



## The Genetics of Parenthood Guide

Why do people, even closely related people, look slightly different from each other? The reason for these differences in physical characteristics (called phenotype) is the different combinations of genes possessed by each individual.

To illustrate the tremendous variety possible when you begin to combine genes, you and a classmate will establish the genotypes for a potential offspring. Your baby will receive a random combination of genes that each of you, as genetic parents, will contribute. Each normal human being has 46 chromosomes (23 pairs which are diploid -2 in a pair) in each cell. In forming the gametes (egg or sperm) one of each chromosome pair will be given, so these cells have only 23 single chromosomes (haploid- through meiosis). In this way, you contribute half of the genetic information (genotype) for the child; your partner will contribute the other half.

Because we don't know your REAL genotype, we'll assume that you and your partner are heterozygous (different genotype letters) for every facial trait. Which one of the two available alleles you contribute to your baby is random, like flipping a coin. In this lab, there are 36 gene pairs and 30 traits, but in reality there are thousands of different gene pairs, and so there are millions of possible gene combinations.

Several inheritance patterns are represented in this simulation, and it is important to review these. Inheritance of the traits in this simulation, have been simplified to serve as a model; actual inheritance of the traits are far more complex.

### terms to know:

**Allele:** form of a gene. For every gene there can be 2 alleles

**Phenotype:** What the organism looks like (brown eyes, blue eyes)

**Genotype:** What the alleles are for a trait (BB, Bb, bb)

**Dominant:** allele which masks the expression of another because it's DOMINANT, represented by capital letters (B,R,V)

**Recessive:** allele which is expressed only if both parents contribute it, represented by small letters (b,r,v)

**Incomplete Dominance:** phenotype of the heterozygote is an intermediate form; represented by capital letters and subscripts (  $C_1$ ,  $C_2$  ); an example is red color tints in the hair

**Polygenic:** several genes contribute to the overall phenotype; an example is skin color

**Sex-linked:** commonly applied to genes on the X chromosome, the more current term is X-linked; genes on the y chromosome are "holandric". This activity will NOT have these examples

**dihybrid:** A hybrid for two different genes. Heterozygous for two pairs of alleles. AABb (etc)

**mutation:** a change in a gene or chromosome resulting from an error in mitosis or meiosis or an environmental factor. Adds variation to genes and can be harmful, beneficial or neutral.

**Inversion:** a mutation in which a section of the chromosome is inverted

Normal: 1 2 3 4 5 6    Inversion    1 5 4 3 2 6

**Duplication:** a mutation in which a section of the chromosome is duplicated

Normal: 1 2 3 4 5 6    Duplication: 1 2 **3 3** 4 5 6

**Insertion or Translocation:** a chromosome mutation in which a section of chromosome is transferred to another chromosome

Normal: 1 2 3 4 5 6    Translocation: 9 10 11 12 13 1 2 3

**Deletion:** a chromosome mutation in which a portion of the chromosome is left out or deleted

Normal: 1 2 3 4 5 6    Deletion: 1 2 3 5 6

