Chapter 14: Mendel and the Gene Idea

If you have completed a first-year high school biology course, some of this chapter will serve as a review for the basic concepts of Mendelian genetics. For other students, this may be your first exposure to genetics. In either case, this is a chapter that should be carefully mastered. Spending some time with this chapter, especially working genetics problems, will give you a solid foundation for the extensive genetics unit in the chapters to come.

Overview

1. In the 1800s the most widely favored explanation of genetics was “blending.” Explain the concept of blending, and then describe how Mendel’s “particulate” (gene) hypothesis was different.

Concept 14.1 Mendel used the scientific approach to identify two laws of inheritance

2. One of the keys to success for Mendel was his selection of pea plants. Explain how using pea plants allowed Mendel to control mating; that is, how did this approach let Mendel be positive about the exact characteristics of each parent?

3. What is the difference between a character and a trait? Explain using an example.

4. Define the following terms. Then, consider your own family. Which generation would your mother’s grandparents be? Your mother? You?
   - P generation
   - F, generation
   - F, generation

5. Explain how Mendel’s simple cross of purple and white flowers did the following:
   - refuted blending
   - determined dominant and recessive characteristics
   - demonstrated the merit of experiments that covered multiple generations
6. On the following figure, label the allele for both purple and white flower color, a homologous pair, and the locus of the flower color gene.

7. In sexually reproducing organisms, why are there exactly two chromosomes in each homologous pair?

8. Mendel's model consists of four concepts. Describe each concept in the appropriate space below. Indicate which of the concepts can be observed during meiosis by placing an asterisk by the concept.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mendel's Four Concepts</th>
<th>Description of Concept</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First concept</td>
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<td>Third concept</td>
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<td>Fourth concept (law of segregation)</td>
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9. Using Figure 14.5 in your text as your guide, provide the missing notations for the figure below (P, F₁, F₂). Also indicate the alleles for each individual as well as the gametes it produces, and complete the Punnett square.

a. What is the F₁ phenotypic and genotypic ratio? 

b. Which generation is completely heterozygous? 

c. Which generation has both heterozygous and homozygous offspring? 

10. In pea plants, \( T \) is the allele for tall plants, while \( t \) is the allele for dwarf plants. If you have a tall plant, demonstrate with a tester cross how it could be determined if the plant is homozygous tall or heterozygous tall.

11. Explain the difference between a monohybrid cross and a dihybrid cross.
12. As you start to work word problems in genetics, two things are critical: the parent’s genotype must be correct, and the gametes must be formed correctly. Using Figure 14.8 in your text as your guide, explain how the gametes are derived for the following cross. (You should have four different gametes.)

\[ YyRr \times YyRr \]

13. Complete the cross given in question 12 by placing the gametes in a *Punnett square*. Then provide the phenotypic ratio of the offspring.

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Phenotypes/Phenotypic Ratio
Phenotypes/Phenotypic Ratio

14. Explain Mendel’s *law of independent assortment*.

Before leaving this concept, it would be helpful to complete the three problems in *Concept Check 14.1* on page 269 of your textbook. The problems are worked and explained in the Answer section on page A-13 at the back of the book.

*Concept 14.2 The laws of probability govern Mendelian inheritance*

15. An event that is certain to occur has a probability of \( \underline{\text{1.00}} \), while an event that is certain not to occur has a probability of \( \underline{\text{0.00}} \).

16. In probability, what is an *independent event*?

17. State the *multiplication rule* and give an original example.

18. State the *addition rule* and give an original example.

19. What is the probability that a couple will have a girl, a boy, a girl, and a boy in this specific order?
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Concept 14.3 Inheritance patterns are often more complex than those predicted by simple Mendelian genetics

20. Explain how incomplete dominance is different from complete dominance, and give an example of incomplete dominance.

21. Compare and contrast codominance with incomplete dominance.

22. Dominant alleles are not necessarily more common than recessive alleles in the gene pool. Explain why this is true.

23. Explain what is meant when a gene is said to have multiple alleles. Blood groups are an excellent human example of this.

24. Blood groups are so important medically that you should be able to solve genetics problems based on blood types. The first step in accomplishing that is to understand the genotypes of each blood type. Before working any problems, complete this ABO blood type chart.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Genotype</th>
<th>Red Blood Cell Appearance</th>
<th>Phenotype (blood group)</th>
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25. Question 2 in Concept Check 14.3 is a blood type problem. Complete it here, and show your work.

26. What is pleiotropy? Explain why this is important in diseases like cystic fibrosis and sickle-cell disease.

27. Explain epistasis.

28. Explain why the dihybrid cross detailed in Figure 14.12 in your text has four yellow Labrador retrievers instead of the three that would have been predicted by Mendel’s work.

29. Why is height a good example of polygenic inheritance?
30. *Quantitative variation* usually indicates ________.

31. Using the terms *norm of reaction* and *multifactorial*, explain the potential influence of the environment on phenotypic expression.

**Concept 14.4 Many human traits follow Mendelian patterns of inheritance**

32. Pedigree analysis is often used to determine the mode of inheritance (dominant or recessive, for example). Be sure to read the “Tips for Pedigree Analysis” in Figure 14.15 in your text; then complete the unlabeled pedigree by indicating the genotypes for all involved.

What is the mode of inheritance for this pedigree? ________

33. In the pedigree you just completed, explain why you know the genotype of one female in the third generation, but are unsure of the other.

34. Describe what you think is medically important to know about the behavior of recessive alleles.

35. You are expected to have a general knowledge of the pattern of inheritance and the common symptoms of a number of genetic disorders. Provide this information for the disorders in the following list.

   a. cystic fibrosis
   b. sickle-cell disease
   c. achondroplasia
d. Huntington’s disease
36. *Amniocentesis* and *chorionic villus sampling (CVS)* are the two most widely used methods for testing a fetus for genetic disorders. Use the following unlabeled diagram to explain the three main steps in amniocentesis and the two main steps of CVS.

![Diagram of amniocentesis and CVS steps]

37. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each fetal test?

38. What are the symptoms of *phenylketonuria (PKU)*? How is newborn screening used to identify children with this disorder?

*Test Your Understanding Answers*

One of the ways to determine your understanding of Mendelian genetics is to work many genetics problems. Complete the questions for the problems at the end of the chapter.

Before starting, it would be productive to read the “Tips for Genetic Problems” on page 283. Work neatly, and show all work. As you know, you can check your solutions in your text.