

Genetics and Cells Activity Bag

Looking at Traits: Student Activity Guide

Every living thing, including every person, has certain special features. In a person, it could be hair or eye color, or the shape of your ears. We inherit these special features, called traits, from our parents. Given a particular mother or father, some traits show up in their children and some don't. (*To begin this activity, it is not necessary to understand this.*) Saying traits “appear” means you can see them in the person, such as dimples or a little dent in the chin. Traits that you can see are called “phenotype.” We are about to find and identify some of our own traits, determine whether the trait is dominant or recessive, and look for patterns of traits passed from parent to child.

These directions will get you started. Your teacher will be in contact to guide you and provide information.

Materials from the bag

- 1 Human Traits document, on back □

Part 1: What Traits do I Have? *Individual Exploration*

During this part, you will become familiar with a few traits then look and see what traits you have.

1. Flip this page over to see the Human Traits document and look at the far left 3 columns.
2. Look through the different traits.
3. For each trait, identify which type you have, dominant or recessive. Fill out the column “me” with your results. (+) dominant, (-) recessive. A mirror may be helpful.

Part 2: What Traits do Others Have?

During this part, you will identify other peoples' traits. If possible, use people in your family to look for patterns in your family.

1. Make observations of different people and fill out the rest of the chart. Be sure to write the name of the person at the top of the column with their data.
2. Record results for at least 4 people other than yourself.
3. When the chart is complete, look for any interesting results or patterns. For example: Were the dominant traits always more common? Or were some recessive traits more common?