

MEETS NATIONAL STANDARDS

Gina discovers

Genetics, DNA and Characteristics!

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Here's looking at you, kid!

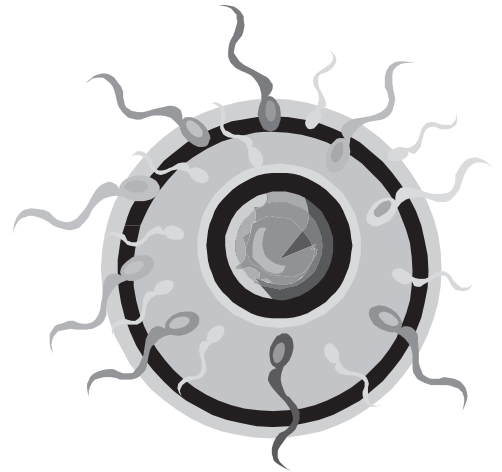


For Better or Worse

DNA sometimes makes mistakes when it makes copies of itself. When this happens, a mutation occurs. A **mutation** is a change in the DNA's genetic code. Mutations can be either good or bad, depending on the result. Some mutations help animals survive in a new environment. Other mutations can cause disease.

Mutations occur in cells in our bodies. Usually, the cells die, but sometimes they cause diseases. Mutations also happen in the sperm or egg cells—the cells that unite to make babies. When mutations happen in those cells, the mutation will be passed along to the child.

Some mutations occur because of the environment. Certain chemicals and radiation can cause DNA to mutate. For humans, too much sunlight or cigarette smoke may cause mutations that lead to cancer.



Hidden Words!

Find the following words in the word search.

WORD BANK

mutation
 copy
 genetic
 DNA
 environment
 code
 disease
 chemicals
 cells

