

Adaptation- a modification of behavior or of traits in response to outside influences; in biology, adaptation is a result of natural selection

Arboreal- living primarily in trees

Archaeology- the study of the past through material culture

Art- drawings, paintings, sculpture, or any other medium created specifically for an aesthetic value

Behavior- a pattern of actions in response to the individual's environment

Bipedalism- the ability to walk on two legs

Culture- the set of beliefs, traditions, and behaviors that are shared by a group of people

Dentition- related to teeth

DNA- deoxyribonucleic acid; the molecule through which genes are passed from parent to child

Environment- the natural surroundings where humans live including the available resources such as plants and animals as well as the weather conditions and the climate

Evolution- a gradual genetic change in a population due to processes such as natural selection or mutations

Fossil- remains, generally of plants or animals, in which the regular materials have been replaced with minerals, transforming those remains into a rock

Hominid- members of the family *Hominidae*, including great apes, humans, and human ancestors

Hominin- modern humans and human ancestors of the subfamily *Homininae*

Hypotheses- a potential explanation for a set of phenomena; a hypothesis must be testable using the scientific method

Inheritance- passing on of genes from parent to child

Last common ancestor- the most recent ancestor from which members of different groups evolved

Omnivore- an animal that eats both meat and plants

Paleoanthropologist- a person who studies human origins through fossils

Spirituality- beliefs related to human souls; can sometimes be related to religion

Symbol- an image or object that communicates a meaning other than the literal

Temperate- an environment that has a moderate temperature with very few extremes in weather patterns

Terrestrial- living primarily on the ground

Tool- an item that makes an activity easier; for example, a bow and arrow for hunting or a stone tools such as bifaces, hand axes, and cleavers for processing animals

Tool industries- categorization of tools based on physical characteristics and function

Tradition- world views and skills passed down through time in a cultural group

Trait- a characteristic, whether behavioral or genetic, that can be inherited

Tropical- an environment that is hot and humid with brightly colored plants and animals