

## Darwin's Idea

Max had to write a short speech for class about a person born in the past who had a big idea. Max loved animals and his Dad suggested that Charles Darwin's ideas might interest him.

Darwin was born in 1809, so that was good. Darwin explained how animals and organisms change over time. The genes that make animals the way they are mutate or change all the time, but in most cases these changes result in one or two odd looking animals and the trait remains rare. But in some cases, those odd changes help an animal to survive. Max went to his Dad and said, "I think I have what I need. It seems like Darwin was saying that genes change and that over time the best genes win."

Max's Dad said, "Yes, that's right, that was his idea, but you could explain in more detail about how that might happen. Let's say a gene mutates, and a frog now has brown and white spots. If those spots help her hide from

predators, she will survive and give birth. Some of those new frogs will have spots. The frogs with spots have the most chance to survive and mate. Over time spots will become more common.”

Max went back to the computer and did more reading and found some examples. Then he looked at his report again and saw how he could expand it and make it better. When he was done, he went to his dad and said, “Thanks for the feedback. My report now seems more complete.”