

Short Answer

Type Answer Here

1. What are scientists who study genes called?

2. What year was the structure of DNA discovered?

3. How many pairs of chromosomes do humans have?

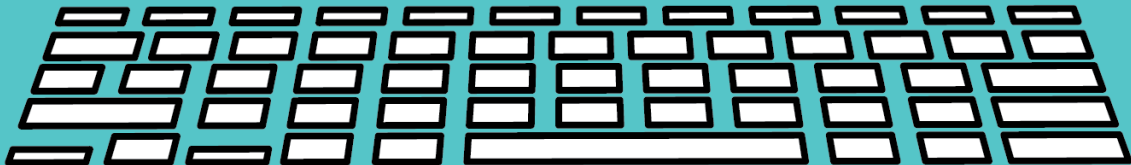
4. What does the A in DNA stand for?

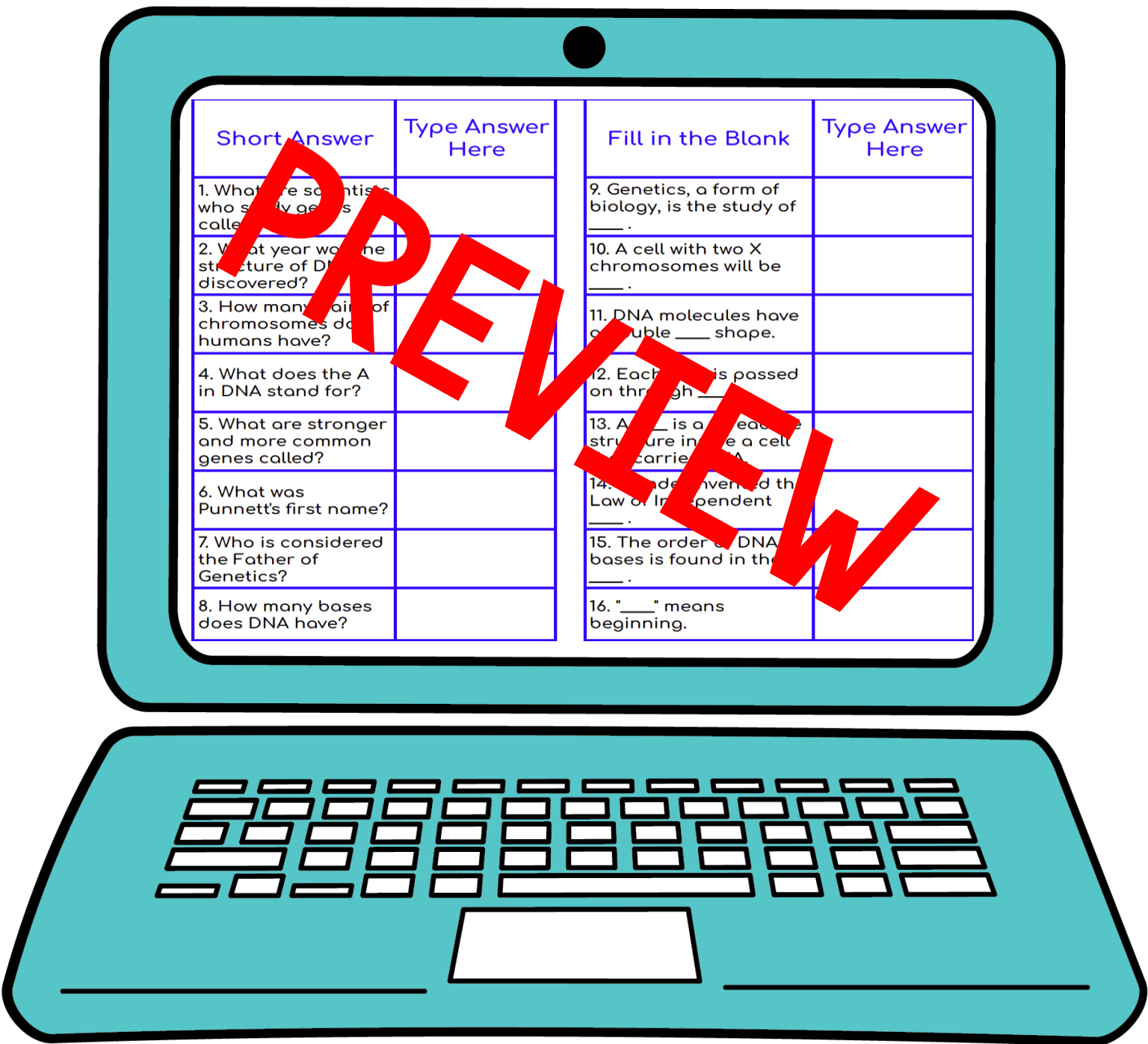
5. What are stronger and more common genes called?

6. What was Punnett's first name?

7. Who is considered the Father of Genetics?

8. How many bases does DNA have?





Short Answer	Type Answer Here	Fill in the Blank	Type Answer Here
1. What are scientists who study genes called?		9. Genetics, a form of biology, is the study of ____.	
2. What year was the structure of DNA discovered?		10. A cell with two X chromosomes will be ____.	
3. How many pairs of chromosomes do humans have?		11. DNA molecules have a double ____ shape.	
4. What does the A in DNA stand for?		12. Each ____ is passed on through ____.	
5. What are stronger and more common genes called?		13. A ____ is a ____ structure inside a cell that carries ____.	
6. What was Punnett's first name?		14. ____ discovered the Law of Independent ____.	
7. Who is considered the Father of Genetics?		15. The order of DNA bases is found in the ____.	
8. How many bases does DNA have?		16. "____" means beginning.	

GENETICS AND DNA

Did you ever notice how your siblings can look so different, even if they have the same mom and dad? For example, mom and dad have brown hair and brown eyes, but why does your brother have red hair and blue eyes while the son has blonde hair and blue eyes? The answer lies in genetics!

Genetics is a branch of biology that studies heredity. "Gen" means beginning. Genetics explains how genes and traits are passed from one generation to the next. Genes are like the code for the appearance of a living being. Scientists who study genetics are called geneticists.

Gregor Mendel, a scientist, is considered the father of genetics. He experimented with pea plants in his garden. With careful discovery, he saw patterns of inheritance.

1. Each trait is passed on through alleles, or alternative versions of a specific gene.
2. Offspring inherits one allele from each parent for each trait.
3. Some alleles may not appear in one generation, but they will still be passed to future generations. An example of this would be a trait that may not appear immediately, but it shows up in future generations, with a red-head child at some point.

When you get the same allele from each parent, that allele is expressed in your phenotype (appearance).

Eventually, Mendel invented the Law of Inheritance and the Law of Independent Assortment.

DNA is the control center where everything begins. DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is a molecule that carries genetic instructions or a blueprint for your body. Humans begin life as a single cell, but that one cell divides into two cells, then four cells, then eight cells. Eventually, humans have trillions of cells. Francis Crick and James Watson of England discovered the structure of DNA in 1953. DNA molecules have a double helix shape, kind of like a twisted ladder. DNA determines traits such as gender, height, hair color, and eye color.

DNA is carried in the chromosome. A chromosome is a threadlike structure inside a cell that carries DNA. Chromosomes carry the "recipe" for the cells. DNA has four bases, called G (guanine), C (cytosine), A (adenine), and T (thymine). These chemicals are the genetic code. A always pairs with T,

and G always pairs with C. The order of these bases is found in the genome (set of genetic instructions).

DNA stays inside the nucleus, so it creates and sends RNA outside the nucleus into the cytoplasm. From here, RNA forms proteins, and these proteins determine life.

Humans have 23 pairs of chromosomes, which equals 46 chromosomes. Living organisms have various amounts of chromosomes. For instance, an elephant has 56 chromosomes, while a pea plant has 14 chromosomes, and roundworms have 2 chromosomes, while hermit crabs have up to 254 chromosomes.

A pair of chromosomes is responsible for a baby being a boy or girl. Chromosomes are labeled X or Y. A cell with one X and one Y chromosome will be male. A cell with two X chromosomes will be female.

A mother and father both pass chromosomes to the baby. These sets of genes determine the baby's traits. Each gene is responsible for one trait, like eye color, hair color, and height. Dominant genes are genes that are stronger than recessive genes.

To see the possible combinations of alleles offspring may inherit, scientists use a Punnett square, named after Reginald C. Punnett. A Punnett square uses two sets of alleles set in a square pattern. One parent's alleles are written on the left, and the other parent's alleles are written on the top. Then you fill in the square. If both parents have the same alleles, the offspring would have those same alleles, called homozygous. Heterozygous, on the other hand, means different alleles for the same gene. This indicates there are two possibilities for the offspring.

In the Punnett square, capital letters indicate dominant genes, and lowercase letters indicate recessive genes. For example, when talking about brown eyes, "B" means brown eyes are dominant. Meanwhile, "b" could indicate a recessive gene for blue eyes. Thus, if a Punnett square reveals BB for eye color, then offspring would have brown eyes. However, if the result is bb, the dominant color trait doesn't exist. However, if the parents have one dominant gene, Bb, offspring will have brown eyes.

Here is a fun fact - the rarest gene is for albinism, or no pigment, and blue eyes. Only one percent of the population has blue eyes. Another interesting note - if you untwisted and stretched a DNA strand, the length of the strand would be twice the size of the diameter of the solar system.

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