



Building Your Communication Skills with Winners of the *I'm a Scientist* Competition

Tristan MacLean and Andrew Maynard



@KeeponQuest



@ImascientistUS



Meet the Scientists...

Zoe
 Lindsay
 Kenzi
 Jeff
 Avani

Zone Home
Scientists

☐ global
☒ zone

Question: When did you become a scientist?

Asked by teamwater321 to Avani, Jeff, Kenzi, Lindsay, Zoe on 16 May 2015.

0

What is *I'm a Scientist*?

Last Message
0 minutes ago

@Aldy : No x
@bvd75 : @Jeff What is the most common type of bat that you study? x
@ArZi : @Zoe is it true that ants can lift things 5 times their weigh x
@EBe : His name is Michael (Our science teacher) x
@PJ : @Jeff #lovebats!! x
@Angus Beot : MY name is angus x
@Greta : our science teacher is about to join x
@piou087 : @Jeff how many diferant types of bats do you study? x
@ToxicButterfly24 : @Zoe, are roly-polies and pñ bugs the same thing? x
@James : @Jeff what bats are you studying right now x
@Angus Beot : Japanese art x
@Aldy : @Zoe do you like rolie polies x
@PJ : cool x
@ArZi : @Zoe is it true that ants can lift things 5 times their weight x
@Greta : hihhi x
@PJ : PJ : @Zoe, @Jeff @Lindsay What is the farthest place you've gone to study? x
@Greta : hihhihihi x

Last Message
0 minutes ago

Lindsay : @PJ Either Johannesburg, South Africa (where I live now), or Punta Arenas, Chile—a popular spot for cruising to Antarctica! x
@Zoe : @Abby I love rolie polies, so cute x
@Jeff : @PJ: #smallworld x
@Jeff : @James : I study all modern bats, which means all bats that aren't extinct! @piou087: scientists think there are at LEAST 1300 species of bats, but probably a lot more we need to find x
@Zoe : @ToxicButterfly2 4-Yup! same things x
@Zoe : @PsychicNova: My favorite insect is the orchid mantis. It camouflages as a pretty pink and white flower and hides on real flowers, when bees and butterflies come by it grabs them and devours them. "link" x
Lindsay : @Abby Not yee! It's a not-so-secret dream of mine, and I read just about every book on the subject that I find! Also, it just got an inch shorter in the last Nepalese earthquake, so it's also a TINY bit easier now! Do you ask me the mountain question on Ask? x
@Jeff : @PsychicNova: that's a weird coincidence! why do you like them so much? x
@Jeff : @PJ South Africa or Australia, depending on where you're measuring from! x
@Zoe : @ArZi I dont think Avani is here. I use R and Python though x
@Zoe : @piou087 there are tons of different inchworms. They are all called geometers, like geometry. They all eat leaves, but different species eat





Meet the Scientists...



I'm a Scientist in numbers

8 years

7 countries

53 events





Zones

281

Hydrogen
Zone 

Tantalum
Zone 

Tungsten
Zone 

I'm a
Scientist
Get me OUT of here 


Extreme Pressure
Zone 

Heart
Zone 

Spectroscopy
Zone 

Ageing
Zone 

Energy
Zone 

Production
Zone 

Earth
Zone 

Launch
Zone 

Training
Zone 

I'm an
Astronaut
Get me OUT of here



I'm an
Engineer
Get me OUT of here

I'm a
Geoscientist

I'm a
Scientist
USA 

~ 1500

Teachers



~ 800

Schools



~ 89,000

Students



~ 1,400

Scientists and engineers



~ 83,000

Questions answered



~ 5,000

Live Chats

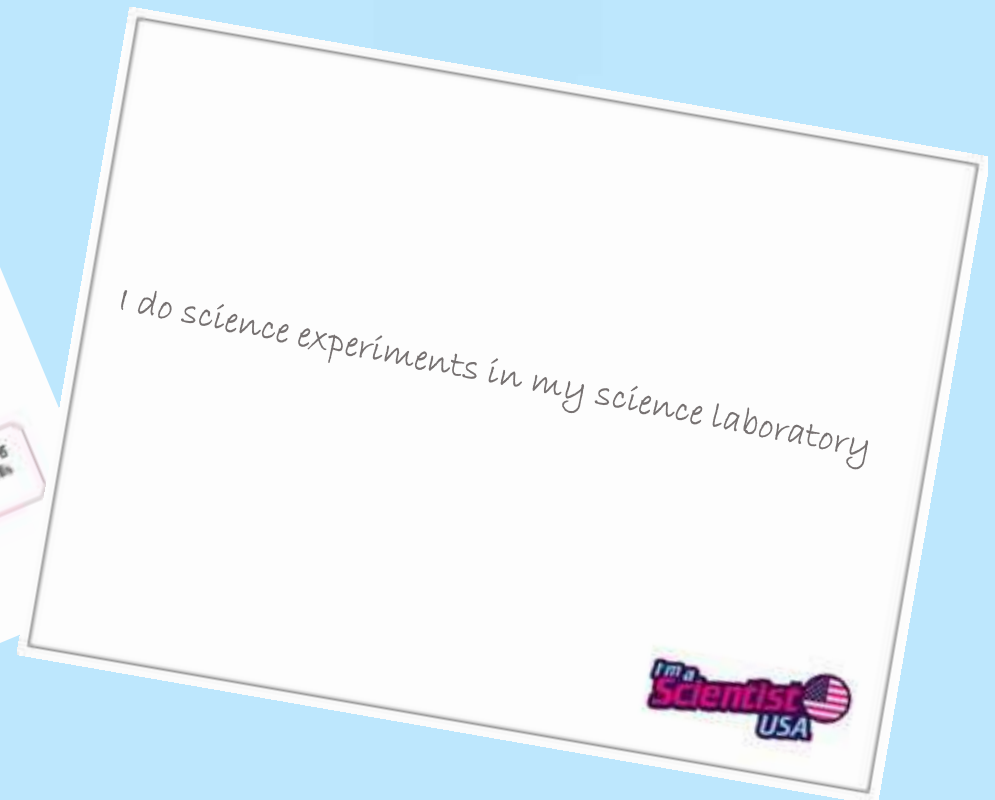
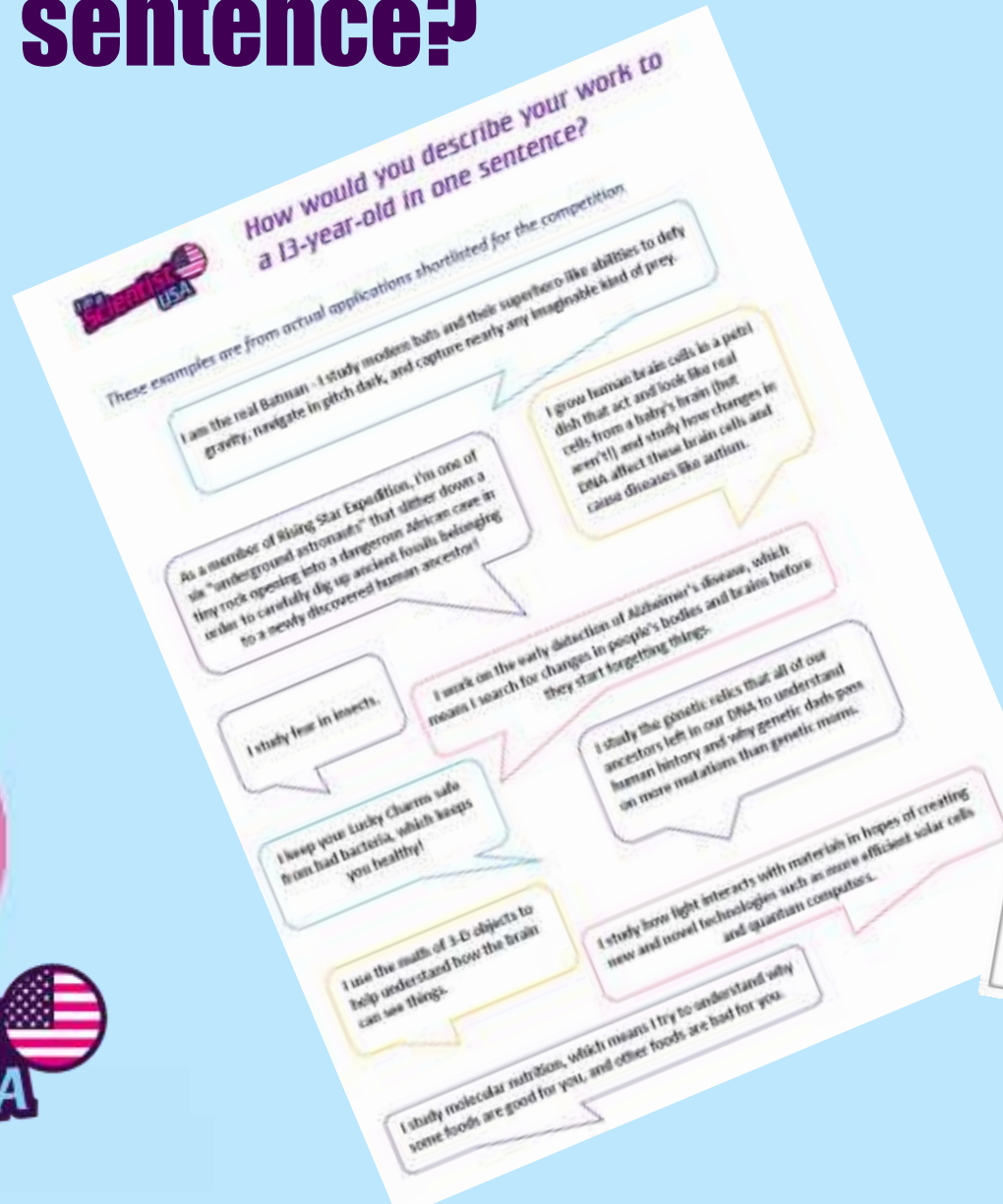


~\$200,000

Outreach prize money



How would you describe your work to a 13-year-old in one sentence?



Profile



Jeff Shi

[Edit your profile](#)

Feeling blood rush to my head every time I remember I won against such amazing competition! Thank you all!

Favourite Thing: Exploring uncharted territory in the field – whether it's trapping animals off the beaten path, observing from the safety of some hardy field vehicles, or generally getting lost in forests, caves, deserts, and everything in between.

Me and my work

I study the world's bats, and how evolution has molded them into a group of superhero-like animals as spectacularly diverse as Batman's gadgets.

[Read more ▼](#)

My Typical Day

I use X-ray beams to scan bat skulls and project evolutionary models of them onto supercomputers for analysis.

[Read more ▼](#)

What I'd do with the money

Since most people find it hard to imagine just how diverse bats are, I will photocopy skulls using 3D printing technology to make replicas for teaching and outreach.

[Read more ▼](#)

My CV

Education:

Duke University (2007 – 2011),
University of Michigan (2012 – Present)

Qualifications:

Ecologist and evolutionary biologist,
wildlife biologist in South Africa, genetic
researcher

Work History:

Hollywood Bowl, Colburn School of
Performing Arts, Duke University,
University of Michigan, 826michigan
(Volunteer)

Current Job:

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, PhD
Candidate and Graduate Student
Instructor

Employer:

University of Michigan



Tips for engaging students

This is not a seminar for the super-smart scientists of the future.

The point of *I'm a Scientist* is to try to engage all students, not just the ones who might go on to study science at university.

– so just be yourself!

Don't be afraid to say 'I don't know'.

"573hyda23 : @zoe what is in a black hole"

Zoe : @573hyda23-I have nooooo idea. I would love to know though. you should become an astrophysicist and find out for me."

Tips for chatting on line with students

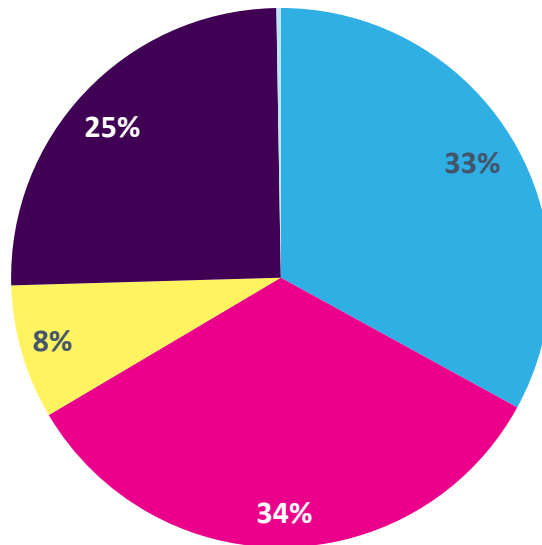
- Embrace the chaos
- Be patient
- Be tolerant
- Don't take offence



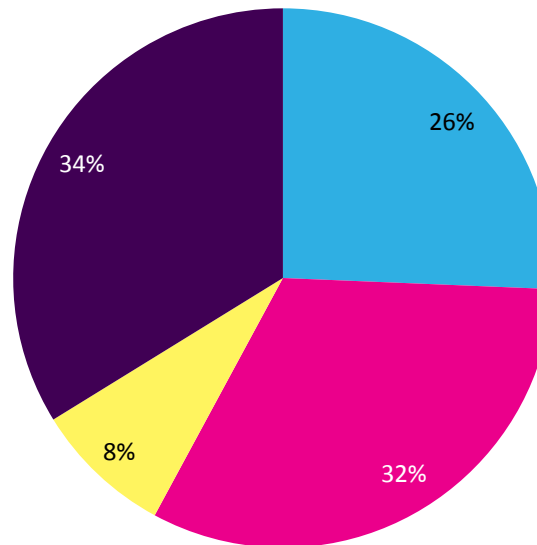
What does the data say?

Scientists' activity

Answers



Lines of live chat



Scientist	Profile views	Position
Jeff Shi	470	Winner
K. Lindsay Hunter	482	2nd
Kenzi Clark	404	3rd
Zoe Getman-Pickering	423	4th
Avani Wildani	341	5th

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32



“I appreciated that you answered all my questions with **details**. I also appreciated that you were being **realistic**. Lastly, I appreciated that you were telling the **truth**. I voted for you because you **inspired** me to observe bats.”

Cheyenne

“I also learned that **me and you aren’t so different.** I learned really cool things about you. Thank you so much!! I hope you win!!”

River



“I voted for you because you stood out to me. **We are also very much alike.** We both travel and I like seeing fossils and learning about them. You also give very **truthful** responses even if they **don't make you look perfect.** This is why I voted for you.”

Student, Kindezi School



“I really enjoyed the chat! I really liked that you answered all my questions with the best answer. **You were also respectful to me.** You were very nice. This made me feel like you deserved to win.”

Ava

“I enjoyed chatting with you because you **responded quickly**. I also enjoyed chatting with you because you inspired me to work with bats. I enjoyed chatting with you because you made your job sound **interesting**. Even though your job is a lot of work, I still like it.”

Camille



students are interested in careers

"Student : I want to be a paleontologist. What should my next steps be?"

Zoe : @Student -First you need to graduate from high school and apply to a college with a good paleontology department. Read about what its like, and what the big discoveries are. IF you can, find some summer camps or clubs you can join that will teach you paleontology skills.

...and life as a scientist

"268hyda23 : why did you choose to become a scientist ?

Zoe : @268hyda23-I became a scientist because I love asking questions and learning interesting facts about nature. As a scientist I get paid to keep asking questions and discovering new things.

"Student : how long do you work a day

Zoe : @ Student - good question. Some days I work allllll day, but usually i work the usual 8 hours. You have to pull some late nights in science but things are very flexible. I can sleep in really late as long as i dont mind working late."

"Student : @Lindsay @Kenzi what kind of tech do you use for experiments?"

Lindsay : @Student I've used 3D contact digitizers, 3D laser scanners, GPS, plum bobs, porcupine quills, spoons, toothpicks, calipers, pipettes, etc. Soon, I hope to learn to use radio collars for monkeys!

“I am always looking for ways to engage those kids who don’t see science as “fun” and I am glad that your **lighthearted** and **enthralling** answers inspired them!”



**Stephanie DeBiasio,
Hamilton Middle School, Montana**

“The kids were **actually talking science** today as they thought about things they are curious about.”

**Alan Siegel,
High School of the Future, Philadelphia**

“Being able to interact with students
gives you a **greater perspective** on
what you are trying to achieve.”

Lindsay Hunter



“It’s a more **personal** level of communication. It’s nice to feel directed towards a person rather than a vague audience. That you’re interacting with someone.”

Lindsay Hunter



Live Chat

This is where Live Chat happens!

Rules:

- Refresh this page until you can see the live chat, it usually opens 5 minutes before your chat is due to start.
- **If your class haven't shown up after 10 minutes into the live chat we will close it.**
- Put an @ in front of their name of the person you're talking to.
- Don't write in capital letters.
- Don't spam.



Click here

Remember to **Ask** **?** more questions. And **Vote** **X** for your favourite scientist.

What are you waiting for?

***APPLY
NOW!***

