

How does evolution work?

Consider each of the following statements regarding evolution and mark those that are FALSE.
(Choose all that apply)

- a. Humans are descended from chimpanzees
- b. Humans are more evolved than other species
- c. Evolution favours characteristics that ensure survival of the species

Check

✓ **Correct!** All of these statements are false.

Humans and chimpanzees are descended from a common ancestor that lived millions of years ago who was neither human nor chimpanzee. After separating, **each** lineage continued to evolve (change over time). Saying that humans are descended from chimpanzees makes about as much sense as saying that chimpanzees descended from humans.

Humans are no more (or less) evolved than any other species. To suggest that humans are more evolved would require that humans are somehow a goal of evolution. But evolution is a mindless process that has no goal. Evolution has no preference for one species over another.

Evolution works at the level of the individual, not the species. Lions may eat antelope, but lions do not compete with antelope to survive. Lions compete with other lions to eat antelope and avoid starvation whereas antelope compete with other antelope to avoid predation. Individual lions and antelope that are successful reproduce and pass on their traits whereas those that fail go extinct.

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Feedback:

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