

Medium Term Plan Evolution



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P levels

Performance attainment targets (P scales) and performance descriptors are used for pupils aged 5 to 16 with special educational needs (SEN) who are working below the standard of the national curriculum tests and assessments. PSTT recognises that the national curriculum levels used in this document are no longer current. We have had so many requests to return these materials to the website that they remain in the documents as a guide for those who have used them in the past. The written statements may be useful to others as an indication of children's development. For further information about P levels see: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/p-scales-attainment-targets-for-pupils-with-sen

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Primary Science Teaching Trust recommends that a full risk assessment is carried out before undertaking in the classroom any of the practical investigations contained in the plans.

Safety Note

PSTT advises teachers to refer to either CLEAPSS website or SSERC website for up to date health and safety information when planning practical activities for children.





Big Questions

- Where did people come from?
- Why do animals die out?
- What helps things to survive?
- Is evolution true?
- Was Darwin a good scientist?

Answers

- Scientists believe that modern humans evolved by 'natural selection' about 200,000 years ago.
- Animals become extinct because they are over-predated, have suffered from disease, or they have failed to adapt to a changing environment and have been unable to find enough food.
- Species are more likely to survive if they adapt to their surroundings: a population gradually changes through natural selection over a long period of time, i.e. through many generations.
- Evolutionary change is a 'theory' a viewpoint that is arrived at when a hypothesis has been tested using evidence. Scientists think that species evolved through natural selection because there is evidence to support this idea.
- Darwin was a good scientist: he had a new idea and spent many years collecting evidence to support this idea.

Learning Objectives

Pupils will have opportunities:

- To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct
- To explore some evidence for evolution





Quick review activities

- Listen to 'I am a palaeontologist' by They Might Be Giants
- Pick out an extinct animal from a group given
- Match some fossils to animals alive at the time
- Darwin was good at spotting things see how good pupils are at spotting things e.g. play games like 'I spy': have things on a tray and then remove one out of sight of pupils and ask them what has been removed

Vocabulary relevant to this topic

- Extinct plant or animal no longer alive on the Earth: hasn't been seen for over 50 years
- Evolution –changing over time or descent with modification!
- Endangered so few left that the plant or animal could become extinct very soon
- Fossil the remains or impression of a prehistoric plant or animal embedded in rock
- Skeleton the bones inside the body that give it support and shape
- Characteristics a feature that makes a plant or animal different
- Diversity –the different plants and animals found in the same place
- Dinosaur: Bones: Teeth: Claws: Names of some animal foods: Names of some animals in danger:





Background information about this topic

- Written records of extinctions of large mammals, birds, and reptiles date back to the 1600s and include species such as the dodo (extinguished in the 17th century), Steller's sea cow (extinguished in the 18th century), and the Rodrigues giant tortoise (extinguished in the 19th century).
 - More species extinction records date from the 19th century and include numerous species of mammals and birds. Records of extinction for reptiles, amphibians, freshwater fishes, and other organisms have mainly been documented since the beginning of the 20th century.
 - It is difficult to be certain that a species is extinct because some species are nocturnal, live in extreme environments or are very rare.
 - Extinction is a natural phenomenon: it occurs at a natural background rate of 1-5 species per year.
 - A growing body of evidence indicates that current species extinction rates are higher than the pre-human background rate and scientists estimate that we are now losing species at 1,000 to 10,000 times the background rate, with dozens of species becoming extinct every day.
- There are lots of different theories as to why dinosaurs became extinct 65 million years ago including meteor impact, disease, volcanic eruption, appearance of mammals. A lot of people think man was alive at the same time as dinosaurs thanks to Hollywood! All knowledge about dinosaurs has been gained from fossil evidence found all over the world. The word dinosaur, meaning 'terrible lizard', was coined by the English anatomist Sir Richard Owen in 1842. Dinosaurs dominated the Earth for over 165 million years during the Mesozoic Era, but mysteriously became ex nct 65 million years ago. They were reptiles, they lived on land, and most hatched from eggs. No dinosaurs could fly and none lived in the water. Prehistoric flying rep les were pterosaurs and prehistoric marine reptiles were plesiosaurs. No one can be completely certain about dinosaurs, scientists can only base their ideas on evidence that they have. When they find new evidence, they may change their ideas. For example, recently Mary Schweitzer surprised colleagues by finding so tissue in a 68 million year old female T-Rex fossil. This has provided new evidence for the link between birds and dinosaurs. So, new informtion about dinosaurs may lead to changes in ideas, including how they became extinct.





- Pupils will often struggle with geological time scales and thinking about the Earth being 4.6 billion years can be very difficult. Sometimes it is good to represent the time line for life on Earth as a 24 hour clock face. If life begins at 12 midnight then it isn't until 6pm that fossils really start to appear: At 8pm plants invade the land: Between 8.15 and 9.30 pm Insects and amphibians invade the land: Between 9.30 and 11pm it is the age of reptiles and dinosaurs: Mammals don't begin until 11pm and humans don't appear until 11.59pm.
- Millions of years ago insects became trapped in tree sap which was subjected to high temperatures and pressure and became fossilised. Other fossils are formed when imprints are left behind and filled with sediment. Usually the plant or animal dies and it gets covered by sediment carried by rivers. Over time this sand or mud becomes compressed and turns into rock. Chemicals and minerals can seep into bones and turn them into a sort of rock. Sometimes too the entire plant or animal can dissolve away which leaves a hollow cast that can be filled with liquid rubber.
- Of the vast amount of prehistoric life that died, it is only a tiny amount that has survived the fossilisation process. The conditions when the majority of life died were just not right at that time, to preserve them. Most fossils are found in sedimentary rocks which were formed from the sediments of rivers, lakes and seas. The majority of the animal and plant fossils we find today, had originally died near these areas, got broken up and deposited on the beds of the rivers, lakes and seas. The sediments covered them and over time some of the layers grew so thick that many of them got crushed. The sediments compacted and over time and turned to rock. The rocks shifted, moved and became exposed to the elements. This process can take up to several hundred million years. Now as the rocks erode or are quarried for, the fossils become exposed and can be collected.





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

- Encounters some different animals or bones (P1i)
- Shows a random fleeting response to the animals or bones (P1ii)
- Shows interest in the animals or bones (P2i)
- Shows consistent or differentiated response to exploring the bones or touching animals (P2ii)
- Participates in shared activities exploring bones or touching animals with less support (P3i)
- Actively explores the bones or interact with the animals for more extended periods
- Encounters some different animals or bones (P3ii)





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Experience touching different pets to raise awareness that animals exist	Visitors who can bring in different pets
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Experience touching different farm animals to raise awareness that animals exist	Visitors who can bring in farm animals
Experience touching different animal foods	

Points to Note:

Pupils at this level are often unaware of other living things

Be aware of allergies

Be aware that some pupils might try to eat animal foods –they are supposed to be safe for human consumption!





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Experience touching dinosaur bones or maybe involve in making rubbings	Dinosaur bones from local museum; paper; large crayons
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Experience touching some different dinosaur bones or teeth	Dinosaur bones; mammoth tooth
Sit inside a willow dome and liken if to being inside a dinosaur. Read a simple sensory story or listen to some dinosaur sound effects	

Points to Note:

Many schools have willow sculptures or one can be made simply using willow twigs inside a tent.





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Select a dinosaur from a group and ask pupils to find one like it Create a collage to show an environment a dinosaur lived in or one of animals that used to exist and animals that still do exist	2 identical sets of Plastic dinosaurs, magazines and other materials to make collage: pictures of dinosaur habitats: pictures of extinct and non-extinct animals
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Set up a pretend archaeological dig to find dinosaur bones	Sand, compost, clean chicken bones of different sizes, large container; spoons to use to unearth dinosaur bones
Make dinosaur eggs from balloon and paper mache. Pupils can paint the eggs. Then make a nest for it to go in and take a photo. Turn egg over after week when pupils not if class and compare to photo. Talk about egg moving and why. Then add a crack ready for hatching! The egg can be split open and a trail of little dinosaur footprints left for pupils to find!	

Points to Note:

There is a misconception that all dinosaurs lived in swamps with volcanoes in the background! Dinosaurs around about 160 million years and the climate /world changed a lot in that time.





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Ask pupils to sort pictures of dinosaurs and group them.	Pictures of different dinosaurs
Talk about some of the features of dinosaurs and why they might have had them e.g. plates on stegosaurus; long beck of diplodocus; claws on T Rex feet	
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Match pictures of dinosaurs to food it might eat. Have pictures of teeth as well	Pictures of different dinosaurs; and their teeth: pictures of plants and meat
Look at different dinosaur claws and if they are the same as lizard claws.	

Points to Note:





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Look at different mammal skeletons. Ask simple questions such as: How many mammals have tails? Do humans have tails? Gorillas are similar to us but why do they have such long arms?	Pictures of different skeletons
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Locate obvious bones in dinosaur skeletons	Pictures of dinosaur skeletons; separate bones form skeletons to match (see Bristol dinosaur site)
Look at modern and prehistoric bird skeletons. Where are they the same? How could you tell it was a bird?	

Points to Note:





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Investigate which dinosaur will survive the swamp Research a dinosaur and find out what it looked like, where it lived, what it ate and so on. Look at pictures of the animal skeletons and how it has changed over time	Plasticine; straws; cardboard; wall paper paste, container. Make dinosaur body from plasticine with straw legs and cardboard feet. Vary body or feet or leg length: animal skeleton pictures e.g. horse over time
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Investigate if dinosaurs were warm or cold blooded by seeing if big animals cool faster than small ones and what that could mean.	Different sized plastic bottles with lids to represent dinosaurs; thermometer or datalogger, warm water, measuring jugs or cylinders
Find out why some scientists think dinosaurs might have been warm and others think cold blooded	
Investigate how stable dinosaurs were. Make model dinosaurs and see which shapes were most stable on 2 legs or 4 legs by putting on a slope and tilting it	
Find out why dinosaurs might have become extinct	





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Points to Note:

Use wallpaper paste without fungicide

Remove pointed ends of cocktail sticks

Cold blooded animals get warm by lying in the sun. The size of the body makes a difference as to how quickly it cools down again. It might be that big dinosaurs would cool down too quickly if they were cold blooded.





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Look at diversity in an area of the school grounds. Pupils identify how many different plants or animals there are in a patch of ground. They don't need to know names just how many different ones there are.	Simple quadrat – made from a wire coat hanger
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Compare the diversity in two different places in the school grounds	Simple quadrat – made from a wire coat hanger
Compare the diversity between mown and unmown areas	





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

- Tolerates deliberate touching during making of fossils (P1i)
- Shows random fleeting response to the fossil making process (P1ii)
- Begins to respond to touch e.g. turns head (P2i)
- Shows consistent or differentiated response to touch (P2ii)
- Begins to communicate intentionally e.g. requests a repeat by gesture (P3i)
- Remembers some learned response for longer e.g. pressing things into dough (P3ii)





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Make fossil bread by helping pupils press clean objects into dough and cooking and then touching when cooked	Bread dough; objects to press into dough e.g. clean shells; baking tray; oven
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Make fossil biscuits in the same way	Biscuit dough; objects to press into dough e.g. clean shells; baking tray; oven
Use animal moulds to make different jelly shapes or shaped cake tins for sponge cakes	

Points to Note:

Be aware of allergies.





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Link to body parts unit: Experience moving different parts at the same time that adult moves part to experience their features	
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Experience looking in mirror with adult pointing out simple features and then repeating with adult also looking in mirror to indicate common features	Mirrors
Experience looking at photos of themselves and pointing out simple features	

Points to Note:

At this early stage pupils will just experience some of their own features and body parts





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Go fossil hunting! Chip out the dinosaur or the bone from the 'rock'. This could be linked to the story of Mary Anning Compare dinosaur hand and foot prints. See how many of their footprints fit in an Apatosaurus foot print (60x120 cm)	Sink plastic dinosaurs or washed chicken bones into air drying clay or plaster of Paris and allow to dry: Plastic knife to chip away at clay or plaster of Paris
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Freeze dinosaurs in ice and talk how sometimes prehistoric animals are found in ice. Hammers can't be used so they need to thaw the ice. Talk about how	Plastic dinosaurs in ice; washing up liquid bottles; warm water to squeeze over dinosaur to melt ice
Make casts of hands or feet by pressing into clay of dough and filling with plaster of Paris or Alginate. Show pictures of dinosaur footprints.	

Points to Note:

Consult safety guidance on Plaster of Paris (see CLEAPSS website).





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Plant conkers at different places in school grounds and see how many grow (long term project but visit regularly). Talk about plants making lots of seeds because they don't all grow or might get eaten	Conkers; trowels; plant markers
Or leave some conkers hidden in various places outside and check regularly to see which are gone, eaten, decaying etc	
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Put old sock over shoes and walk about in a grassy area (summer/early autumn is best) to pick up seeds. Cut up sock and plant bits in compost to see what grows!	Old socks, plastic tray. Compost, scissors
Plant hazel nuts or acorns in pots and see how many grow.	
These could be transplanted into bigger pots and kept for all the time the pupil is at school or keep large numbers in one pot and record what happens over time	

Points to Note:

Watch for nut allergies





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Find out which surfaces make the best fossils imprints. Talk to pupils about trace fossils and show them actual/ photo of coprolite. Explain that scientists can find lot of information from fossilises 'poop'. Give them some fresh dinosaur 'poop' to dissect and to see what sorts of things the dinosaur had eaten e.g. feathers, fur, bones (various) teeth, seeds	Different surfaces to press shell into e.g. sand dry and wet, playdough, soil, cornflour dry and wet; alginate: photo or sample of coprolite, owl pellets, tweezers, cocktail sticks, trays,
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Find out which plants make the best fossils by pressing different leaves into bread dough and cooking.	Bread dough; different leaves; rolling pins; tray to bake on: oven
Make amber fossils. Slice raisins in half and cut or shape to look like insects. Grease patty tin with oil and line with paper. Put raisin insects in the indented parts of tin and put two barley sugar sweets on top of each insect. Bake for 8 mins at 180°C – might need to vary depending on oven. Leave to cool and then take off paper. Remove any paper stuck to 'amber' with bit of water. Can make displays by wrapping in cling film and hanging in window.	





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Points to Note:

Wear gloves when dissecting owl pellets.

Soak pellets prior to use.

Owl pellets can be obtained from local environment centres or online.

Trace fossils are ones left by an animal when alive e.g. excrement, nests, eggs, claw marks.

Owl pellets are not excrement but undigested bits that are ejected via the mouth.





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Find out why some acorns don't grow. Plant acorns in different media and record which grow.	Acorns; sand; gravel; vermiculite; pots;
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Fence off a bare patch of earth and observe what grows or dig up soil and put into ice cream containers and leave outside to see what grows	Pieces of wood or similar to fence off ground; ice cream containers or similar; trowels
Plant some large and smaller seeds in grass. Mark were each seed was planted and monitor their growth.	
Or grow large and small seeds in same pot and observe which grows best by taking photos	

Points to Note:

Taking regular photos as a record of seed growth is important for some pupils, especially autistic pupils, because they like facts and being right, if they were asked to decide what they think might happen, is important to them





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Find out the best substance to make a fossil. Make a fossil imprint in the plasticine and curve side up to make bowl shape. Try different substances to make cast of imprint.	Plasticine or clay to make fossil mould; object to make imprint; jelly; lard; wax, Plaster of Paris (see guidance on using Plaster of Paris on CLEAPSS website)
Look at different fossils and try to match them to creatures alive today or plot them onto a map of the world.	
Use Tricky Tracks and ask pupils to give some ideas about what the tracks could mean. Link to how scientists could use these to think about what dinosaurs might have eaten	Tricky Tracks activity from RSC website: http://media.rsc.org/Nature%20of%20science/NSci-Bbox1.pdf
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Talk about fossils that are sometimes frozen in ice. Find out which plants would be preserved best this way.	Examples of plants to freeze e.g. vegetables such as lettuce and cucumber, herbs, grass etc; water; containers; hairdryers; warm water
Research a particular fossil	
Talk about fossils that are sometimes formed when it is very dry. Investigate drying some foods and see how long they last for.	
Create a time line and get pupils to find out when different animals and plants lived, draw them and place them on the timeline	

Points to Note:

Check safety guidance on melting substances. Use gloves and eye protection.

Care when melting lard or wax and using Plaster of Paris (ref CLEAPSS).





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Plan a fair test to see if seeds can germinate after being in salt water. Soak seeds for different periods of time and then plant to see if they germinate. Pre- soaked seeds can be provided. Link to Darwin's question about how seeds spread.	Cress, radish, lettuce, carrot, and celery seeds; plastic bottles or other containers; salt water
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Seeds that can be eaten need to survive digestive chemicals. Investigate the effect on acid on seed germination	Different types of strengths of acid; different seeds: pots; compost; containers to soak seeds in
Some seeds need to experience a cold spell (like winter) before they grow. Find out how winter affects different seeds	





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

- Shows interest in finding a matching dinosaur or digging out the bones (P4i)
- Explores using vocalisation (P4ii)
- Shows anticipation of finding out about pets or dinosaurs (P5i)
- Takes turns when digging out bones or making collage (P5ii)
- Begins to make connections e.g. signs or points to animal that is extinct (P6i)
- Selects the correct dinosaur from a group (P6ii)





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Talk about a pet they have at home or the school pet and what it needs. What might happen to pet of not looked after?	
Show them some pictures of animals that are now extinct	
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Watch a video clip about endangered species. Make simple mobiles of some endangered species	
Create a wild flower garden for bumble bees or butterflies that are endangered	

Points to Note:

At this stage it is important that pupils think about what animals need to survive and then conversely what happens if those things are not there.





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

- Shows interest the fossil activities (P4i)
- Explores and observes what they do (P4ii)
- Shows anticipation of engaging with fossil activities or matching animals and young (P5i)
- Responds to simple scientific questions (P5ii)
- Begins to make simple generalisations and connections e.g. matching animals to young or getting soil/compost to grow plants (P6i)
- Uses photographs to record what happened (P6ii)





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Match pictures of familiar baby animals and their parents. Talk about how they made the link. Make the point that often offspring look like parents	Pictures of baby and adult dogs, cats, mice, rabbits, sheep etc
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Match pictures of less familiar baby animals and parents. Talk about which features they used	Pictures of baby and adult lions, tigers, giraffes, peacocks etc
Match pictures of baby and adult dinosaurs. Talk about which features they used	





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

- Recognises some extinct animals (P7i)
- Observes some features of dinosaurs (P7ii)
- Describes some problems animals face (P8i)
- Sorts pictures of dinosaurs and talks about some of their features (P8ii)





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Match different pets to the food and talk about how to look after them and what happens if you don't. Link this to endangered/ extinct animals	Loneliest Animals film clip: http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/the-loneliest-animals-introduction/4898/
Do they know any animals that are extinct/ endangered? Show video clip of the 'Loneliest Animals' or photos of some	
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Make mobiles of some endangered species and add some other information about why the animal is endangered	Wire coat hangers to make mobiles; pictures of endangered animals; string or cotton; scissors; card shapes to put other information on
Create a large map of the world. Pupils put pictures of endangered species in the right country	





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

- Observes some changes in investigations (P7i)
- Records single features that have come from different parents (P7ii)
- Records more than one feature that has come from different parents (P8i)
- Describes simply what happened in their investigation (P8ii)





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Look at family pictures that pupils have either bought in or are on internet. Look for features that have come from one or other parent	Family photos are available on Google Images
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Look at more familiar animal family pictures from internet. Look for features that have come from one or other parent	Animal family photos are available on Google Images
Look at less familiar animal family pictures from internet. Look for features that have come from one or other parent	

Points to Note:

Be aware of pupils who may only have one parent or are adopted





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

- Describes simply why animals became extinct (L1i)
- Records results in pre-drawn tables (L1ii)
- Describes simply what they found out (L1iii)
- Compares the diversity in different areas (L2i)
- Records results in an ordered way (L2ii)
- Begins to identify simple patterns in results (L2iii)
- Explains how some animals have become extinct (L3i)
- Constructs tables to record their results (L3ii)
- Explains what their results show (L3iii)





Objective 1: To recognise that living things change over time and may become extinct

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Match animal to reason for becoming extinct	Large world map; pictures of extinct animals
Create a large map of the world and add pictures of extinct animals to country where they lived	
Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Find out why the Dodo became extinct	Film clip of dodo; researchable resources/ websites
Carry out a survey to identify an endangered animal to adopt	
Find out what happened to the great auk	_





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

- Identifies some obvious family characteristics (L1i)
- Begins to suggest how to collect evidence to answer a question (L1ii)
- Communicates findings of an investigation in everyday language (L1iii)
- Describes some features that are passed on in families (L2i)
- Plans simply how to find the answer to a question with some support (L2ii)
- Draws a bar chart to show results of the survey with help (L2iii)
- Explains how they made all the 'possible children' of Mr Potato head (L3i)
- Plans how to find the answer to a question including what equipment and what observations the will make (L3ii)
- Suggests how to improve their investigation (L3iii)

Possible Activities:	Resources:
Look at family tree of Hapsburg / Habsburg Family. What do they observe?	Hapsburg or Habsburg Family tree available on Google Images
Tongue rolling is passed on from parents. Carry out a survey to find out how many pupils in school can roll their tongues. Is there a pattern?	Mr Potato Head; potatoes
Use Mr Potato head and make a mum and dad with different eyes, ears, mouth and nose. Ask pupils to make all the 'possible children' from the two parents.	





Objective 2: To explore some evidence for evolution

Optional activities you might like to try include:	Resources:
Look at family tree of Tudor Family. Which characteristics are passed on?	Tudor Family trees are available on Google Images
Dimples are also passed on in families. Carry out a survey to find out how many pupils in school have dimples. Is there a pattern?	
Look at current Royal Family family tree. Which characteristics are passed on?	
Ear lobes can be attached or unattached. Carry out a survey to find out how many pupils in school have which sort of lobes. Is there a pattern?	

Points to Note:

Sensitivity about pupil's family backgrounds