

Figure 1. What began with Gregor Mendel...

From Mendel to the Post-genomic Era

How are traits transferred from one generation to the next? What are genes? What is the genetic material? What are the underlying mechanisms for the translation from genetic information to proteins? What will be next after the deciphering of the human genome sequence? The web site *DNA from the Beginning* of the *Dolan DNA Learning Center, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory* takes the reader on an exciting journey to begin with the work of the father of genetics, Gregor Mendel, up to current research topics as a result of the human genome project. This web page has deserved the many prizes it received.

In a total of 41 chapters, grouped into sections on classical genetics, molecules of genetics, and genetic organization and control, the reader is made familiar with the mentioned subjects in a clear fashion. The story starts with the famous crossing experiments conducted by Gregor Mendel. First, the overall concept of a chapter is described in a brief introduction. Clicking on "Animation", one will be introduced by a scientist who has conducted seminal work in the respective field: "Hello, I'm Gregor Mendel" (Figure 1). In the subsequent animation, the reader will be guided through the experiments which led to fundamental new insight into the respective process (Figure 2). In most cases, one will interactively participate during the lessons.

At the end of each animation in a chapter, a virtual trip into the attached gallery section is highly recommended.

Here, the protagonists are shown in the lab, the classroom, or in a private environment. Thus, the gallery section helps readers to associate important scientific work with a person. These impressions will be strengthened further due to the availability of exciting video interviews with important people in a subject. This material can be found in the Audio/Video section and be displayed by the RealPlayer within the same frame. The biography of every important researcher involved in a subject are listed in a separate section, which is linked to further interesting web pages.

The problem section is interesting for both teachers and students. Here, the topic is briefly summarized and scrutinized through several problems. The problems have to be solved interactively.

Who is the target group of this web site? *DNA from the Beginning* is certainly interesting for students as well as teachers. Students and any interested nonspecialized person will find an excellent introduction to the biochemistry and (molecular) biology of DNA. Teachers will find valuable inspiration for their own teaching activities through the animations, which are designed in a highly descriptive manner. The video interviews are valuable documents and sources for anecdotes to improve one's own teaching activities. In total, this is a great web site, it is worth a visit.

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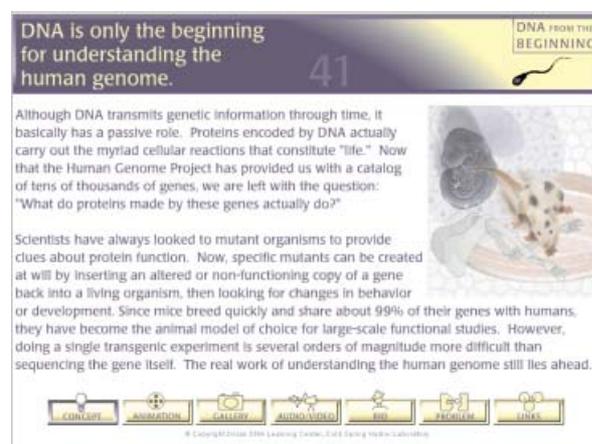


Figure 2. ...is not finished after the human genome project.