



EXAM PAPERS PRACTICE

Variation and evolution

Level: GCSE AQA 8461

Subject: Biology

Exam Board: Suitable for all boards

Topic: Variation and evolution

Level: Hard

This is to be used by all students preparing for AQA Biology 8461 foundation or higher tier but it is also suitable for students of other boards



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Q1. *Howea forsteriana* and *Howea belmoreana* are two species of palm tree.

The two *species* grow together on a small island in the South Pacific.

(a) What is meant by the term *species* ?

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(2)

(b) The table gives some information about these two species of palm tree.

	<i>Howea forsteriana</i>	<i>Howea belmoreana</i>
Optimum pH of the soil for growth of the palm tree	pH 8	pH 6
Height above sea level of most common habitat	30 to 60 metres	above 120 metres
Month when most palm trees flower	October	December
Method of pollination	Wind carries pollen	Wind carries pollen

Scientists believe that these two species of palm tree began to evolve from a single species over 2 million years ago.

Suggest how these two different species developed.

In your answer you should use information from the table and your own knowledge.

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(Total 7 marks)



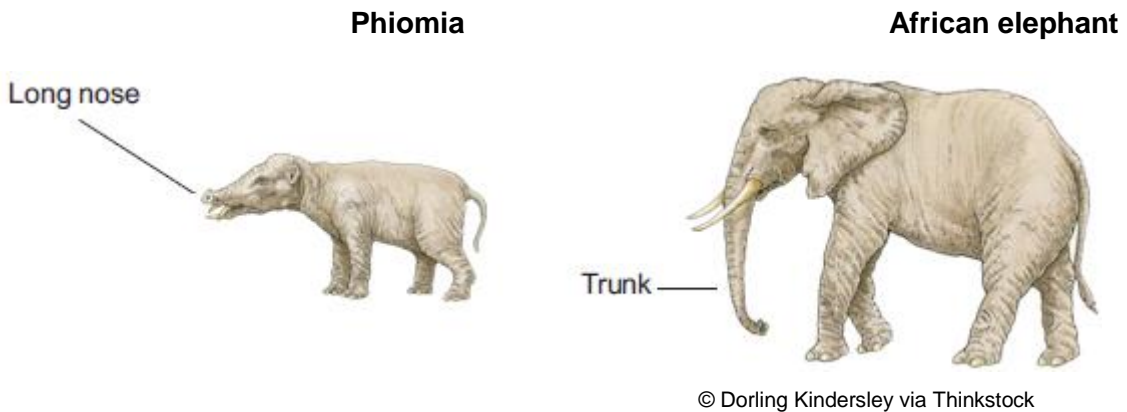
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Q2.The image below shows:

- *Phiomia*, an ancestor of elephants
- a modern African elephant.

Phiomia lived about 35 million years ago.



Both *Phiomia* and the African elephant reach up into trees to get leaves.

In the 1800s, Darwin and Lamarck had different theories about how the long nose of *Phiomia* evolved into the trunk of the African elephant.

- (a) (i) Use Darwin's theory of natural selection to explain how the elephant's trunk evolved.

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(4)

(ii) Lamarck's theory is different from Darwin's theory.

Use Lamarck's theory to explain how the elephant's trunk evolved.

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(2)

(b) (i) In the 1800s, many scientists could **not** decide whether Lamarck's theory or Darwin's theory was the right one.

Give **two** reasons why.

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(2)

(ii) Before the 1800s, many people had a different idea to explain where all the living things on Earth came from.

What idea was this?

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(1)

(Total 9 marks)



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- Q3.(a)** Fossils provide evidence for what early life forms were like. From the evidence, scientists think that life began on Earth more than 3 billion years ago.

Many early life forms were soft-bodied.

Explain why this makes it difficult for scientists to be certain about what these early life forms were like.

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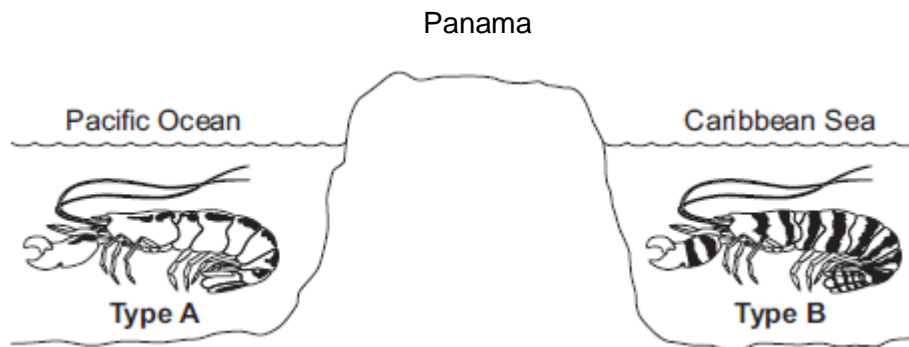
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(2)

- (b) The illustration below shows two types of pistol shrimp.

The shrimps live in shallow, tropical seas on opposite sides of Panama.



Not to scale

Scientists put one **Type A** shrimp and one **Type B** shrimp together in a tank of seawater.

The two types of shrimp snapped their claws aggressively at each other. They did not mate.

The scientists said that this was evidence for the **Type A** and **Type B** shrimps being classified as two different species.



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(6)
(Total 11 marks)



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Q4.As embryos develop, some genes in cells are turned off and some genes are turned on. This allows cells to become specialised for particular functions.

Usually, after cells have become specialised, they cannot change again into different types of cells.

(a) What is a gene?

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(2)

(b) Scientists have developed a way to change specialised cells back into embryo-like cells by a method called iPS.

Read the information in the box.

Cells made using iPS can be changed into different types of cells.

Scientists plan to take skin cells from an endangered species of monkey called a drill and change these cells into iPS cells. These iPS cells can then be changed into egg cells or sperm cells.

After fertilisation, the embryo can be inserted into the womb of a female of a non-endangered species called a mandrill. The mandrill is closely related to the drill.

Describe similarities and differences between the iPS method and adult cell cloning.

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(4)

- (c) Suggest **one** advantage of trying to preserve endangered species such as the drill.

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(1)

(Total 7 marks)



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Q5.The Blue-moon butterfly lives on a small island called Samoa, in the Pacific Ocean.



By Eموke Dénes [CC-BY-SA-2.5], via Wikimedia Commons

In 2006 Blue-moon butterflies almost became extinct.

Wolbachia bacteria killed males before they could hatch from eggs. Only females were resistant to the bacteria.

In 2006 the number of male Blue-moon butterflies had decreased to only 1 per cent of the population. Two years later, the number of males was equal to the number of females.

- (a) Scientists believe that a change in a gene suddenly occurred to make some males resistant to the bacteria.

What scientific term describes a change in a gene?

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(1)

- (b) The numbers of male Blue-moon butterflies in the population increased quickly after the new form of the gene had appeared.

Suggest why.

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(4)
(Total 5 marks)



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Q6. The photographs show the flowers of two closely-related species of plant.

Species A Species B



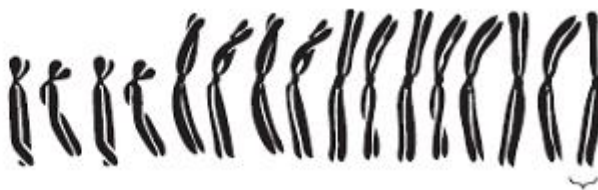
Images: © iStock/Thinkstock

The drawings show chromosomes from one cell in the root of each plant during cell division.

Species A Species B



**One
chromosome**



**One
chromosome**

(a) The drawings show that each chromosome has two strands of genetic material.

(i) How does a chromosome become two strands?

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(1)

(ii) Explain why each chromosome must become two strands before the cell divides.

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(2)

(b) For sexual reproduction, the plants produce gametes.

(i) Name the type of cell division that produces gametes.

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(1)

(ii) How many chromosomes would there be in a gamete from each of these two plant species?

Species A

Species B

(1)

(iii) It is possible for gametes from **Species A** to combine with gametes from **Species B** to produce healthy offspring plants. How many chromosomes would there be in each cell of one of the offspring

plants?

(1)

(c) (i) Look back at the information at the start of the question and the information from part (b).

What evidence from these two pieces of information supports the belief that **Species A** and **Species B** evolved from a common ancestor?

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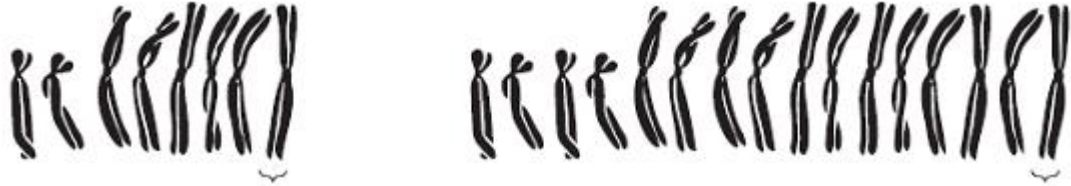
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- (ii) For successful gamete production to take place, chromosomes that contain the same genes must pair up.

The drawings showing the chromosomes of **Species A** and of **Species B** are repeated below.

Species A Species B



The offspring plants cannot reproduce sexually.

Suggest an explanation for this.

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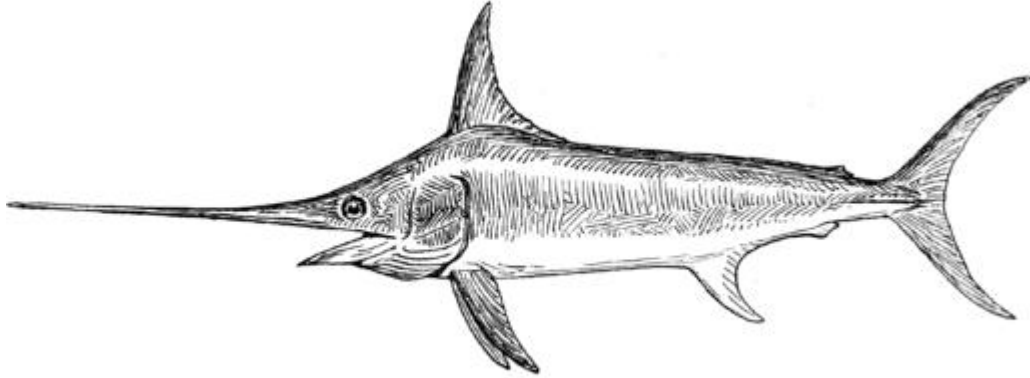
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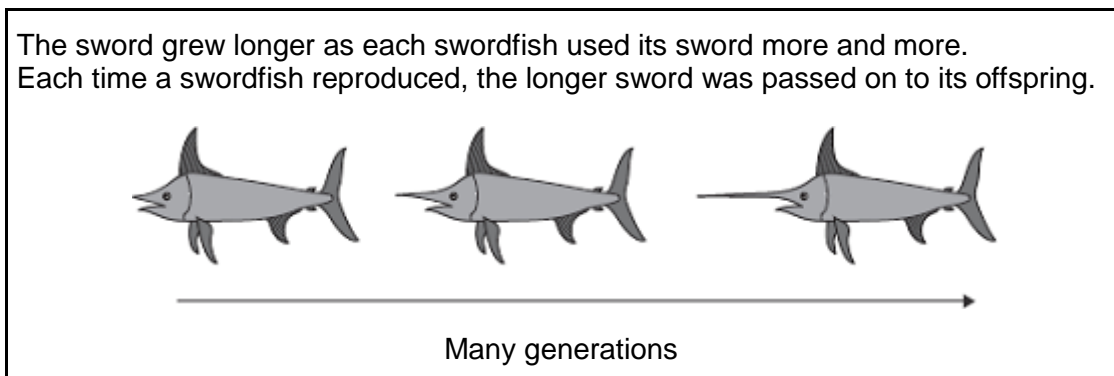
Q7. The picture shows a modern swordfish.



By Pearson Scott Foresman [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Ancestors of swordfish had short swords. Modern swordfish have long swords. Swordfish use their swords to injure prey. The injured prey are easier to catch.

The information in the box shows one theory of how the length of the sword of swordfish changed.



(a) Which scientist suggested the theory shown in the box?

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(1)

(b) (i) Darwin suggested that evolution is a result of natural selection.



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Describe how natural selection could result in modern swordfish with long swords developing from ancestors with short swords.

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(4)

- (ii) Scientists in the 1800s accepted both the theory shown in the box, and Darwin's theory.

Now most scientists only accept Darwin's theory.

Give **one** reason why.

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(1)

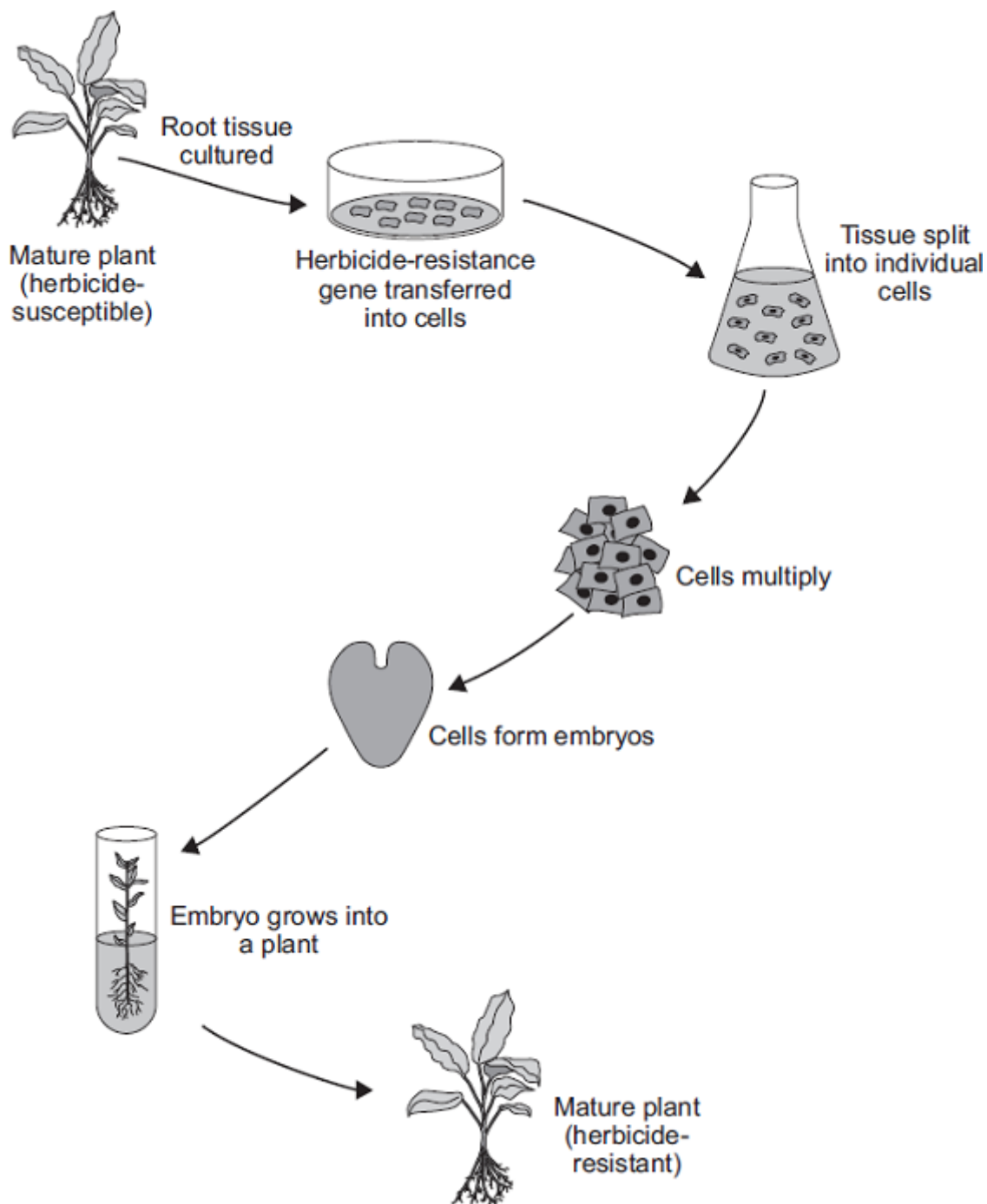
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Q8. The diagram shows one method of producing herbicide-resistant crop plants.



- (a) The herbicide-resistance gene is cut out of a chromosome of a herbicide-resistant plant.

How is the herbicide-resistance gene cut out of the chromosome?

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- (b) Apart from having the herbicide-resistance gene, the herbicide-resistant plants are identical to the herbicide-susceptible plants.

Explain why.

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(2)

- (c) Suggest **one** advantage to a farmer of growing herbicide-resistant crops.

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(1)

- (d) Many people are opposed to the growing of herbicide-resistant crops produced in this way.

Suggest **one** reason why.

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(1)

(Total 5 marks)