



Speed survey

Surveys are an important method of information retrieval, and this activity allows students to evaluate the process of collecting data from short interviews with their peers.

Outcomes

Students will understand:

- the importance of gathering information from people (survey)
- the case study approach to research.

Time required

Allow 1 hour 30 minutes for speed survey and 30 minutes to plan and collate results.

Outline of the activity

This speed survey game is similar to the concept of speed dating and speed networking.

Ask students to plan five questions related to their Science in Society lessons that they could ask their peers' to form part of a small research project. Give them some examples, such as the following.

- Did you have the MMR vaccination?
- Which other diseases have you been vaccinated for?
- Do you think the MMR vaccine is safe?
- Have you read or watched any media reports about the MMR vaccine?
- Would you allow your child to have the MMR vaccine?

Discuss whether, by asking enough people, it is possible to make a link between the answers such as 'those who have had the MMR vaccine themselves are more likely to say they would allow their own child be vaccinated than people who have not had the MMR' or 'people who have seen media reports about the MMR vaccine are less likely to think it is safe'.

Once students have their questions, they all start off with one partner and you shout 'go'. When 1½ minutes is up, ring a bell / alarm (or shout 'change'). This indicates that the first student

interviewer now becomes the interviewee. After another 1½ minutes ring a bell and call 'move!'. This signals that students must find someone else to talk to, and the process repeats. Each student in the pair has only 1½ minutes to conduct their interview.

After half an hour (or ten interviews), ask students to look at their results and see if there are any trends. Can students compile their results in a form that can be presented to the rest of the class (graphs, tables etc.)? Ask for a few volunteers to tell the whole class what they have found.

Have a short discussion based on the last question on the briefing sheet. Can students use their preliminary data to generalise about their year group (or even age group)? Why? This illustrates how 'case studies', i.e. getting a lot of information (or five questions!) from a small sample, might give you rich data, but this is not enough to tell you everything. The sample is not representative of the whole population, so you cannot generalise.

Tips and strategies



Students can mingle in the classroom, or sit at desks as if being interviewed while one in the pair remains stationary and the others move around (just like speed dating!).

Agree that potentially embarrassing questions will not be part of the survey.

This activity if extended (i.e. asking the students to prepare their data for a presentation) would allow you to cover Skill Areas 4 and 6 as well.



Speed survey: briefing sheet

In this activity you will collect data from speed surveys of your classmates.

1 Write down five questions, based around the topic of modern vaccines, which you would like to interview your classmates about.

2 Choose questions that may allow you to link your classmates' answers to general statements such as 'people who have seen media reports about the MMR vaccine are less likely to think it is safe.' Your teacher may suggest some examples.

A

B

C

D

E

3 Now play the Speed Survey Game, as organised by your teacher. Whilst interviewing your friends, write down all their answers, along with any other information that may be relevant (e.g. name, gender).

4 When you have finished, look at all your results. Do you see any patterns? Write down what you have found. If you haven't found any patterns, what can you conclude? Is this an effect of your methods, or can you be sure there is no pattern?

5 How would you present your findings? Sketch your results and discuss with another student in your class.

6 Discuss whether you should make generalisations for such small-scale surveys. Write down the reasons for your answer below.