

FOR TEACHERS: PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES grades 5-8

How to Use: Try any or all the activities below in advance of your visit to the Spitzer Hall of Human Origins. You can also photocopy the worksheet on the opposite side of this page and distribute to students to use as they walk through the exhibition. They'll need a pen or pencil and a hard surface to write on.

Diary of a Discovery:

To excite students about several of the famous fossils they'll see represented in the Hall of Human Origins, visit www.amnh.org/education/resources/TKTKTK. You'll find first-hand accounts about the moment of scientific discovery of Lucy, the Laetoli footprints, and Turkana Boy. Follow-up questions are suggested.

AMNH OLogy Activities:

Engage students in web and hands-on activities about genetics and fossils from OLogy, the Museum's website for kids. Visit:

ology.amnh.org/genetics

- *Go on A Genetic Journey* to track your unique traits
- *What Makes You YOU?* to zoom in on DNA in the body

ology.amnh.org/genetics/stufftodo

- *Wear a Chimp on Your Wrist* to make a bracelet of genetic code

ology.amnh.org/paleontology/layers/

- *Layers of Time* to sort fossil layers by date

AMNH Sackler Educational Laboratory Activity:

Students in the Hall of Human Origins' on-site classroom isolate DNA from strawberries using salt, shampoo, rubbing alcohol, and other basic materials. Visit www.amnh.tk to perform the Simple DNA Extraction in your own classroom.

Measuring Variation:

Give students 20 dried lima beans (or any other type of bean), rulers, and magnifying lenses.

1. Have the students observe the beans to see if they are identical. Then they can examine the beans to describe their variation, if any.
2. Measure the beans with the ruler and lens.
3. How might the beans' variation affect what kind of plants they grow into?
4. What do your observations tell you about variation in living things?
5. Why is variation important?

You can correlate the Hall of Human Origins to the NEW YORK CITY SCOPE AND SEQUENCE for grades 6-8.

Grade 6

Unit 3 Diversity of Life

Kingdoms of Life
- The cell is a basic unit of structure and function in living things.

Unit 4 Interdependence

Ecosystems and Interdependence
- Populations and definition of species.

Grade 7

Unit 1 Geology

Fossils and Earth's History
- Where fossils are found
- Dating of rocks: Absolute and relative age
- The importance of the fossil record

Unit 3 Dynamic Equilibrium: The Human Animal

Levels of Organization
- Cells—structure and function

Grade 8

Unit 1 Reproduction, Heredity, and Evolution

Heredity
- Genes and DNA
- Mutations

Natural Selection: The Driving Mechanism Behind Evolution
- Sources of variation in organisms
- Adaptations
- Evidence for evolution