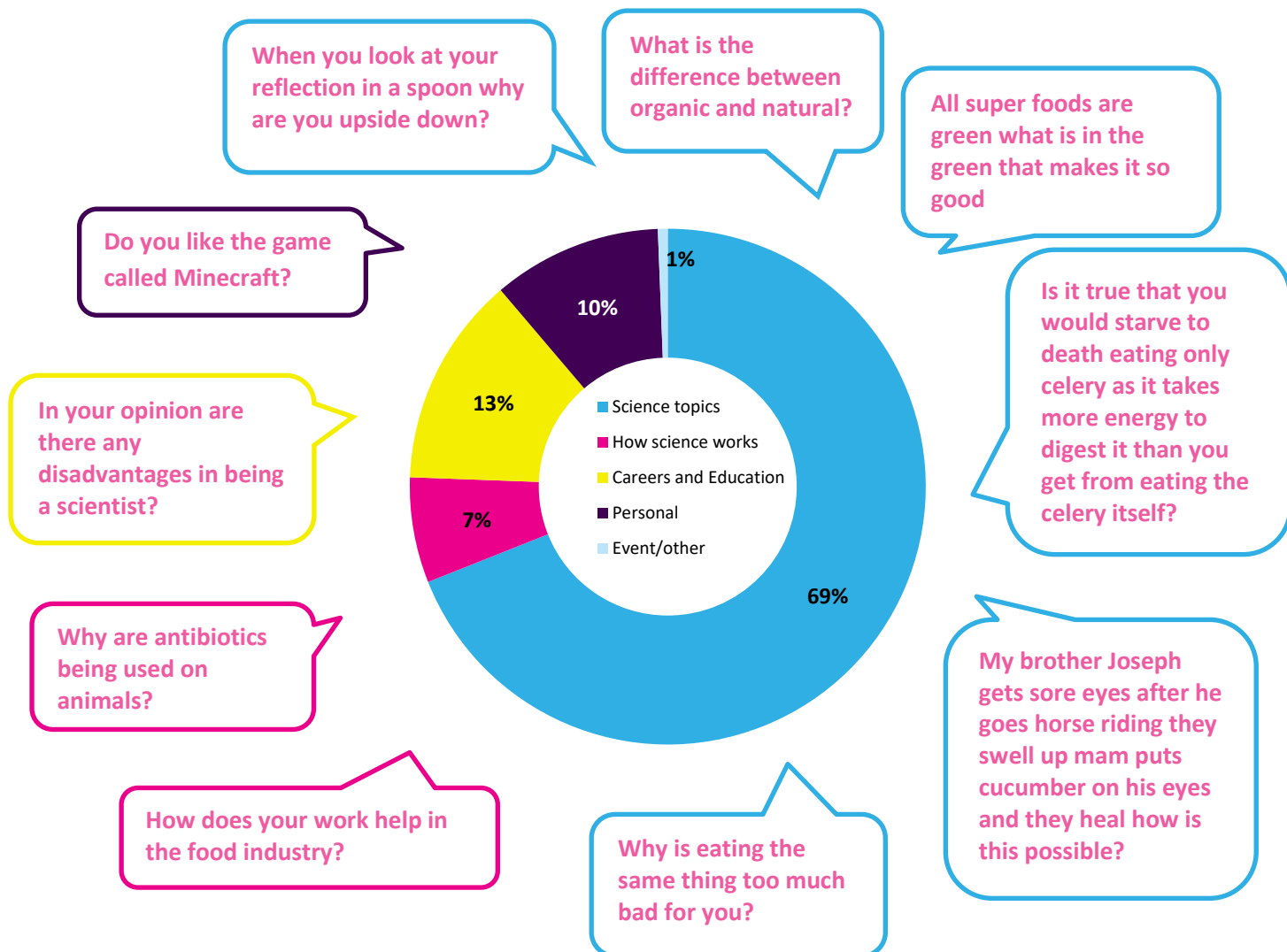
Area represents frequency of use



Being a Scientist Science

Question themes and example questions in the Zone

Click for links



Find out about how we've coded the questions at about.imascientist.org.uk/2017/student-question-coding

Examples of good engagement

Live Chats were on topic and fun, with students asking lots about different types of foods and the effects food can have on our bodies. The scientists were great at explaining complicated topics in a way that primary-aged students could understand:

"Why are people allergic to certain food?" – Student

"This is because their bodies are trying to protect them, and think the food is harmful and then they get an allergic reaction" – Ciara, scientist

"Some substances are recognised as strangers for the body and it reacts against them. Some of these substances are in food, but can also be in animals (cats, dogs) or dust mites..." – Gonzalo, scientist

Students wanted to know about the scientists' favourite foods and bonded over their likes and dislikes:

"Would u like to try any food u have not tried before?" – Student

"Yes there are a lot of foods I would like to try.. snails maybe?" – Ciara, scientist

"Ewwww i don't think i would like to try snails!" – Student

"Haha I've heard they are nice!" – Ciara, scientist

"Really!?!? Haha!" – Student

"Yeah I must try sometime and decide for myself!" – Ciara, scientist

"Haha maybe if u ever find one on a wall eat it" – Student

"Maybe not :P" – Ciara, scientist

"I would never do that either!" – Student

Scientist winner: Ciara O' Donovan

Clara's plans for the prize money: *"Host a workshop for students to show them a little bit about what I do. A lot of my work involves DNA sequencing and the analysis of this and so I would like to give a workshop on this explaining and going through the steps of extracting DNA and then explaining what happens during sequencing. I would use the money to get equipment to run this workshop."* Read Ciara's [thank you message](#).



Student winner: EAMON

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...

"The scientists who took part in the live chat were marvellous! They really engaged with the students in and answered all sorts of wonderful questions!" – Teacher

"I would like to say thanks this was SO fun. I have learned so much!" – Student

"I much preferred this type of science engagement than others I have performed in the past...I was able to fit it into my schedule and I didn't have to travel anywhere to participate I just had to be at my desk when a live chat was happening. This suited me and my current work very well." – Ciara, scientist