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Why do Science? Survey

(Adapted from a survey originally hosted at <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/>)

The following is a list of reasons people gave for doing science. Rank them from 1-10 on how important they seem to you as reasons for you to put time into learning science. You may only use each number (1-10) once. Then, answer the reflection questions.

_____ **A)** “Studying science will broaden your understanding of the world around you, may allow you to influence and develop accepted scientific knowledge, and will give you the skills needed to approach most matters in a reasoned and analytical manner.”

Dr. Zac Sloman, Chemistry, Gatsby Business-Science Fellow, Nottingham

_____ **B)** “Science makes a positive impact on people’s lives. In many cases, science saves lives. Scientists use their expertise to develop real solutions for real problems. Remedies for many of the challenges that face our world will be developed by researchers who devote their whole lives to the pursuit of science.”

Professor Neil T. Gorman, Veterinary Science, Vice-Chancellor, Nottingham Trent University

_____ **C)** “Studying science can help you to distinguish between fact and marketing ploys so you can make informed decision about buying new products yourself.”

Science student, Nottingham

_____ **D)** “One of the best reasons for studying science is the wide variety of work it gives you access to. There is a shortage of Biomedical Scientists so there is little job competition here. I previously worked as a science teacher, again a shortage area. My science background can also get me involved in research, and the strong academic challenges of a science degree make it applicable to other careers.”

Maggie Mulholland, Genetics, Hospital biomedical scientist, Northampton

_____ **E)** “I like being a scientist because every day presents a new challenge. Being a scientist means you learn something new every day.”

Industrial researcher, pharmaceutical company, Nottingham

_____ **F)** “The ‘wow’ factor and mystery of science never ceases to amaze me and by studying science, I now have a better understanding of the mystery but still haven’t lost the ‘wow’ factor.”

Postgraduate science student, Nottingham

_____ **G)** “I have decided to study chemistry as I was inspired by my A-level chemistry teacher.”

Undergraduate chemistry student, Nottingham

_____ **H)** “Studying science teaches you how to question, investigate, report and communicate. These are all skills that you can use in any line of work.”

Postgraduate student, Nottingham

_____ **I)** “We cannot know God as well as we otherwise might if we fail to study creation’s witness to its Creator. The Apostle Paul puts it this way, ‘For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, because they are understood through what has been made. So people are without excuse.’” (Romans 1:20 NET)

Dr. Thomas Jay Oord, writer, Relevant Magazine

_____ **J)** “Chemistry, Biology and Physics form the basis of the world around us. By studying science, we can learn how to make the most of our world and hopefully how to protect it for the future generations to come.”

Science graduate, Nottingham

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Reflection questions:

1. What reasons or motivations were new to you or something you had not thought of before?

2. Can you think of other motivations or reasons that weren't listed among the 10 examples? What are they?

3. How do you think your own reasons or motivation could change or be changed?

4. Look at the motivations you have ranked more highly – what character qualities do they make important? (e.g. curiosity, care for the well-being of others, capacity for appreciation and wonder, discernment, desire to serve, ambition, etc.) Are these qualities you want to develop more?

5. One of the motivations listed mentions God – which of the others could also be Christian reasons for studying science? How might they connect with faith?