

Heredity

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Glossary

adaptation (ad-ap-TAY-shuhn) a body structure or behavior that helps an organism survive in its environment **(22)**

cell (SEL) the smallest unit of an organism, sometimes called a building block of life **(8)**

chromosome (KROH-muh-sohm) a cell structure made of the substance DNA; it contains the genes that give an organism its traits **(8)**

diversity (di-VUR-si-tee) variety **(23)**

dominant trait (DOM-uh-nuhnt TRAYT) a trait that appears if an organism has one or two genes for that trait **(18)**

environment (en-VYE-ruhn-muhnt) all the physical things and conditions, such as soil, air, climate, plants, and animals, that surround and affect an organism **(5)**

gene (JEEN) a section of DNA on a chromosome that carries information for a trait **(8)**

heredity (huh-RED-i-tee) the passing of traits from parent to offspring **(4)**

inherited trait (in-HER-i-ted TRAYT) a characteristic passed from parents to offspring through genes **(4)**

instinct (IN-stinkt) a behavior that an animal knows how to do without being taught; examples include finding food, caring for young, and building a shelter **(4)**

learned behavior (LURND bi-HAYV-yur) an action that an animal learns by observation or from experience **(5)**

nucleus (NOO-klee-uhs) the part of a cell that controls the cell's activities **(8)**

recessive trait (ri-SES-iv TRAYT) a trait that appears only if an organism has two genes for the trait **(18)**

reproduce (ree-pruh-DOOS) to make more of one's own kind; to make offspring **(10)**

trait (TRAYT) a physical feature or behavior of an organism **(4)**

variation (vair-ee-AY-shuhn) a difference between two or more individuals in a species **(16)**

