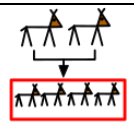
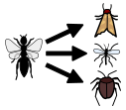
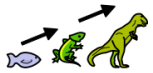
Evolution and Inheritance

Year 6 - Summer

Science

 Offspring	The young animal or plant that is produced by the reproduction of that species
Inheritance	This is when characteristics are passed on to offspring from their parents.
 Variations	The differences between individuals within a species
Adaptation	An adaptation is a trait (or characteristic) changing to increase a living thing's chance of surviving and reproducing.
 Evolution	An adaptation over a very long time.
Natural selection	The process where organisms that are better adapted to their environment tend to survive and produce more offspring.
 Habitat	Refers to a specific area or place in which particular animals and plants can live.
Environment	An environment contains many habitats and includes areas where there are both living and non-living things.

Animals and plants produce offspring that are similar but not identical to them. Offspring often look like their parents because features are passed on.

There is also variation between offspring and the parents. You can see variation in animals and plants.

Adaptive traits are characteristics that are influenced by the environment the living things live in. these adaptations can develop as a result of many things such as food and climate.

Inherited traits are things such as eye colour, hair colour or shape of your face. These traits can be passed down from parents.

Fossils are the preserved remains, or partial remains of ancient animals and plants. Fossils let scientists know how plants and animals used to look millions of years ago. This is proof that living things have evolved over time.

Evolution is the gradual process by which different kinds of living organism have developed from earlier forms over millions of years. Scientists have proof that living things are continuously evolving.

Fossils of giraffes from millions of years ago show that they used to have shorter necks. They have gradually evolved through natural selection to have longer necks so that they can reach the top leaves on taller trees.

Male deer have antlers so that they can fight other males. The strongest male deer mate with the female deer.

The cactus's thick fleshy stem helps it to conserve water and its spines prevent it from being eaten by predators.

The polar bear's thick white fur helps it keep warm and to camouflage it from predators. Its large feet help it spread its weight over the ice.

Peacocks display their impressive tail feathers to help them attract a mate to reproduce offspring.

The colour of this owl's feathers help to provide camouflage and protect it from predators.