Reading Is Fundamental
until every child reads

Family Recipe

Do you have your mom's green eyes? How about your dad's curly hair? Is your laugh just like your grandma's?

The reason you might look or act like your family members is because of your genes. No, not the jeans that you wear. These genes are inside of your cells.

Genes are made of DNA. DNA is like a recipe for your body. It tells your cells what to do.

Your genes come to you through your mom and dad. They combine in new ways that make you unique. Genes help decide how tall you will be, what color hair you'll have, and even whether you'll like broccoli.

A monk named Gregor Medel was the first person to prove that genes were passed through families. He did experiments with pea plants. He worked with round peas and wrinkled peas to see how they passed down their shapes to future generations.

Mendel discovered that round peas are dominant. They are more common. Wrinkled peas are recessive. They are less common. In humans, brown eyes are dominant and blue eyes are recessive.

Humans can look very different from each other. But 99.9% of human DNA is the same. Humans also share 98% of their genes with gorillas and 50% with plants.

If you unraveled all your DNA and put it end to end, it would reach to Pluto and back! That's a long recipe with a lot of instructions. It's the family recipe that makes you *you*!

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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. How is DNA like a recipe?
    a. It is dominant
    b. It decides whether you like broccoli
    c. It tells cells what to do
    d. It is wrinkled

2. What did Gregor Medel experiment with?
    a. Pea plants
    b. Broccoli
    c. Gorillas
    d. Monks

3. What percent of human genes are DIFFERENT from gorillas?
    a. 99.9
    b. 98
    c. 50
    d. 2

4. Which color eyes are more common?
    a. Blue
    b. Brown
    c. Green
    d. They are all the same

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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