Teacher Resource for:

Stop codon reassignments in the wild

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GENERAL USE OF *Science* in the Classroom

Student Learning Goals:

"One fundamental goal for K-12 science education is a scientifically literate person who can understand the nature of scientific knowledge."[1]

The U.S. National Academy of Sciences defines science as: "Any new finding requires independent testing before it is accepted as scientific knowledge; a scientist is therefore required to honestly and openly report results so that they can readily be repeated, challenged, and built upon by other scientists. Proceeding in this way over centuries, the community effort that we call science has developed an increasingly accurate understanding of how the world works. To do so, it has had to reject all dogmatic claims based on authority, insisting instead that there be reproducible evidence for any scientific claim."

An important student learning goal, central to any understanding of "the nature of scientific knowledge," is to give each student an appreciation of how science is done.

This includes knowing why:

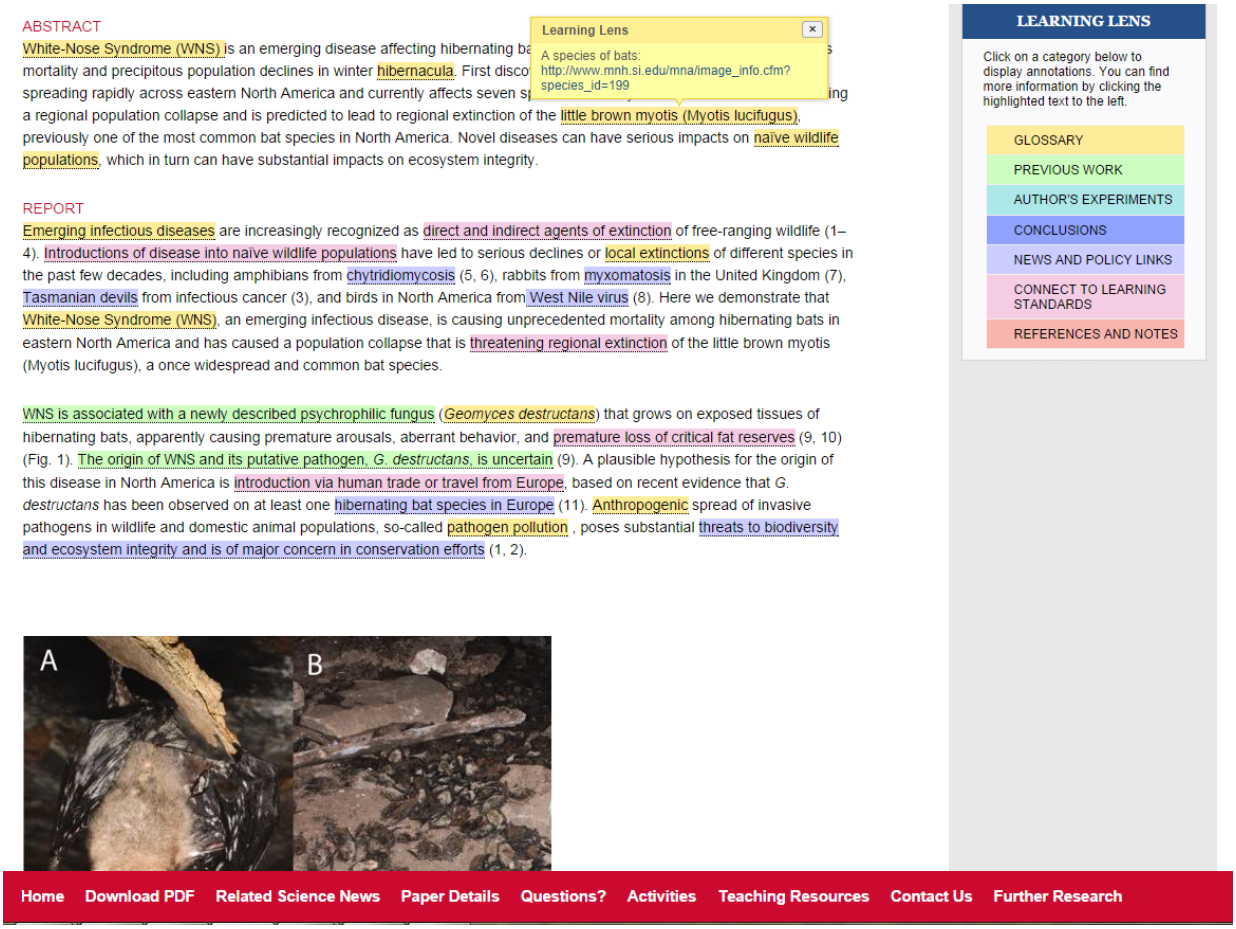
- Scientists must be independent thinkers, who are free to dissent from what the majority believes.
- Science can deal only with issues for which testable evidence can be obtained.
- All scientific understandings are built on previous work
- It is to be expected that one scientist's conclusions will sometimes contradict the conclusions of other scientists.
- Science is a never-ending venture, as the results from one study always lead to more questions to investigate.

[1] *A Framework for K-12 Science Education*, National Research Council, 2012

Using This Resource

Learning Lens:

The Learning Lens tool can be found on the right sidebar of each resource and is the source of annotations. Click on the headings to highlight portions of the text of the corresponding research article. A subsequent click on the highlighted text will produce a text box containing more information about that particular piece of text. Below is an example of the Glossary function of the Learning Lens.



An example of the resource with the Glossary, Previous Work, Author's Experiments, News and Policy Links, and References and Notes tools turned on. The Glossary tool is in use.

Learning Notes:

Learning Notes accompany each figure and are designed to help students deconstruct the methods and data analysis contained within each figure.

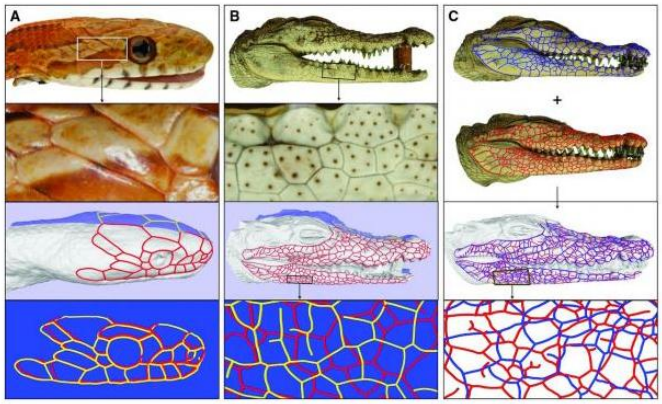


Fig. 1. Spatial distribution of head scales. (A) Head scales in most snakes (here, a corn snake) are polygons (two upper panels) with stereotyped spatial distribution (two lower panels): left (yellow) and right (red) scale edges overlap when reflected across the sagittal plane (blue). (B) Polygonal head scales in crocodiles have a largely random spatial distribution without symmetrical correspondence between left and right. (C) Head scales from different individuals have different distributions of scales' sizes and localizations (blue and red edges from top and bottom crocodiles, respectively).

Method: 3D geometry and color-texture reconstruction | Panel A | Panel B | Panel C

The authors took 120 color pictures of each animal to create detailed, three-dimensional models of reptile heads. Watch this video in which the authors further explain their modeling methods:

http://www.sciencemag.org/content/suppl/2012/11/29/science.1226265.DC1/1...

LEARNING LENS

Click on a category below to display annotations. You can find more information by clicking the highlighted text to the left.

- GLOSSARY
- PREVIOUS WORK
- AUTHOR'S EXPERIMENTS
- CONCLUSIONS
- NEWS AND POLICY LINKS
- CONNECT TO LEARNING STANDARDS
- REFERENCES AND NOTES

References:

The Reference section of each resource is annotated with a short statement about how or why each reference relates to the current research study.

6. L. Lewejohann, B. Zipser, N. Sachser, "Personality" in laboratory mice used for biomedical research: A way of understanding variability? Dev. Psychobiol. 53, 624 (2011).
7. G. Kempermann, The neurogenic reserve hypothesis: What is adult hippocampal neurogenesis good for? Trends Neurosci. 31, 163 (2008).
8. Lewejohann et al., Behavioral phenotyping of a murine model of Alzheimer's disease in a seminaturalistic environment using RFID tracking. Behav. Res. Methods 41, 850 (2009).
9. B. Steineret al., Differential regulation of gliogenesis in the context of adult hippocampal neurogenesis in mice. Glia 46, 41 (2004).
10. Garthe, J. Behr, G. Kempermann, Ad… flexible use of spatially precise learning strategies. PLoS ONE 4, e54…
11. G. Kempermann, New neurons for 'su… 27 (2012).
12. G. Kempermannet al., Why and how … brain plasticity. Front Neurosci 4, 189 (2010).
13. K. Fabelet al., Additive effects of physical exercise and environmental enrichment on adult hippocampal neurogenesis in mice. Front. Neurosci. 3, 50 (2009).
14. Amrein, H. P. Lipp, Adult hippocampal neurogenesis of mammals: Evolution and life history. Biol. Lett. 5, 141 (2009).
15. G. Kempermann, Why new neurons? Possible functions for adult hippocampal neurogenesis. J. Neurosci. 22, 635 (2002).
16. C. Crabbe, D. Wahlsten, B. C. Dudek, Genetics of mouse behavior: Interactions with laboratory environment. Science 284, 1670 (1999).
17. Lewejohann et al., Environmental bias? Effects of housing conditions, laboratory environment and experimenter on behavioral tests. Genes Brain Behav. 5, 64 (2006).
18. D. W. Bailey, How pure are inbred strains of mice? Immunol. Today 3, 210 (1982).
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21. R. P. Talenset al., Epigenetic variation during the adult lifespan: Cross-sectional and longitudinal data on monozygotic twin pairs. Aging Cell 11, 694 (2012).
22. P. B. Baltes, J. R. Nesselroade, S. W. Cornelius, Multivariate antecedents of structural change in development: A simulation of cumulative environmental patterns. Multivariate Behav. Res. 13, 127 (1978).
23. M.E. Raijmakers, P. C. Molenaar, Modeling developmental transitions in adaptive resonance theory. Dev. Sci. 7, 149 (2004).
24. K. Friston, M. Breakspear, G. Deco, Perception and self-organized instability. Front. Comput. Neurosci. 6, 44 (2012).
25. Van de Weerd et al., Effects of environmental enrichment for mice: Variation in experimental results. J. Appl. Anim. Welf. Sci. 5, 87 (2002).
26. D. P. Wolferet al., Laboratory animal welfare: Cage enrichment and mouse behaviour. Nature 432, 821 (2004).
27. K. Lewin, Dynamic Theory of Personality (McGraw-Hill, New York, 1935).
28. K. L. Jang, R. R. McCrae, A. Angleitner, R. Riemann, W. J. Livesley, Heritability of facet-level traits in a cross-cultural twin

Learning Lens

This paper showed that while both physical activity, like running, and living in an enriched environment can result in the generation of new hippocampal neurons in mice, a combination of the two activities leads to even greater rates of neurogenesis.

LEARNING LENS

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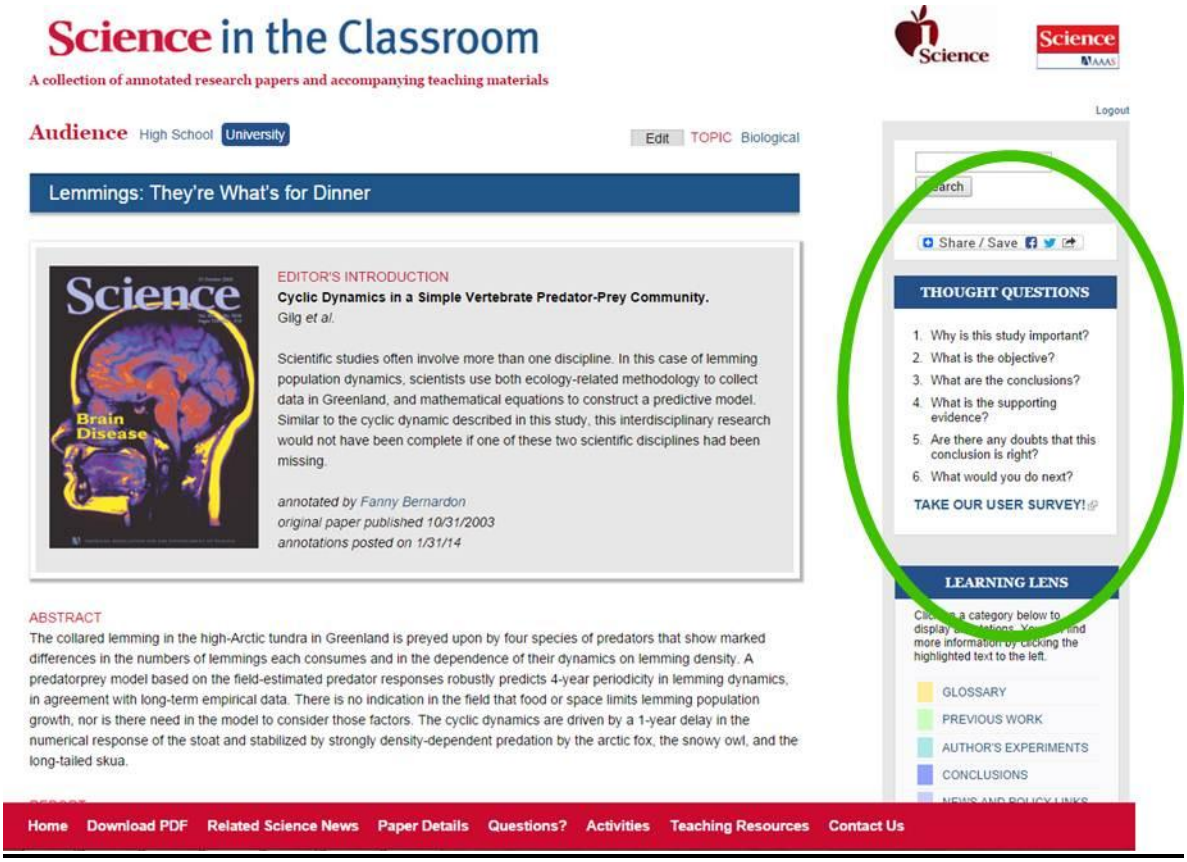
Thought Questions

Thought Questions are located above the Learning Lens in the right sidebar of each resource. These questions were written to be universal and applicable to any primary research paper. Thought questions do not have a single answer, or a correct answer for that matter, and can be used to stimulate discussion among students.



Suggestions for Classroom Use:

In addition to the thought questions discussed above, other resources are provided for use in the classroom. These can be found toward the end of the teacher guides associated with each specific article and include:

1. Discussion questions specific to the article, related to the standards, and/or associated with the figures.

2. Activities tied to the articles.

Some ways to use the *Science* in the Classroom articles:

1. Assign to student groups to read and discuss during class.

2. Assign small sections of the article to student groups to read and discuss during class, with the expectation that they will present or use jigsaw to teach the entire class what is in their part of the article.

3. Assign to individual students to complete during class or as homework.

4. Assign reading as an extra credit project.

Some ideas for interactive student engagement after reading the article:

1. Students write answers to discussion questions (for example, those linked to the standards or those linked to the diagrams).

2. Go over the abstract, as well as information about the purpose and structure of an abstract, and have students write their own abstracts for the articles in language that could be understood by their peers.

3. Have students edit the article, or parts of the article, to a simpler reading level.

4. Have students, alone or in small groups, use the annotated list of references to explain how the scientists who wrote this article built on the published work of at least one independent group of scientists in making their discoveries. In the process, did they produce data that supports the findings of the earlier publication that they have cited in the text? In what way does this article support the statement that scientific knowledge is built up as a “community effort”?

5. Use the article and discussion questions linked to the standards and the diagrams for a teacher-led classroom discussion. The discussion can focus on the nature of science and scientific research, as well as on the science in the article itself.

6. Have students give a classroom presentation about the article, parts of the article, or their answers to discussion questions.

ARTICLE-SPECIFIC MATERIALS

Connections to the nature of science from the article

Scientists are looking for connections between various microbe environments. In this study, the scientists collected samples from aquatic and terrestrial environments as well from microbiomes of human mouth, stools, and throat in order to compare and contrast the genetic material found within these microcosms.

The importance of this scientific research

The scientists performed an extensive survey of environmental data to study the reassignment of genetic codes. They investigate the effect of such reassignment in genetically recorded organisms and also in viral resistance.

The actual science involved

The scientists undertook a massive bioinformatic analysis of 5.6 trillion base pairs of metagenomic data for stop codon reassignment events.

Connect to Learning Standards:

Next Generation Science Standards 8 practices:
http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=13165&page=42

1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
4. Analyzing and interpreting data
6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
7. Engaging in argument from evidence
8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

AP Biology
http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-biology-course-and-exam-description.pdf

Essential Knowledge 2.D.2: Homeostatic mechanisms reflect both common ancestry and divergence due to adaptation in different environments.

Common Core English Language Arts Standards:
http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RST/11-12/2/

Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to important distinctions the author makes and to any gaps or inconsistencies in the account.

Summary of the Article for the Teacher:

It is recommended that this not be used by students in place of reading the article.

General Overview:

In most animals, babies sleep more than adults. This is true in humans, mice, and even all the way down to fruit flies (Drosophila). The authors of this paper discovered that the reason newborn flies sleep more than adults is because they have less of a chemical called dopamine. This chemical is a neurotransmitter, which means it is used for neurons to communicate with one another. In the fly, less dopamine causes a brain region called the dorsal fan-shaped body (dFSB) to become more active, which causes young flies to sleep more. The researchers also found that young male flies need sleep in order to court female flies when they are older. The reason for this appears to be related to another region of the brain called the VA1v. This study is important because it shows that the consequences of sleep deprivation during development may carry over into adulthood.

Topics Covered:

- CRISPR
- Genetically recorded Organisms
- Viral resistance
- Genetic code and their reassignments

Methods used in the Research:

- bioinformatics
- analysis tools such as Prodigal

Conclusions:

This research showed that codon reassignment is diverse and abundant in prokaryotes and phages.

Areas of Further Study:

- Genetically Recorded Organisms
- Viral resistance and alternative genetic codon

Resources for Interactive Engagement:

Discussion Questions

1. **What is the genetic code and why it is universal?**

   The genetic code is set of rules for information flow from DNA (or RNA) to proteins. It suggests which three nucleotides code which amino acids. It is universal as it is optimum and selected for better information flow from DNA to proteins.

2. **Is there any alternative assignment for genetic code that is different than universal?**

   There are alternative assigned for many codon in different organisms. For example in Mycoplasma capricolum, codon UGA is assigned for tryptophan instead of its universal role in termination signal.

3. **What are tools for gene prediction?**

   There are several bioinformatics tools like Prodigal, GSFinder, TiCO,Glimmer, GenemarkHMM and Easygene.

4. **Do stop codons code for amino acids or not?**

   Yes. For example in Mycoplasma capricolum, codon UGA is assigned for tryptophan instead of its universal role in termination signal.

5. **Does difference in codon usages cause protection of host from virus infection?**

   It is one of the antiviral hypotheses but this paper shows that phages infect bacteria even if there is difference in codon usage.

6. **What is CRISPR?**

   This is a newly discovered pathway in bacteria and archaea that protects cells from phages and conjugative plasmids.