



THE ORIGINS OF HUMAN LIFE

Learning outcomes:

To **describe** evolution

To **explain** religious views on the origin of human life

To **evaluate** scientific evidence on the origins of human life

Starter:

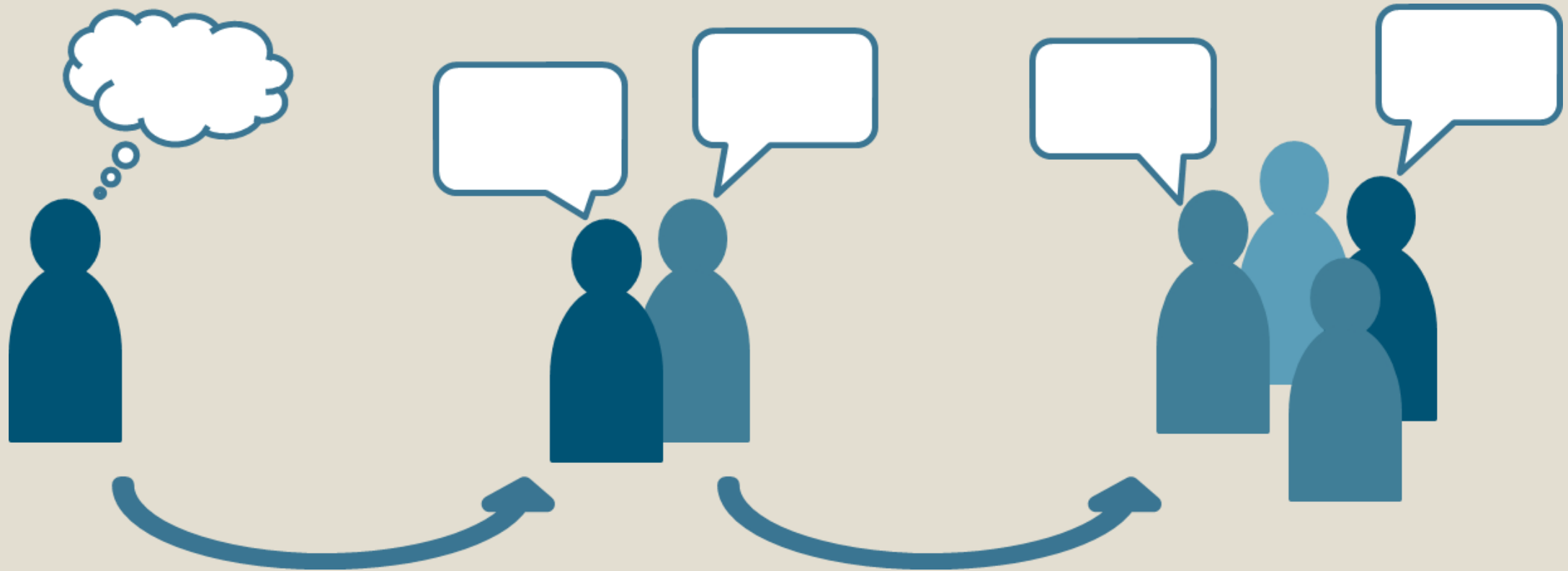
How were humans made? Explain fully your answer.

Key Terms

- **Evolution:** the process by which living organisms are thought to have developed and diversified from earlier forms of life during the history of the earth.
- **Adaption:** a process of change where an organism or species becomes better suited to its environment.
- **The theory of evolution:** the theory that higher forms of life have gradually developed from lower ones.
- **Sanctity of life:** the belief that all life is holy or deeply valuable, and should not be misused or abused.
- **Quality of life:** the general wellbeing of a person, in relation to their health and happiness; also, the theory that the value of life depends upon how good or how satisfying it is.



What do you know about the theory of evolution?



The Theory of Evolution

- Watch the clip and take notes on the Theory of Evolution:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhHOjC4oxh8>



The Theory of Evolution

In 1859 in a book called *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, Charles Darwin put forwards the theory of evolution. Darwin suggested that as the earth cooled, conditions became right to support life. Simple organisms then evolved over many years into other species. Creatures were able to change or adapt into their environment and thrived. This is called survival of the fittest.

1. Life started with single-celled creatures in the sea.

2. Over a long period of time they evolved into creatures capable of living on land.

3. Humans started evolving around 2.5 million years ago.

4. They developed into humans with the same anatomy as us about 200,000 years ago.

Christian beliefs about the origins of life

- Genesis 1 says that God created all life, humans were created last.
- Genesis 2 tells how God created the first man, Adam, from the soil and breathed life into him. Whilst Adam was asleep, God took one of Adam's ribs and used it to create a woman, Eve. Eve was created to help Adam and to live in a close relationship with him and God.

1. How do Christians believe humans were made?
2. How does this belief impact upon Christians today?
3. Do you think all Christians believe this is how humans were made? Why?

Do all Christians believe in the theory of evolution?

Fundamentalist Christians do not believe in the theory of evolution. They believe God created each species separately. Some believe life was created exactly as described in Genesis 1 and 2.

Majority of Christians accept the theory of evolution but believe God is the creator: he started the process and evolution explains how life developed afterwards.

Challenge!

Why do you think there are some differences in opinions in Christianity on the theory of evolution? Explain fully your answer.

What would a Buddhist view be on the origins of human life?



Buddhists views on the origins of human life

- The Buddha said that anything (including life) can come into existence when the necessary conditions are there. This process does not rely on a creator – it just happens.
- Buddhist teaches it is not possible to identify a beginning or end to the earth. Instead the earth is in a continuous process of change.
- When the conditions were right on earth, plants and animals came into being. As conditions continue to change, life continued to evolve.

1. What is a Buddhist view on the origin of human life?
2. What are the similarities and differences between Christian and Buddhist views on the origins of human life?
3. Does the Buddhist view agree or disagree with the Theory of Evolution? Why?

Challenge!

Do you agree or disagree with a Buddhist view? Why?

Explain two religious views on the origins of human life. Refer to religious teachings in your answer. (5 marks)

One view is...because...Therefore...

Another view is...because...Therefore...



5 min

Swap with the person next to you. What mark would you give them out of 5? Why? Compare it to the example answer below:

1 mark for one simple explanation.

2 marks for one detailed explanation.

1 mark for correct reference and use of a religious teaching.

One view on the origins of human life is found in Buddhism. They believe that life comes into existence when the necessary conditions are there. Life just happens. This means that as the conditions change, life continues to change as well. This is called evolution and means that humans evolved once the conditions were met.

Another view is found in Christianity. Fundamentalist Christians believe that humans were made by God. In Genesis 2, it describes how Adam was formed out of soil and God breathed life into him. It also describes how God made Eve out of Adam's rib. This means that Christians view life as sacred as it is made from God and life is a gift.

How does this clip show the Theory of Evolution?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ci9jfMvoLb4>



Complete the sentences!

- Last week I did not know...
- Today I have learnt....
- Next time I would like to know...