

Name:

Michal Szpak

Job:

Scientist at the Wellcome Sanger Institute and Outreach Officer at the EMBL-EBI

What do I do?

I study how humans have changed or evolved over thousands of years by looking at the DNA from people around the world as well as really old bones and Mountain gorillas. I use computer programmes to help me look for differences in the DNA code and work out how they are linked to human characteristics such as hair shape.

Me in 3 (three words to describe me)

- Creative
- Fast learning
- Chatty

Fascinating facts about me

I grew up in Poland and I have an identical twin brother. I went to Drama school (and I still keep going to auditions). My favourite band is Years & Years and I have appeared in their music videos. I love films, theatre and travelling.



Skills I use in my job:



Coding – I write code and computer programmes to help me analyse my data



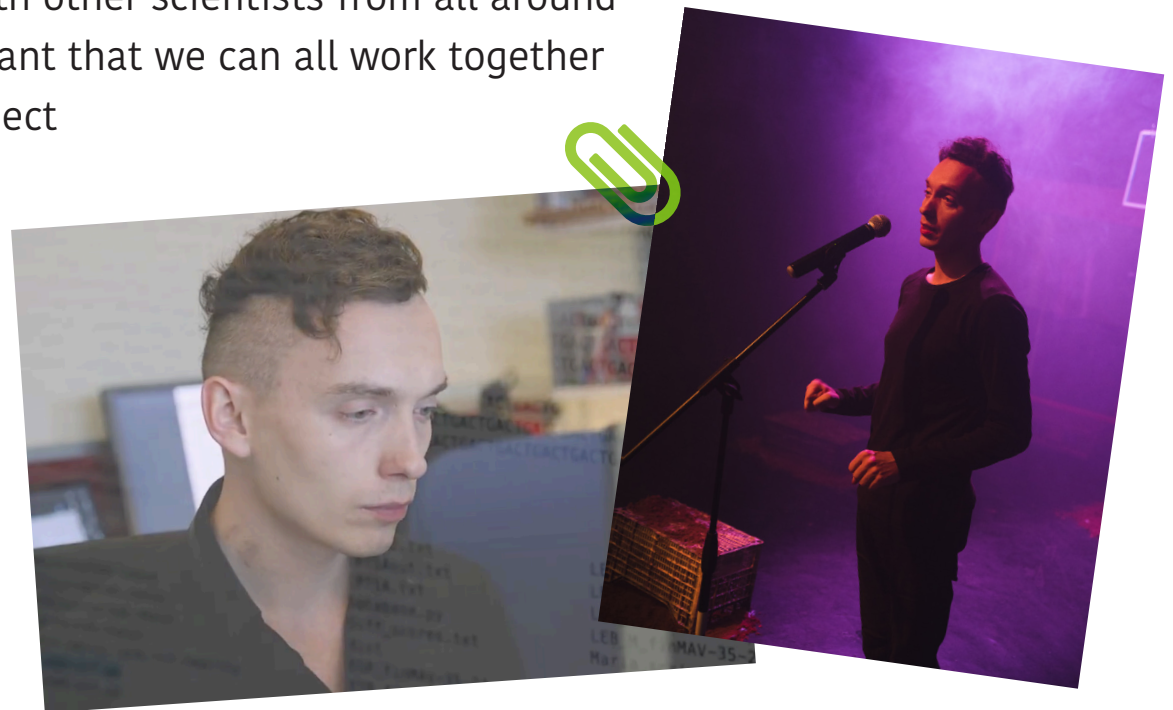
Planning – I have to plan and design my experiments to help me answer new science questions

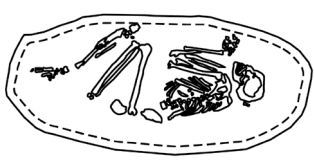


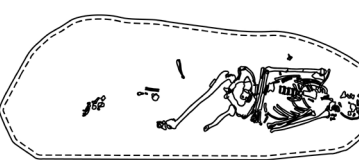
Communication – Part of my job involves training other scientists, I have to explain things clearly to help them learn new skills



Teamwork – I work with other scientists from all around the world, it is important that we can all work together to contribute to a project



Skeleton 1	
	
Gene	DNA clue
Eye colour	CTCCTC
Hair colour	GAAAGG
Hair type	AGTTTT
Freckles	TGGGAT

Skeleton 2	
	
Gene	DNA clue
Eye colour	TGTCTC
Hair colour	GAATGT
Hair type	AGATT
Freckles	CGTGAT

Gene	DNA clue	Face feature
Eye colour	CTCCTC	brown eyes
	TGTCTC	green eyes
	TGTTGT	blue eyes
Hair colour	GAATGT	blonde hair
	GAAAGG	brown hair
	GATAGG	black hair
Hair type	AGATT	curly hair
	AGATTT	wavy hair
	AGTTTT	straight hair
Freckles	TGGCAT	lots of freckles
	TGGGAT	some freckles
	CGTGAT	no freckles

You can recreate more faces here:

www.yourgenome.org/activities/recreate-a-face

Can you recreate an Anglo Saxon's face?

Using DNA clues to understand people from the past is a big part of my job.

Can you use DNA clues to discover and draw what a person from the past looked like?

Using the DNA Key opposite, match the DNA clues for the eye colour, hair colour, hair type and freckles to one of the Anglo-saxon skeletons and draw what you think they looked like.

DNA can't tell us much about what they wore or physical marks such as scars – but you can be creative!