

Grades 6-8

Genius by Stephen Hawking “What Are We?”

Join Stephen Hawking as he challenges three ordinary people to find out what we really are. Self-assembling machines, light-up bacteria and the world’s first physical demonstration of evolution in action conspire to revolutionize their view of life

After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to Stephen Hawking, what are we? • Why does Stephen Hawking believe we can all answer big questions ourselves? • What is the genetic make-up of humans? • What experiments do the three volunteers perform to discover their answers to who we are? • What is the purpose of the first machine as it helps to answer who we are? • What do the volunteers discover after completing their first task? • What is the purpose of the experiment as it helps to answer who we are? • What do the volunteers discover after completing their second task? • What is the purpose of the third as it helps to answer who we are? • What do the volunteers discover after completing their task? • What conclusions do the three volunteers come to by the end of all three tasks as it relates to the question “What Are We”?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do you think we are and what evidence do you have to support your conclusion?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare the genetic makeup of humans and two other types of animals using a table. What do you notice? What other questions do you have? • Compare the chemical makeup of humans and the same two animals using a table. What similarities are there? What differences exist?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discover alternative conclusions as to what we are from the likes of ancient and modern philosophers as well as religious leaders of yesterday and today.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life forms are not the only things that have evolved over many years. Research a career you might be interested in that has been around for a long time. Describe how that career has evolved over time and why.