How ‘sciencey’ am I?

• Very!

• As a child:
  • I used to think about science in the bath
  • I had great science teachers
  • I had a chemistry set, LEGO, Meccano and a microscope
  • I always wanted to be a vet
  • My father played golf and snooker with me
How ‘sciencey’ am I?

As an adult:

- I was a post-doc biochemist
- I work at the Science Museum
- I read and watch science media for fun
- I try to cook like Heston Blumenthal!
- I love jigsaws and Sudoku
- I own a steam cleaner
- I use science to solve life’s little problems!
How ‘sciencey’ are you?

• What STEM-related qualifications or skills/knowledge do you have?

• What 3 words would you use to describe your feelings about STEM?

• What STEM-related activities/experiences do you do outside of work?

• Who do you know who uses STEM in their life/work?
How ‘sciencey’ are you?

• What STEM-related qualifications or skills/knowledge do you have?

• What 3 words would you use to describe your feelings about STEM?

• What STEM-related activities/experiences do you do outside of work?

• Who do you know who uses STEM in their life/work?

• Score yourself out of 5 for each question

Let \( f_{(SC)} = A(1) + A(2) + A(3) + A(4) \)

• \( x \geq 16 \) = high science capital
• \( x \leq 8 \) = low science capital
• \( 8 < x < 16 \) = medium
Science Capital

In a sample of 3000+ 11-15yr olds:

- 5% had high science capital
- 27% had low science capital
- 68% had medium science capital
- The more science capital you have, the more likely you are to engage with science in the future
- Science Capital is a lens for understanding how people engage with science
Why science?

- Engagement in science improves life opportunities
- Many young people see science as abstract
  - little real life application
  - suited only to bright students
- They don’t recognise the value it has to their lives or how it can help them with their future aspirations or ambitions.
Science Capital helps us to …

• … understand what influences and shapes people’s attitudes towards science
• … consider all of the
  • science related knowledge
  • social contacts
  • attitudes
  • skills
  • experiences.
However …

- We cannot solve the problem alone
- We are part of the science engagement landscape along with schools, universities, Government, STEM organisations etc
- Only by working together we can affect change
Why is Science Capital useful?

- Understanding visitors’ engagement with STEM
- Help us shape our engagement experiences
- Identify successes
- Improve engagement with non-visitors
Why is Science Capital useful?

- Visitors are at the heart of our experiences
Why is Science Capital useful?

- Help us shape engagement experiences
In summary

• Higher science capital is associated with increased science engagement
• We all play a part in science engagement
• We all play a part in science capital
• The UK needs more STEM professionals
• One quarter of our young people currently have no engagement with science …
… but could do!
Thank you