

EVOLUTION, ADAPTATION AND INHERITANCE



Offspring
Animals and plants produce **offspring** that are similar but not identical to them. **Offspring** often look like their parents because features are passed on.

Variation
In the same way that there is **variation** between parents and their **offspring**, you can see **variation** within any species, even plants.



Adaptive Traits

Characteristics that are influenced by the **environment** the living things live in. These **adaptations** can develop as a result of many things, such as food and climate.



Inherited Traits

Eye colour is an example of an **inherited** trait, but so are things like hair colour, the shape of your earlobes and whether or not you can smell certain flowers.

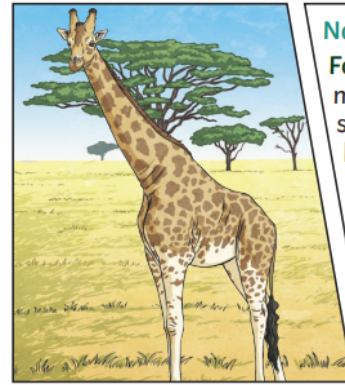
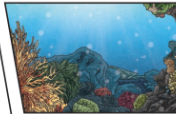


Habitats

A good **habitat** should provide shelter, water, enough space and plenty of food.

Environments

There are many types of **environment** around the world. Polar regions, deserts, rainforests, oceans, rivers, and grasslands are all **environments**.



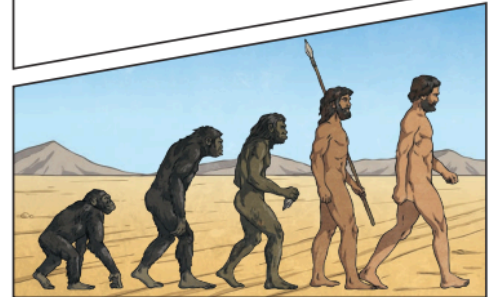
Natural Selection

Fossils of giraffes from millions of years ago show that they used to have shorter necks. They have gradually **evolved** through **natural selection** to have longer necks so that they can reach the top leaves on taller trees.

Fossils are the preserved remains, or partial remains, of ancient animals and plants. **Fossils** let scientists know how plants and animals used to look millions of years ago. This is proof that living things have **evolved** over time.











Evolution is the gradual process by which different kinds of living organism have developed from earlier forms over millions of years. Scientists have proof that living things are continuously **evolving** - even today!



Key Vocabulary

offspring	The young animal or plant that is produced by the reproduction of that species.
inheritance	This is when characteristics are passed on to offspring from their parents.
variations	The differences between individuals within a species.
characteristics	The distinguishing features or qualities that are specific to a species.
adaptation	An adaptation is a trait (or characteristic) changing to increase a living thing's chances of surviving and reproducing.
habitat	Refers to a specific area or place in which particular animals and plants can live.
environment	An environment contains many habitats and includes areas where there are both living and non-living things.

Living Things		Habitat	Adaptive Traits
polar bear		arctic	 Its white fur enables it to camouflage in the snow.
camel		desert	 It has wide feet to make it easier to walk in the sand.
cactus		desert	 It stores water in its stem.
toucan		rainforest	 Its narrow tongue allows it to eat small fruit and insects.