The University of Texas at Austin
UT High School

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Biology B
Unit 10 Glossary

Term	Definition
Absolute Dating	Technique used to determine the numerical age of a fossil by using the decay of the carbon atoms found in the fossil. (Unit 10, Lesson 2)
EXAMPLE	Scientists used absolute dating techniques to determine that the fossil is 1 million years old.
Analogous	Structures that perform a similar function but are different in structure and evolutionary origin. (Unit 10 – Lesson 4)
EXAMPLE	The wings of a butterfly and the wings of a bird; they perform similar functions but are structurally different.
Ancestors	An organism from whom another organism is descended from. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	Your grandfather is your ancestor; you are descended from him.
Ancient	Dating from a remote age long ago. (Unit 10 – Lesson 2)
EXAMPLE	Dinosaur fossils are ancient; they date back to millions of years ago.
Biogeography	The study of the geographic distribution of organisms. (Unit 10 – Lesson 3)
EXAMPLE	The kangaroo is only located in Australia.
Biological Diversity	Diversity among living organisms. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	There is a great amount of biological diversity in the rainforest because there are many different types of organisms in the rainforest.
Carbon Dating	Process in which the decay of an isotope of carbon, carbon 14, is examined to determine the absolute age of a fossil. (Unit 10 – Lesson 2)
EXAMPLE	Carbon dating was used to determine that the fossil is 2.5 million years old.
Coevolution	When two species rely heavily on one another for survival causing them to evolve simultaneously. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	As the gazelle evolves and becomes faster so it can run away from the cheetah; a cheetah must also evolve to become faster so that it can continue to eat the gazelle.
Common Ancestry	When two or more organisms share a common ancestor; they are descended from the same organism. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	You and your siblings share a common ancestor.
Convergent Evolution	When unrelated organisms develop similar traits in order to adapt to their environment. (Unit 10 – Lesson 4)
EXAMPLE	The white fur of an artic fox and the white feathers of an artic owl. They both became white for camouflage in the snow.
Divergent Evolution	When one species begins to evolve to form two different species. (Unit 10 – Lesson 4)
EXAMPLE	A species of finch that evolves into multiple different species.

Embryo	An unborn offspring in the process of development. (Unit 10 – Lesson 4)
EXAMPLE	Before you developed into a fetus, you were first a small embryo.
Evidence	Serves to prove or disprove something. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	Evidence from the crime scene can prove that she is guilty.
Evolution	A change over time in the gene pool of a population over time. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	The Earth's population of giraffes haves evolved long necks to reach leaves high in the trees.
Fossil	The remains or impression of a prehistoric organism preserved in rock. (Unit 10 – Lesson 2)
EXAMPLE	A dinosaur bone preserved in the rock.
Fossil Record	A record of the geographic location and the depth of fossils that have been found. (Unit 10 – Lesson 2)
EXAMPLE	Fossils found in different layers of rock show that those organisms died in different time periods.
Gene Pool	All of the genetic information circulating through a population. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	If a population has some blonde haired people and some black haired people then the gene pool for that population contains genes for blonde and black hair.
Homologous Structures	Structures on different organisms that are similar in position, structure, and evolutionary origin. These structures may not perform the same function. (Unit 10 – Lesson 4)
EXAMPLE	The forelimb of a cat and the arm of a human; they are similar in structure, position, and evolutionary origins.
Offspring	A child of a parent. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	You are the offspring of your parents.
Relative Dating	Technique used to determine the approximate age of a fossil by using the depth and type of rock that the fossil is found in. (Unit 10 – Lesson 2)
EXAMPLE	Scientists used relative dating techniques to determine that the organism in the fossil came from the Paleozoic era.
Stasis	A period of inactivity or equilibrium. (Unit 10 – Lesson 1)
EXAMPLE	A population can reach evolutionary stasis when they have reached a point where they no longer need to evolve to survive in the environment.
Vestigial Structures	A structure in an organism that no longer serves a purpose but is believed to have once been essential for that species' survival. (Unit 10 – Lesson 2)
EXAMPLE	Muscles around the human ear that currently have no purpose.