

Session 3 Discussion

1. A detailed study of Darwin's life goes beyond the scope of this study. On the Origins of Species is widely available in a number of electronic formats for free. There are any number of commentaries on this work, as well as biographies of Darwin.
2. Discuss Darwin's Postulates. Give examples of them in action.
3. "Survival of the Fittest" is often misunderstood and misrepresented. It is usually take to mean the biggest, strongest, fastest, meanest etc. will survive- the "kill or be killed" mentality. Note how fitness is measured. Fitness is far more subtle. Higher fitness may be a slightly increased resistance to a local strain of bacteria. What other factors may affect fitness?
4. Consider the example for selection. Note that the population evolves, not an individual. The population evolves when there is a change in the gene pool. When Sheldon from The Big Bang Theory asserts that he is a more highly evolved form of human, he demonstrates his misunderstanding of Evolution. How?
5. You may wish to take a look at the Tree of Life Web Project. (<http://tolweb.org/tree/>) Click your way along a path and notice how much information is given at each step. Note also the extensive lists of references which indicate how much research is being done.