

Biology

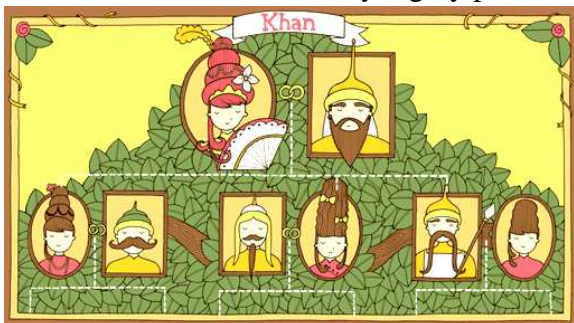
Unit 4 – Genetics, Background Paper 4-3

Genealogy Tracing Your Ancestry

Keeping track of who was married to whom and tracing the thread of your ancestry has become America's fastest growing hobby¹. Internet family web sites are in the top five search sites nearly every month. The internet genealogy market is climbing toward becoming a \$500,000,000 (half billion) dollar industry. Research into your family history will eventually take you to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, where over 2.2 million rolls of microfilmed records, 742,000 microfiche, 300,000 books and 4,500 periodicals are housed. Their records include information for 100 countries. You can locate everything from 14th century English church records to African oral histories. Each day nearly 3000 people dig through the library's massive data bases to piece together their family histories. Why all of the fuss? Much of the current craze is often attributed to the television movie *Roots*, which traced the members of an entire family beginning with an African slave, brought to the United States, down to his living ancestors. Some of the craze is undoubtedly also fueled by our love of celebrity.

Every one of us would like to know who the more famous, or infamous, members of our family tree are. Am I related to Julius Caesar, Louis the 14th, Ben Franklin, Hitler or Genghis Kahn? In truth it is statistically highly probable that every one of us can claim ancestry to one or more historical characters. Wouldn't be fun to know who is lurking in the outer branches of your own family tree? Hard core genealogists will tell you that it is a basic human need to know where we came from. It gives us a place in time much as a home gives us a physical place. There is also the side benefit that, regardless of how fruitful your search may be, you will learn a lot about history and how your ancestors lived and survived in the age they lived in.

Another way to discover your ancestry is to do just what you are currently involved in. Learn about genetics and how the traits that make you unique were passed down to you from your parents, grandparents, great grandparents, and on back in time. Each of us carries a piece of history in our collection of 30,000 genes. At least one of those genes was passed on to you by the first person in your family tree millions of years ago. The family trees that genealogists are so fond of producing are nothing less than a roadmap showing how the genes that make you up got there.



¹ <http://www.crafterstoybox.com/store/media/6651-9.jpg>


Points Earned						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Title of Reading: **4-3 Genealogy**

Concept Map of Reading (3 points)

Main Idea

A) What one question do I have about this article?

1 Point
A & B 

B) Show or describe the reading to a parent or guardian (Name _____).
What comments or questions did they have concerning the reading?
(Biology Homework Time _____)

#	Answers
1	
2	
3	

