Evolution Vocabulary

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| **Term** | **Definition** | **How I Remember** |
| Species | Organisms with similar traits that can interbreed & reproduce successful offspring |  |
| Natural Selection | States that organisms best suited for their environments are the ones most likely to survive |  |
| Survival of the fittest | Organisms most fit for the environment will survive and thrive |  |
| Adaptation | Inherited characteristic that increase and organisms change to survive |  |
| Variation | Difference in traits between organisms within a population |  |
| Fitness | Measure of an organism’s ability to survive and produce offspring relative to other members of the population |  |
| Niche | Composed of all the physical, chemical, and biological factors that a species needs to survive, stay healthy, and reproduce |  |
| Habitat | Combined biotic and abiotic factors found in the area where an organism lives |  |
| Competition | Ecological condition in which two organisms attempt to obtain the same resource |  |
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| **Term** | **Definition** | **How I Remember** |
| Evolution | Changes over time |  |
| Phylogeny | Evolutionary history of a group of related species |  |
| Microevolution | Small changes that occur over within a species | Ruff, Ruff! |
| Macroevolution | Evolution that occurs between species, many times resulting in a new species formed |  |
| Speciation | Formation of new species |  |
| Gene &  Allele | 1. specific region of DNA that codes for a particular protein  2. any of the alternative forms of a gene that occurs at a specific place on a chromosome |  |
| Genetic Drift | Change in the frequency of alleles due to **(A)** disease, **(B)** starvation, **(C)** change in environment, or **(D)** natural disaster |  |
| Gene Flow | Physical movement of  **alleles** from one population to another |  |
| Bottlenecking | Genetic drift (genes lost) that results from an event that drastically reduces the size of a population; reduces the population’s genetic variation |  |
| Mutation | Change in DNA sequence; can be beneficial, neutral, or harmful |  |
| **Term** | **Definition** | **How I Remember** |
| Divergent evolution | Isolated populations evolve independently; results from adaptation to different environments; many species evolve from a common ancestor |  |
| Convergent Evolution | A type of evolution in which different types of organisms have evolved similar characteristics |  |
| Coevolution | Species that interact over a long period of time change and adjust to one another | Hummingbird |
| Fossil | Trace of an organism from the past | Mastodon tooth |
| Fossil Record | Tell a story of how organisms change over time | Like a book of pictures |
| Homologous structure | Body part that is similar in **structure** on different organisms but performs **different** functions |  |
| Analogous structure | Structures that are similar in function but have very different evolutionary origins |  |
| Vestigial structure | Structures that are no longer useful to an organism but functioned to serve a purpose in an earlier ancestor |  |