

5-BY6 From apes to humans

Living things can change over thousands, maybe millions of years? Say like, apes, they..., they, like over millions of years, they learned how to do, like, stuff we can do. And then they changed to humans and they adapted to their environment and then that's all I can remember really.

Claim(s) **Evolution is about living things changing over thousands or millions of years.**

Apes learned to adapt and changed into humans.

Any challenges to the expressed claim?

Anything to disagree with?

Any clarification needed?

Question(s). **Could apes that are alive today change into humans?**

Note: See the article from Primary Science that deals with [Representations](#) of hominid evolution. One image of the evolution of modern humans is often misunderstood. It shows a line of ape-like creatures across the page from left to right, looking increasingly less like apes and more like modern humans. The way we 'read' images from left to right on the page somehow causes the idea that each has directly changed into the form on its right. This leads to the idea that apes have somehow directly turned into people.

When Darwin first made his ideas about evolution known to his scientific colleagues and the general public, he encountered a great deal of opposition. Many people found it offensive to suggest that once, many hundreds of thousands of years back in evolutionary time, human beings shared a common ancestor with forest dwelling primates or 'ape'-like creatures. The evidence that confirms common ancestry between ancient extinct hominids such as Neanderthals, as well as chimpanzees, gorillas and modern humans is from DNA where this is available to make comparisons. Where common ancestors are extinct, the evidence is from fossil material which is rather rare and difficult to find. The fossil evidence shows very small differences over time in the structure of the bones – especially of the teeth and skull which tend to be best preserved. Palaeontologists can reconstruct the evolutionary story of development that must have happened as different early species of hominid developed and fanned out into various adaptations to environments and ways of living. The fossil evidence for many early ancestors is missing, so it is unlikely that we will ever know the detailed picture of evolution of modern humans.