Human origins: running the prehistoric human race

The Prehistoric Human Race has been created to complement the Internet site www.dnai.org.

Playing the game

Each "population" group starts off the game with a game piece on *The Missing Link*. This places each group (of primates) between six and eight million years ago and gives them the potential to evolve into modern humans or our closest living relatives, the chimpanzee.

The group with the person closest to the average age of reproduction in primates will go first. (This means the group with the person who is closest to their thirteenth birthday goes first, then the next group with a person who is next closest to their thirteen birthday goes, and so on).

On a turn:

A turn begins with the population's "leader" selecting a question card from the pile on the board. If a "Time Out" card is drawn, the population follows the instructions on the card; the population may evolve more rapidly or remain "in stasis" for a turn.

If the card contains a question, the group has an opportunity to evolve. Their success relies on their collective intelligence and speed i.e. their ability to answer the question on the card. Most questions are not one-word answers and require the answer to be expressed clearly, completely and concisely.

The leader can choose to answer the question with or without help from the other members in his/her population. If the leader cannot answer immediately, the "selecting agent" (teacher) will determine the time limit allowed on that question. The population group can then use the hint provided on the card with the www.dnai.org Internet site to answer the question within the set time limit.

With a correct answer:

If the selecting agent determines that the group has answered the question satisfactorily within the time limit, the population group gets the opportunity to reproduce and acquire random mutations! They roll the die and advance – moving the game piece as they go – according to the letter (nucleotide) they roll.

The next group then has a turn at trying to evolve.

With an incorrect answer:

If the group answers incorrectly, the population reaches equilibrium until the next turn and the other populations have a chance to answer the question.

Note: each time a population attempts to evolve, a different member of that population becomes the leader.

Winning the game

In this race, the population groups with larger brains and advanced communication skills will have an adaptive advantage.

As the population group moves closer to loser to modern times, the environment changes (the questions get harder) and the members must adapt to survive.

The first team to evolve into modern human beings wins the game.

Good luck and happy evolving!

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