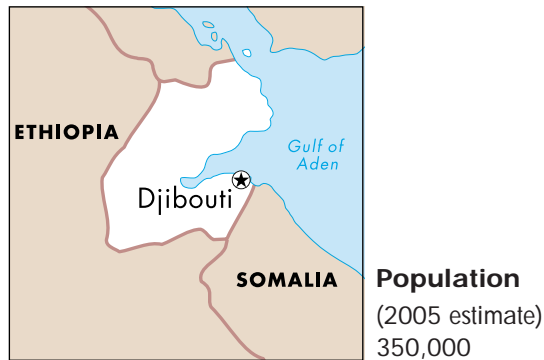


Djibouti



Djibouti is a city in northeastern Africa on the Gulf of Aden, a part of the Indian Ocean. Djibouti is the capital of a small country that is also named Djibouti. Most of the country's people live in Djibouti city.

Djibouti city has a mixture of old and modern buildings in African and French styles. The economy of the city depends on trade through its port. Transporting goods on a railway to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, also brings money to the city.

Djibouti city began as a port in about 1888. In that year the French built a station for fueling ships in the harbor. A city soon rose up. The colony called French Somaliland grew around the city. In 1892 Djibouti city became the capital of the colony.

Djibouti became an independent country in 1977. Djibouti city was its capital. The city grew rapidly in the late 20th century. Many people went there to escape droughts and wars in nearby countries.

► **More to explore**
Djibouti

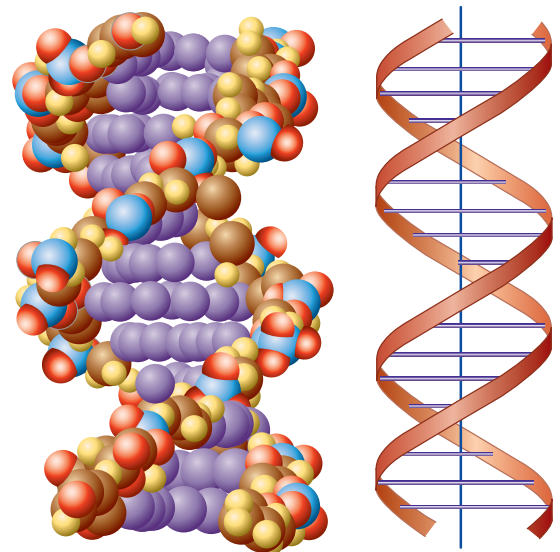
DNA

DNA is the material that carries all the information about how a living thing will look and function. For instance, DNA in humans determines such things as what color the eyes are and how the lungs work. Each piece of information is carried on a different section of the DNA. These sections are called genes.

DNA is short for deoxyribonucleic acid. It is in every cell of every living thing. DNA is found in structures of the cell called chromosomes. Chromosomes are tiny. Scientists need to use very powerful microscopes to see them.

Functions

When DNA works correctly, it helps keep the body working properly. DNA helps cells to make the substances called proteins, which the cells need to live. DNA also allows living things to reproduce. The genes in DNA pass along traits from parents to children.



Part of a long DNA chain shows the twisted, ladderlike structure.

Sometimes there are mistakes in DNA. These mistakes are called mutations. They can cause unusual features, diseases, and other problems.

Structure

DNA has a complex structure. It is made of chemical substances that are linked together like a chain. Each piece of DNA has two long strands, or chains. The two strands are joined together. They form a shape like a ladder that has been twisted into a spiral.

Chemicals called phosphates and sugars make up the sides of the ladder. DNA also has chemicals called bases. Each base on one strand is joined to a base on the other strand. The linked bases form the rungs of the ladder.

Genetic Code

There are four different bases in DNA: adenine, thymine, guanine, and cytosine. These four chemicals are repeated in different orders over and over again in each strand of DNA. Human DNA contains about 3 billion pairs of these bases.

The order in which the bases are arranged is very important. It forms a code that tells cells to make certain kinds of proteins. The differences in these proteins is what makes different living things—such as a cactus, a gerbil, and two different people—different.

► More to explore

Cell • Chromosome • Genetics • Living Thing • Mutation

Dog

The dog is one of the most popular animals in the world. It was one of the first animals to be domesticated, or trained for use by humans. The dog's scientific name is *Canis familiaris*. It is related to the coyote, wolves, foxes, and jackals.

Where Dogs Live

People around the world keep dogs as pets, guards, or work animals. Some dogs, called feral dogs, do not live with people. These homeless dogs often roam around in groups, called packs. One type of dog, called the dingo, lives in the wild in Australia.

Physical Features and Breeds

The dog is a mammal with sharp teeth, an excellent sense of smell, and a fine sense of hearing. Each of its four legs ends in a foot, or paw, with five toes. Each toe has a soft pad and a claw. A coat of hair keeps the dog warm. It cools off by panting and hanging its tongue out of its mouth.



Some dogs are purebred. This means that both parents were of the same breed. A dog with parents of different breeds is called a mutt or mongrel.

Mycenaean Civilization

▶ see Aegean Civilization.

Mythology

Mythology is the rich collection of traditional tales called myths from cultures all over the world. Many myths date back to ancient times. They are stories about how the world was created and why certain things happen. Today the word myth is often used to describe something that is not true. But a myth is not just a made-up story. Myths tell of gods, heroes, and events that a group believes, or at one time believed, to be real. A culture's myths are often closely tied to its religion.

Background

Thousands of years ago people did not have the sciences to help them understand life. For instance, they did not know why the sun rises each morning or why the seasons change. Ancient people saw sickness, death, and natural disasters, but they did not understand what caused them.

Groups of people developed their own stories and beliefs to explain the world around them. These myths were usually not written down. Instead one generation of people passed them along to the next generation by telling them out loud as stories.

Types of Myths

Each group of people has developed its own explanations about the world. But

Many different cultures have created myths to explain the world around them.

all myths try to answer basic questions such as, How was the world created? How did life on Earth begin? Why is there evil in the world?

Myths explain the origins of Earth in many different ways. Many cultures believe that an all-powerful god created the world. For example, a myth of the Polynesian people tells that the god Io formed the world out of water and darkness. Some Native American myths say that the world came up from underground and developed gradually, like a child being born.

To explain the origin of human beings, an ancient story from India described a being called the Self. When the Self became lonely, it divided into two parts, creating man and woman. Their children became the human race. Many myths from western Africa tell that the first beings were a pair of twins. The Sumerians, an ancient Middle Eastern people, believed that the first people came from clay. According to their myths, the water god told his mother to mold bits of clay into the shapes of people.

Many cultures also have myths explaining why there is evil in the world. For example, an ancient Greek myth tells that Pandora was the first woman on Earth. She opened a jar to see what was inside, and all kinds of miseries flew out. So, through her curiosity, troubles were released into the world. A great variety of other myths explain the origins of animals, plants, and events in nature.

Some Figures of Greek and Roman Mythology		
Greek Name	Roman Name	Description
<i>Main Gods and Goddesses</i>		
Aphrodite	Venus	goddess of love
Apollo	Apollo	god of light and music
Ares	Mars	god of war
Artemis	Diana	goddess of hunting
Athena	Minerva	goddess of wisdom
Hades	Pluto	god of the underworld
Hephaestus	Vulcan	god of fire
Hera	Juno	queen of the gods
Hermes	Mercury	messenger of the gods
Hestia	Vesta	goddess of the home
Poseidon	Neptune	god of the sea
Zeus	Jupiter	king of the gods
<i>Other Figures</i>		
Asclepius	Aesculapius	god of medicine
Demeter	Ceres	goddess of farming
Dionysus	Bacchus	god of wine
Erinyes	Furiae (Furies)	goddesses who punished wrongdoers
Eros	Cupid	god of love
Gorgons		female monsters with snakes for hair; included Medusa
Moirai	Parcae (Fates)	three goddesses who controlled humans' lives
Muses	Muses	goddesses of the arts and sciences
Nymphs		goddesses of nature
Titans		family of giants; included Cronus (god of farming) and Prometheus (god of fire)

Many other myths tell of the gods. Stories discuss their births, special powers,

Some Figures of Norse (Northern European) Mythology	
Name	Description
Balder	god of light and peace
Freyja	goddess of love, fertility, battle, and death
Freyr	god of fertility, rain, and sunshine
Frigg	goddess of marriage; wife of Odin
Hel	goddess of the dead
Loki	god of mischief
Odin	chief god
Thor	god of thunder
Tyr	god of war and justice
Ull	god of hunting
Valkyries	female messengers of Odin who took the souls of heroes to Valhalla (heaven for warriors)

and victories over monsters or enemies. Other myths tell about heroes with amazing strength or cleverness. For

Some Figures of Egyptian Mythology	
Name	Description
Amon	one of the chief gods
Bastet	goddess of music and pregnant women; cat-headed
Hathor	goddess of women and love; cow-headed
Horus	god whose eyes were the sun and the Moon; appeared as a falcon
Isis	important goddess; wife of Osiris and mother of Horus
Khnum	god of fertility; ram-headed
Mont	god of war; falcon-headed
Nut	goddess of the sky
Osiris	important god of the underworld
Re	chief sun god
Seth	god of disorder; had some features of a dog
Toth	god of the Moon, wisdom, and writing; ibis-headed

instance, ancient Greek myths tell that the brave warrior Heracles completed 12 nearly impossible tasks. The Chinese hero Da Yu is said to have saved China by draining the land after a huge flood.

Collections of Myths

Some cultures developed collections of myths, especially in ancient times. Their stories describe a group of gods and the world that the gods live in.

The ancient Egyptians had many gods. Some looked like people and some looked like animals. For example, the doglike god Anubis was the god of the dead. For a time a ruler named Amenhotep made the sun the only god. He called the god Aton, and he changed his own name to Akhenaton. After he died the other gods were worshipped again.

The ancient Greeks worshipped 12 main gods. They believed that their gods lived on Mount Olympus. Zeus was the king of the gods.

The ancient Romans borrowed much of the mythology of the Greeks. They gave many of the Greek gods new names. For example, Zeus became known as Jupiter.

Norse mythology developed long ago in northern Europe. Its main god was Odin. He and the other gods lived in Asgard. A palace called Valhalla was part of Asgard. After dying in battle, human warriors were taken to Valhalla by warrior women called Valkyries.

► **More to explore**
Religion • Storytelling