

Human Genome Project

Lesson Title: *Cracking the Genetic Code*

Page 1 of 1

Name: _____

Your assignment is to write a feature article about the Human Genome Project.

The following items should be addressed in the story:

- Describe the human genome, its history and its development.
- Describe how the human genome project is the key to understanding our species as well as others.
- Discuss the degree of kinship between organisms or species that is estimated from the similarity of their DNA sequences. Examples are worms and chimps, or other humans.
- How can DNA sequences show us that we share common ancestors with other organisms?
- How is the Human Genome Project affecting medicine today?
- What does it hold for the future?

NOTE: You must use quotes in your story. Cull them from the movie, and other resources used in this lesson.

What is a feature article?

Feature articles are lengthy and interesting, and can be found in some magazines. They are at least 1,000 words long. You can write up to 2,000 words if you need to. A feature article can read like a story, but is nonfiction. This means that you can give personal anecdotes, be somewhat creative, and definitely be informative and descriptive.

Points to consider:

- **Lead:** Lead in with something to grab the reader. The lead depends on the length of the article. If you were writing a 150-word news article, you would write a one-sentence lead. But since you're writing a feature article, you can do a much longer lead, around two paragraphs.
- **Nut graph:** The nut graph is where you let the reader know just what he or she is about to embark upon. So imagine that you've just grabbed the reader's attention with the lead, now you need to say in a paragraph what this entire article is about. In other words, you'll need to describe as simply and concisely as you can what the Human Genome Project is.
- **The meat of the story:** This is where the outline is really necessary. Take the topics you want to cover and put them in order. Your order can change as you write, but you'll want to know where to begin. Say you want to cover the history of the Human Genome Project—you'll need to figure out where you want that. Some writers would start with it, but others would reflect back on it partway through the article. You can have subheads for each of these topics. You'll still want to try to have a smooth link that connects one topic to the next. Some will seem natural; others will need some crafting.

Quotes: Quoting people can do a number of things for you. It can say something from another angle, so that you as a writer are not saying it, the person is. Quotes can also break up the story and make it interesting. They can also support what you are writing about. In some cases, quotes are crucial in providing facts from a noteworthy source.

- **The ending:** The ending is similar to writing a paper. It can be conclusive, like what we have learned so far, but with a science story, it can be interesting to give future applications. Some stories link back to the beginning and connect the ending to the lead (if it isn't too forced).