

# Darwinism on trial in American state (Sun 8 May, 2005)

## WARM-UPS

**CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics you are interested in, which do not look interesting and which look really boring:

*Kansas / scientists / Charles Darwin / the Theory of Evolution / the Bible / God / Genesis / Adam and Eve / apes / the age of Earth*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**CHARLES DARWIN:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Charles Darwin. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

**HOW WE GOT HERE:** How do you think we developed into human beings? Do you agree with the Theory of Evolution or do you think we were specially created? Talk to your partner / group about this. Make a conclusion. Change partners and tell each other your conclusions. Does everybody agree or are there differences in thinking?

**2-MINUTE EVOLUTION DEBATES:** Face each other in pairs and engage in these fun 2-minute debates. Students A take the first argument, students B the second. Change partners regularly for more conversation:

- a. God made us. vs. We came from monkeys and apes.
- b. God created life. vs. Science did that.
- c. Adam and Eve is just a story. vs. It's a true story.
- d. God created everything in seven days. vs. That's just a story.
- e. The Earth is 5,000 years old. vs. It's millions of years old.
- f. Human beings are the greatest creation. vs. All creatures are the same.
- g. It's good that evolution is questioned. vs. It's a waste of time.
- h. There is no God. vs. There is.

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## PRE-READING

**WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'origin' and 'life'.

**TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Charles Darwin has been arrested and is on trial in the USA. T / F
- b. There is an education battle in Kansas over how to teach the origins of life. T / F
- c. A group called the "creationists" thinks we came from apes. T / F
- d. The creationists want the Bible's story of creation taught in schools. T / F
- e. US science and teaching associations agree with the creationists. T / F
- f. Scientists say the Kansas school system may become a laughingstock. T / F
- g. Some committee members think the Earth is less than 5,000 years old. T / F

**SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |    |           |              |
|----|-----------|--------------|
| a. | origins   | idea         |
| b. | debate    | evidence     |
| c. | strongly  | throw out    |
| d. | theory    | passionately |
| e. | identical | about        |
| f. | reject    | same         |
| g. | proof     | beginnings   |
| h. | roughly   | discussion   |

**PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |    |                  |                          |
|----|------------------|--------------------------|
| a. | the origins      | evolution theory         |
| b. | strongly         | from the same beginnings |
| c. | almost           | believe                  |
| d. | They reject the  | this issue               |
| e. | all life came    | timeline as the Bible    |
| f. | no scientific    | of life                  |
| g. | decide           | proof                    |
| h. | roughly the same | identical to             |

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### **READING:**

**ODD WORD OUT:** Circle the word in each group of three (in italics) that does not fit.

### **Darwinism on trial in American state**

**BNE:** There is an education battle in the American state of Kansas about how the *origins / origin / original* of life should be taught in schools. On one side of the debate are scientists and teachers. They *strongly / weakly / passionately* believe that only Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution should be taught to schoolchildren. On the other side is a group called the "creationists". They think students should be taught a new theory called "intelligent design". This theory is almost *ditto / identical to / the same as* the story of creation from the Bible. It teaches that there is an intelligent designer - God - that created human beings. They *reject / throw out / drop* the evolution theory that all life came from the same beginnings. They believe we did not come from apes but were "specially created". American science and teaching *organizations / partnerships / associations* / do not accept the theory of intelligent design. They say it has no scientific proof and is being used for religious reasons. Two of the ten committee members that will decide this *issue / matter / option* believe the Earth may be younger than 5,000 years old. This is *smoothly / about / roughly* the same timeline as the Bible.

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## **DISCUSSION**

- a. Did you like this article?
- b. What did you think after reading the article?
- c. Were you surprised by anything you read in the article?
- d. How do you think humans arrived on Earth?
- e. Do you believe in the story of creation?
- f. Do you believe in the story of Adam and Eve?
- g. Can you tell me about Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution?
- h. Do you believe in the "survival of the fittest" theory?
- i. Are we the greatest creations on the Earth?
- j. How old is the Earth?
- k. Is it OK to teach a Christian theory of the origins of life in schools?
- l. What were you taught about our origins in school?
- m. Do you believe we were "specially created"?
- n. Don't you think that if we were "specially created" we would be perfect?
- o. Will we look the same in ten million years' time?
- p. Will we still be here ten thousand years from now?
- q. Did you like this discussion?
- r. Teacher / Student additional questions.

## **HOMEWORK**

- 1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on Charles Darwin. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.
- 3. NOT PERFECT:** Write six to ten points about why human beings are not perfect. Present these points of your essay to the class in your next lesson.
- 4. LETTER TO KANSAS:** Write a letter to either the teachers and scientists or the creationists telling them your views on this issue. Use this letter in a debate in your next class.

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### **TEXT**

**ODD WORD OUT:** Either of the two words in italics would fit in the article.

### **Darwinism on trial in American state**

**BNE:** There is an education battle in the American state of Kansas about how the *origins / origin* of life should taught in schools. On one side of the debate are scientists and teachers. They *strongly / passionately* believe that only Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution should be taught to schoolchildren. On the other side is a group called the "creationists". They think students should be taught a new theory called "intelligent design". This theory is almost *identical to / the same as* the story of creation from the Bible. It teaches that there is an intelligent designer - God - that created human beings. They *reject / throw out* the evolution theory that all life came from the same beginnings. They believe we did not come from apes but were "specially created". American science and teaching *organizations / associations /* do not accept the theory of intelligent design. They say it has no scientific proof and is being used for religious reasons. Two of the ten committee members that will decide this *issue / matter* believe the Earth may be younger than 5,000 years old. This is *about / roughly* the same timeline as the Bible.