

# oldU.5 Common Ancestry

Content Area: **Science**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **January**  
Length: **20 Days**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Summary

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In this unit of study, students analyze graphical displays and gather evidence from multiple sources in order to develop an understanding of how fossil records and anatomical similarities of the relationships among organisms and species describe biological evolution. Students search for patterns in the evidence to support their understanding of the fossil record and how those patterns show relationships between modern organisms and their common ancestors. The crosscutting concepts of cause and effect, patterns, and structure and function are called out as organizing concepts for these disciplinary core ideas. Students use the practices of analyzing graphical displays and gathering, reading, and communicating information. Students are also expected to use these practices to demonstrate understanding of the core ideas.

## Standards

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SCI.6-8.MS-LS4-1	Analyze and interpret data for patterns in the fossil record that document the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life forms throughout the history of life on Earth under the assumption that natural laws operate today as in the past.
SCI.6-8.MS-LS4-3	Analyze displays of pictorial data to compare patterns of similarities in the embryological development across multiple species to identify relationships not evident in the fully formed anatomy.
SCI.6-8.MS-LS4-2	Apply scientific ideas to construct an explanation for the anatomical similarities and differences among modern organisms and between modern and fossil organisms to infer evolutionary relationships.

## Student Learning Objectives

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**Analyze and interpret data for patterns in the fossil record that document the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life forms throughout the history of life on Earth under the assumption that natural laws operate today as in the past.** [Clarification Statement: Emphasis is on finding patterns of changes in the level of complexity of anatomical structures in organisms and the chronological order of fossil appearance in the rock layers.] [Assessment Boundary: Assessment does not include the names of individual species or geological eras in the fossil record.] ([MS-LS4-1](#))

**Apply scientific ideas to construct an explanation for the anatomical similarities and differences among modern organisms and between modern and fossil organisms to infer evolutionary relationships.** [Clarification Statement: Emphasis is on explanations of the evolutionary relationships among organisms in terms of similarity or differences of the gross appearance of anatomical structures.]([MS-LS4-2](#))

**Analyze displays of pictorial data to compare patterns of similarities in the embryological development across multiple species to identify relationships not evident in the fully formed anatomy.** [Clarification Statement: Emphasis is on inferring general patterns of relatedness among embryos of different organisms by comparing the macroscopic appearance of diagrams or pictures.] [Assessment Boundary: Assessment of comparisons is limited to gross appearance of anatomical structures in embryological development.]([MS-LS4-3](#))

## **Driving Questions**

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How do we know when an organism (fossil) was alive?

Are bats more similar to birds or mice?

How do we know that birds and dinosaurs are related?