

Breaking News – Evolution of Life on Earth



National Curriculum:

Recognise that living things have changed over time and that fossils provide information about living things that inhabited the Earth millions of years ago.

Learning objective:

ALL: The Earth is billions of years old.

MOST: Different animals existed at different times in Earth's history.

SOME: Life we see today has evolved from life millions of years ago and the conditions of Earth have changed over time such as atmospheric content and temperature.

Differentiated outcomes:

ALL: Will be able to explain that the Earth is billions of years old.

MOST: Can name different animals from different times in evolutionary history.

SOME: Will be able to explain that animals we see today have evolved over millions of years as the environment has changed.

Lesson in context/prior learning:

Introduce the 'Evolution and Inheritance' module. Detail that you will find out where life came from and how life has evolved. Outline that the earth is very old and over long periods of time, species change in the way they look or behave over many generations as a result of their environment. The video portrays in a newsreader style the progression of some species from 'simple' life such as single celled organisms progressing to more complex organisms as their environment changes and the colonisation of land from water. It details the conditions of Earth at different periods and how these changes such as atmospheric content resulted in the evolution of new species. For example, as oxygen increased and plants colonised the land, animals evolved, colonising the land from water. The main focus of this activity is the progression from ancestral life to the life we have today and how this happens over a very large timescale as a result of environmental change.

Activity 1: After explaining the context of the lesson, play the video of a news story on the history of Earth and hand out the script we have provided. After watching the video, in pairs the children act out their own version of the news story to the class.

Materials needed

- Projector to show the class the video (Found on www.PrimaryEvolution.com)
- Script
- Writing resources for script

Plenary: Explain that life we see today has evolved over millions of years and continues to evolve but it is a very long process. Life we see today has evolved from different looking organisms all the way back to the first signs of (which is different from the origin of the earth).