ASID 2020 Social Event Information

Pub Quiz – Friday 24th July 2020 3-4pm

ACTIVITY: This event was a virtual “pub” quiz taking place over Zoom. We had 5 hosts that each wrote their own round of 4-5 questions (Music & Film, Celebrity Picture Round, Geography and Dingbats – logical picture and word puzzles). Once everyone had arrived on the call, we split the group randomly into 4 teams (of 3-4 people). They had 2 minutes to create a team name. Each host presented their own round (verbally and with slides) to the whole group in the main chat, with each person noting down their own answers. Then the group split into their teams to discuss their answers, re-joining the main chat when called back. Then answers were given (the teams self-marked). Scores were collected at the end of each round and the winners announced at the end.

ATTENDANCE: Around 14 people

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY: We used Zoom with screensharing and also breakout rooms. Each host shared their screen in the main chat in order to present their round (the host used PowerPoint slides to present questions). After presenting each round, the teams would go into their breakout rooms to discuss their answers. The team was then called back to re-join the main chat for the answers (either spoken or shared over screen-share), then the next round was presented. We allocated one person to be Zoom meeting host, in charge of allocating breakout rooms and calling people back to the main chat.

We sent the invitation to the Zoom meeting via MS Teams.

FEEDBACK:

* 11 people filled out the feedback form
* **3.9**/5 for **fun, 3.4**/5 for **organisation; 3.6**/5 for **sociability**
* Length of quiz: **73% good**, **27% too short**
* **64%** wanted to be with **new people** next time, **18% the same**, **18% had no preference**
* **91%** were comfortable with their **camera** and **sound** on a**t all times**, **9%** were **only comfortable** with both **in smaller groups**
* **The majority (50%) thought the pub quiz would work equally well for events with freshers, existing students and colleagues**, with freshers being the least popular option (0%) and colleagues the most (29%)
* **Noone had technical difficulties**
* **Comments on what went well:**
  + Great use of breakout rooms; good variety of rounds; small groups good for teams; time spent with medium (main) group good to get to know others; different presenters for each round
* **Comments on what did not go well/ could be improved:**
  + Main critiques were to have questions available in breakout rooms (PDF/ screen share in breakout room) and to have more time to think about questions in breakout rooms; a few said the hosts should be more energetic/ "showcase-y"; need to fill silences between rounds; smoother/ faster transition between rounds (have questions set up)
* **Further Comments:**
  + Harder questions to differentiate scores; synchronise equipment and quiz to all be in same format

THINGS LEARNED:

* The overall set-up (in Zoom with breakout rooms and presenting to the main group via screen-share) worked very well
* But we need to make the questions accessible in the breakout rooms (email PDFs/ look into option of screensharing to breakout rooms simultaneously?)
* Teams of 3-4 people and random allocation worked really well – everyone seemed happy (random allocation would work particularly well in a Freshers scenario)
* Have **one** person in charge of circulating around breakout rooms to check timings
* Ideal to have **one main host** who would stimulate discussion at the start and fill the gaps in-between
* The hosts need to be as energetic and engaging as possible
* We could have made the pub quiz longer – more rounds/ more questions in each round (some harder ones in each round to differentiate the scores more)

Online Games Social Thursday 30th July 2020 2-3pm

ACTIVITY: This event relied on the use of the virtual platform *jackbox* games. To play, at least one person in the team must have purchased the software (around £7). We played a game called *Quiplash* which is a game involving up to 8 players. Any additional participants are counted as the audience - they can still interact, but they cannot give answers. There are three rounds. The first two rounds are identical, except that the second round is worth double the points. In the first two rounds, each player gets given two prompts and they must come up with the funniest/wittiest response to the prompt that they can think of. Each prompt is given to two players. There is a time limit on the responses and the responses are originally anonymous. After everyone has submitted their answers, the prompt and the two answers provided appears on screen, and the players (and the audience) vote on which one they think is the funniest, then points are allocated to the players based on the number of votes their answer received. The final round is similar except that every player gets the same prompt, and then players and the audience vote for the top 3 best answers. Each game (of 3 rounds) takes around 20 minutes to complete.

We met briefly as a large group on the Zoom call and then split the group into two breakout rooms (with a host who could access *jackbox* in each). We jumped straight into the game with little introduction. We played the game twice (so that those who were originally in the audience could now be players). We then briefly re-joined the main Zoom call and ended the event.

ATTENDANCE: Around 20 people attended.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY: We used Zoom with breakout rooms with 10-11 people per room – it is ideal to have 8 people per room so everyone can be fully involved and provide answers. In each breakout room, one host accessed *jackbox* through their device (desktop) and shared their screen and audio to “stream” the game to all participants.

We sent the invitation to the Zoom meeting via MS Teams.

FEEDBACK:

* 18 people filled out the feedback form
* **3.2**/5 for **fun, 4**/5 for **organisation; 2.1**/5 for **sociability**
* Length of online games: **78% good**, **22% too long**
* **19%** wanted to be with **new people** next time, **56% the same**, **25% had no preference**
* **61%** were comfortable with their **camera** and **sound** on a**t all times**, **39%** were **only comfortable** with both **in smaller groups**
* **The majority (54%) thought the pub quiz would best for existing students (who knew each other well),** with colleagues second (21%) and freshers least popular (8%)
* **11% had technical difficulties**: the quality of the video and sound on the host's screen was not great - hard to hear the game and the video lagged; one person’s internet connection kept dying but they were still able to pick the game back up
* **Comments on what went well:**
  + The main positive comment was that the activity was fun, different, engaging and creative. People also remarked on the simplicity of the game. In general, the quality of the game was good. In theory, a funny game and had potential.
* **Comments on what did not go well/ could be improved:**
  + Most critiqued the activity for being very unsociable - little/ no interaction between people, lots of "awkward" silence, many said the groups were too large and wanted smaller groups (3-4). Another common critique was the lack of an introduction in person to the game/ not knowing what to do at the start. A few said that it "put people on the spot" to be funny or that they struggled to think of "appropriate" answers. Many people commented that the game would have been better with people they knew well. Other comments included: first-come-first-serve for players not ideal; turn game music off; better questions; Teams notifications popping up from host; background noise from host; a suggestion to team people up.
* **Further Comments:**
  + Change questions; pair/group people up (less pressure on one person to be funny); reduce time to pick answers; would only play with close friends (common comment); not good for a first/ early event - needed an ice breaker first.

THINGS LEARNED:

* The set-up of *jackbox* is not sociable as very difficult for people to communicate during the game itself
* It also seems that it works mainly for those who are very comfortable with each other – for a personal event rather than a University organised one
* Clearly the group sizes of 10 were far too big - a lot fewer people with having their cameras/ audio on compared to the pub quiz, it made for **far** less interaction (in addition to the change in event itself)
* It would be hard to reformat the game to make it work as it is a self-contained game

Coffee Break Wednesday 5th August 2020 10-10:30am

ACTIVITY: A short and informal ‘getting to know each other’ activity. Primarily intended to be a chat, but as people don’t know each other well, we planned a conversation prompt of ‘two truths and a lie’. Everyone comes up with three statements about themselves/their experiences, two of which are true, and one is false. The rest of the group must guess which one is the false one.

ATTENDANCE: About 10 people

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY: We used Zoom but could use any group video platform. If a large number of people are attending, breakout rooms would be a good idea. As we were only 10, we stayed as one large group.

We sent the Zoom meeting invitation via MS Teams.

FEEDBACK:

* 7 people filled out the feedback form
* **4.7**/5 for **fun, 4.3**/5 for **organisation; 4.4**/5 for **sociability**
* Length of coffee break: **86% good**, **14% too short**
* **57%** wanted to be with **new people** next time, **29% the same**, **14% had no preference**
* **71%** were comfortable with their **camera** and **sound** on a**t all times**, **29%** were **only comfortable** with both **in smaller groups**
* **The majority (50%) thought the pub quiz would work equally well for events with freshers, existing students and colleagues**, with freshers being the least popular option (0%) and colleagues the most (29%)
* **14% had technical difficulties** – went into Teams meeting instead of Zoom
* **86%** thought the **prompt was good; 14%** did not need a prompt
* **Suggested Alternative Prompts:**
  + Shag, Marry, Avoid
  + Truth or Dare
  + 1 Truth, 2 Lies (less personal)
  + A Book Club - people can show everyone a book they are reading or have read and want to talk about
  + Juggling three Rubik's cubes while solving them
* **Comments on what went well:**
  + In general, very good feedback - the prompt and answers worked well and encouraged more conversation; the coordination between people (people taking turns) worked well; people could participate as an audience if they wanted; a good number (more would have been too many); charismatic and charming host.
* **Comments on what did not go well/ could be improved:**
  + Very little negative feedback - only suggestion to come up with a way of implementing a voting system for what people think is a lie.
* **Further Comments:**
  + “It is a good ice-breaker"

THINGS LEARNED:

* This is an ideal ice-breaker event when people are meeting for the first time
* Again, fewer people were comfortable with having both their video and sound on than for the pub quiz (most likely due to large group number)
* Simple works quite well but is good to have prompts
* Need to be well-organised and clear about how to join the meeting/ where it is – in Teams vs Zoom

Film Screening & Discussion Friday 7th August 2020 4:30-5:10pm

ACTIVITY: Everyone was given a link to watch ‘Secrets of the Surface: The Mathematical Vision of Maryam Mirzakhani’, which is a 1-hour long documentary about the life and mathematical work of Maryam Mirzakhani, who was the first Iranian and the first female to win a Fields medal. The link was open for 24 hours to account for differing time zones/availability (from 6pm on the 6th August, till 6pm on the 7th August). There was a suggested viewing time (3:30pm on 7th August), after which there was a scheduled discussion meeting (4:30pm on 7th August).

ATTENDANCE: There were 26 members of the “UoE Film Club (Maths)” team, so up to 26 people watched the film. Only 10-15 people joined for the discussion.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY: The film was screened using Media Hopper on media.ed.ac.uk, which requires a UUN login. We *think* the film was rented using Vimeo and a licence was gained (speak to Reuben Wheeler about how this worked).

An email was sent to all UG and PhD assistants with all information and asking them to “sign-up” to the event, after which they were added to the Private MS Team “UoE Film Club (Maths)” (for the discussion) and to the private Media Hopper channel (to access the documentary). In the MS Team, standard channels were created as “Tables” which you could choose to “sit at” to form a discussion group at the scheduled time for discussion (4:30 pm).

FEEDBACK:

* 10 people filled out the feedback form
* **4**.**4**/5 for **fun, 4.7**/5 for **organisation; 3.9**/5 for **sociability**
* Length of event: **90% good**, **10% too long**
* **30% the same**, **70% had no preference**
* **70%** were comfortable with their **camera** and **sound** on a**t all times**, **30%** were **only comfortable** with both **in smaller groups**
* **The majority (64%) thought the pub quiz would work well for events with existing students and colleagues,** with freshers being the least popular option (16%)
* **20% had technical difficulties –** accessing the location of the video in MediaHopper; laptop overheating during video calls
* **Comments on what went well:**
  + The most positive feedback was about the film itself - very interesting/ enlightening as most had not heard of Maryam previously. Many commented on the discussion positively - they enjoyed "the flow"/ how it wandered/ the general "chitchat"/ how the film provided a starting point for further discussion. Other comments included: liking the group size of 10 (could see everyone's faces on Teams with 10); liking how we watched the film in our own time; being able to listen without participating; Reuben's hair/ how he is "a chill dude".
* **Comments on what did not go well/ could be improved:**
  + The main critique was that the discussion group was too large - despite having separate "Tables", we did not use them - one suggested prearranging discussion groups (random allocation). Sometimes one person dominated conversation/ some people hardly spoke. The discussion wandered - would help to have a few questions/ points to think about going into watching the film (would also help the shy people to talk/ those who don't know others). Also, a comment to provide a link to MediaHopper/ a email notification when added to the private channel (hard to find). Also, to give people longer to watch the film (some did not attend discussion as had not finished/ watched it).
* **Further Comments:**
  + "I think this kind of thing could be really good to run with people who know each other a little e.g. within workshop groups, to help to get to know each other a little better and make people more at ease on the video calls".

THINGS LEARNED:

* It would be useful to have a few informal discussion points to think about beforehand (to fill silences, not to structure the discussion too much)
* Yet again, large groups have proven **not** to be the most conducive to people being comfortable with their video/ audio on (and hence to interacting with one another)
* It would be a good idea to randomly allocate tables but to do this, you would have to know in advance who was coming (for Teams at least) - perhaps Zoom would be better as people can be more easily added to breakout rooms once then join
* The majority of people who “signed-up” and showed an interest in the film did not attend the discussion (most likely as they had not watched the film) - it would be helpful to think of ways to ensure/ remind people to watch it (group viewings/ notifications)
* Clearly, in a scenario with students, more time would be given to access the film (a week perhaps instead of 24 hours)

ASID Mathalon 2020 Friday 15th August 2020 3-4pm

ACTIVITY: The Mathalon was an online Maths competition comprised of 5 questions (2 International Mathematics Olympiad Questions, 2 MathsCircle questions and 1 Bonus Question – a sequence to fill in the missing terms of). The teams comprised of 2-4 members and they had 50 minutes to complete the questions. (We knew that this was not enough time but we wanted to trial different types of questions and a full event but could not take more time out of the participants’ working days). We gave the ASID team the option to register for the event as a team (of 2-4) or individually (and we would assign them of teams of 2-4). We had 5 teams register and 9 individuals which we randomly assigned to 3 teams. We started in the main group video call and introduced the task, then released the questions as a PDF (along with hints) and asked participants to split into their teams (private channels). The teams had to write their answers into the OneNote document provided by the end of the allotted time. We then ended the event in the main group video call. We then marked the questions the following Monday and released the scores, worked solutions (as a PDF) and the winners on Monday evening.

ATTENDANCE: Around 20 people (8 teams)

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY: Outlook (email), MS Forms, MS Teams, OneNote, Overleaf (LaTex editor optional fot questions, hints and solutions)

We used **Outlook email** to send the information for the event and to ask people to register.

We created a **MS Form for participants to register** their team/ team name/ individually with.

After allowing days for people to sign up (and readvertising several times in various places), we finalised the teams and **created a new MS Team called “ASID Mathalon 2020”**. We created a **Teams Meeting** with all participants and **linked it to the general channel of this Team** (ASID Mathalon 2020) so that people could join from their calendars or from the general channel (and would not forget event as in their calendar).

We created **Private channels** in the ASID Mathalon 2020 MS Team, one for each Team. We created a file in each private channel with a **OneNote** document that had pre-allocated spaces for workings and for the **answers** **to each question** in separate sections/ pages.

The questions and hints were each given in separate PDFs (created using Overleaf but not essential) and posted to the general channel of the MS Team at the start of the event.

We were then available during the event, answering questions posted in the general channel (had to check for these), via private message and on the main video call in the general channel which we kept going so people could come back and ask questions re technical issues etc.

The solutions (PDF), scores (excel) and winners were then posted in the general channel of the MS Teams.

Note: we also created a “Tag” in the ASID Mathalon 2020 Team with **all** participants. We used this when communicating any essential information in the general channel of the ASID Mathalon 2020 Team – I.e. reminder to come back to the main chat/ announcement of winners. (This ensures that everyone will see it no matter which Team they are currently in as they will get an “Activity” notification)

There were 3 of us involved in the management of this event and it worked well. One to arrange the organisation of the event – send emails, form the MS Team, allocate Teams, advertise the event, handle technical issues - and two to manage the material – to find the questions and write/ adapt them, write the answers worked solutions, write the hints document and to mark the answers.

FEEDBACK:

* 17 people filled out the feedback form
* **4.2**/5 for **fun, 3.9**/5 for **organisation; 3.7**/5 for **sociability**
* Length of quiz: **53% good**, **47% too short**
* **50%** wanted to be with **new people** next time, **44% the same**, **6% had no preference**
* **82%** were comfortable with their **camera** and **sound** on **at all times**, **6%** were **only comfortable** with both **in smaller groups** and **12%** would **rather just use sound**
* It was quite an even split between which scenario the event would work best in – **33% thought colleagues, 30% thought existing students, 23% thought all scenarios and 13% thought freshers**
* **35% had technological difficulties –** most had **issues with OneNote** (no tablet, hard to draw pictures, hard to collaborate, text boxes were strange) **and Teams** (no split-screen, no access to group/ private channel – had to be readded, forced out of call when internet was low)
* There was a **big variety in the amount of collaboration** – **35% collaborated a lot, 35% a fair amount and 30% little/ not at all**
* **All types of questions seemed to encourage collaboration** – **41%** said **MathsCircle Qs** encouraged the most collaboration, **32% the Bonus Q** and **27% the Olympiad Qs**
* **The vast majority enjoyed that it was maths-related (76%)** and the rest said it made no difference.
* **Most were comfortable contributing to the team (76%), 12% said it was easier to work on their own and 12% would have been comfortable** but they had to split individually due to difficulty of questions to complete in such a short amount of time
* **When asked if they’d prefer easier questions, they was a roughly even split – 44% said Yes and 56% said no –** the general consensus was that the Olympiad were too hard for the time frame and the MathsCircle are only the right difficulty (as fairly easy) if time-pressurised.
* **88% were happy with their team size and 12% thought they were too small** (probably those in 2-person teams)
* **The cash/voucher prize, wanting to hang out with people and love of maths were fairly equal motivating reasons** for taking part, with boredom and curiosity also listed as reasons.
* **Everyone who registered individually and was allocated to a team was comfortable with allocation/ their team** – liked getting to know people over a shared task. A suggestion to allocate teams with **one other person** **they knew**. Some did not bond at all as did not collaborate or speak at all. **Need to encourage collaboration more.**
* **Comments on what went well:**
  + The main comments were on the problems being interesting/ challenging/ fun and on the organisation of the event - well organised and smoothly run, clear instructions and expectations were made clear, pre-made answer notebook was good. Other comments included catching up with friends (if signed up as team) and
* **Comments on what did not go well/ could be improved:**
  + More time/ easier questions/ few questions; OneNote was frustrating – more time to allow for scanning/ photographing solutions; many comments on integrating questions into the answer sheet as annoying to have to switch between channels; choose questions specifically with collaboration in mind; perhaps give questions one-by-one (or release in stages) to stop teams splitting up; team size too small (most likely was in a 2)
* **Further Comments:**
  + Prize not clearly explained beforehand; advantage to larger team sizes not made clear; having time restraint makes everything harder to questions don’t have to be so hard (MathsCircle difficulty good); Olympiad questions were too hard to do in time frame – unrealistic

THINGS LEARNED:

* **DO NOT OVERESTIMATE HOW MANY QS CAN BE DONE IN TIME FRAME –** also do not give more questions than possible as encourages people to work individually
* **MS Teams can be very glitchy** with allocation of members to Teams and private channels – it caused many problems, however MS Teams is very useful if working properly with private channels with inbuilt OneNote docs
* **Specifically,** some participants could not see ASID Mathalon 2020 MS Team at all (fixed by deleting and readding them to whole Team) or could not see their Private Channel for their team (also fixed by deleting and readding them to Private Channel).
* So, **check beforehand** that everyone has access to the team/ their private channel. Good idea to close sign-up a day in advance and use that day to sort glitches
* Advise everyone to **bring Tablets** if they have them for workings – especially questions involving diagrams/ images
* **Provide the diagrams in the answers** workbook
* **Provide questions (optional hints) and answers side-by-side in same workbook** so members don’t have to switch between channels
* Could **explore using Google Docs/ Word collaborate/ shared whiteboards** instead of OneNote – less lag potentially and easier to contribute
* Unfair advantage to larger team sizes – Solution: Either fix team sizes (but this could reduce participation if students feel pressurised to form a larger group); or **make it clear that the more team members, the better** (in sign-up form/ original email)
* **Could give questions one-by-one/ release sequentially to encourage teamwork** and more collaboration – also stops larger teams from having a large advantage