



# Think & Believe

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## Tips for Students & Parents

By Dave & Mary Jo Nutting

Now that school is in session again, students and parents often face a perplexing problem — how to deal with evolutionary teaching. Of course, this decision should be approached with serious personal consideration and prayer. However, since many people have asked us for suggestions, we will attempt to give a few. Keep in mind these are our personal opinions only.

First, students should do the very best job in class as they possibly can. Teachers are more likely to listen to the views of good students than poor ones. Assignments should be done neatly and thoroughly and turned in on time. Students should be careful to be attentive and respectful in class and maintain a positive attitude about the class and the teacher, “so that in all things God may be glorified.” (1 Peter 4:11)

We have found that it is usually best not to challenge the teacher directly in class. Normally, it is better to talk to the teacher after class, respectfully presenting personal views and relevant facts. Asking questions and sharing pertinent information in class are also appropriate if done in a respectful way which does not embarrass the instructor. In addition, the student can offer to do special reports, arrange for guest speakers, or provide the teacher with books and articles presenting another view.

When faced with a pointedly evolutionary assignment we find it is best for students to complete the assignment in a way which demonstrates a thorough understanding of the evolution model, but which also points out its shortcomings along with the positive points for creation. Admittedly, this will require additional work; however a well-reasoned defense of the creation model is often effective, especially with fair-minded teachers.

On tests we usually recommend that students answer questions as much as possible by giving the “correct” answer (as taught in the text or in class) and then add qualifiers, such as “According to the evolution model . . .” or “The text states . . .” Many times a note attached to the test explaining personal views is appropriate.

Although the suggestions above are often effective, they are not fool-proof. Some teachers are absolutely intolerant and refuse to allow students to express opposing views. In such cases, parents should consider talking directly with the teacher, and then with the principal, superintendent and school board if necessary. In some cases of direct prohibition of freedom of speech or discrimination because of religious beliefs, legal action may even be appropriate.

In conclusion, we believe the best approach involves diligent preparation, gentle persistence in standing up for personal convictions, and trusting in God for the results.



# NOTES & QUOTES

■ Evolution forms the basis of most science textbooks used in the public education system. Some books are totally saturated with it so that it is virtually impossible for an instructor to use them and not be teaching evolution. Statements such as the following are typical (from *Biological Science: A Molecular Approach*, BSCS Blue Version, Fifth Edition, 1985):

- The fossils preserved in successive vertical layers indicate the sequence in which animals and plants evolved. . . . Fossils form a record in the rocks that supports the idea that life has evolved over very long periods of time from simple to more complex varieties. (p. 69)
- Scientific evidence indicates that Earth is about 4.7 billion years old. (p. 95)
- A "nutrient broth" may have resulted from the accumulation of organic compounds in Earth's ancient waters. As time went by, the simpler molecules in the broth formed more complex molecules and then the complex molecules formed a primitive cell. (p. 110)
- Little or no free oxygen was present in the early atmosphere. If it had been, it would have destroyed the naturally occurring organic compounds from which life is believed to have evolved. (p. 95)

■ If you study this book carefully, you do find qualifying statements which indicate that much of the information is assumption, or believed to be true by biologists. However, the assumption of evolution itself is not questioned, and no alternative is provided. Thus students are led to believe that evolution is true.

- Biologists share the view that evolution has taken place but continue to investigate questions of how it has done so. (p. 65)

■ Most of the elementary and junior high science texts intersperse varying amounts of evolutionary dogma and many do that without ever mentioning the term "evolution." This primes the students for full acceptance of evolution in the upper grades. Here are some examples of how students are led into believing evolution. (Unless noted, all references are taken from the McGraw-Hill Gateways to Science elementary science curriculum.)

- Some animals of long ago were ancestors of animals that live now. Today's lizards and snakes probably are descended from snakes and lizards of long ago. (2nd grade, p. 99)

■ We certainly can go along with that statement found in this 2nd grade students' book, but look at what the

teacher's edition says and, of course, what the student will ultimately be taught:

- Point out that people look somewhat like their parents or grandparents, but they look different too. Explain that some animals of today resemble animals of long ago, and scientists believe that they are related. Review who the ancestors of today's lizards and snakes were. (p. 99) . . . Explain that birds are believed to have descended from ancient reptiles. (2nd Grade, Teacher Edition) (p. 100)

■ You might say "That's not fair!" However, it is a common practice for textbooks to say one thing so that parents don't get alarmed and to teach another or "go into detail" for the students through the teacher's edition.

- Note that water has been wearing away Earth for a very long time. Some scientists say this has been happening for hundreds of millions (even billions) of years. Ask the students why then the mountains have not been worn away. [They then give a standard answer.] (3rd grade Teacher Edition, p. 179)
- This carving [of the Grand Canyon] took anywhere from one to ten million years. (6th grade, p. 183)
- During the early periods of the Paleozoic Era nearly all animal types were without backbones. (Heath Earth Science, 1984, p. 383)

■ Significantly, none of the elementary or junior high textbooks that we reviewed for this article mentioned alternate current viewpoints. Evolutionary concepts were presented matter of factly as if there was absolutely no other possibility. It's no wonder so many children end up believing evolution is a proven fact.



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## The Origin of Life

People have long speculated on the origin of living creatures. A common view in the past was the idea of spontaneous generation. This was the idea that some life forms came directly from the earth or from other non-living materials. For example, maggots were thought to arise spontaneously from decaying meat, rats from dirty rags, snakes from horsehairs, and all kinds of creatures from dried up pond mud. Scientific experiments in the 1600s-1800s however showed the error in such thinking, and the principle that "life comes only from life" became widely accepted. This principle is now one of the best substantiated principles in modern science.

Many evolutionary scientists, however, still accept a modified version of spontaneous generation to explain the origin of the very first life, though there is no direct experimental evidence to support it. In general they try to trace the stream of life back to simple one-celled creatures like bacteria and simple algae, but where did they come from? Supposedly they arose spontaneously from non-living chemical materials by natural chemical processes. Since there is no known way for this process to take place under the current kind of atmosphere, evolutionists propose that the original earth atmosphere must have been much different from today's. Experiments have shown that it is possible to produce the chemical building blocks of life in such an atmosphere. However, these are specifically controlled laboratory experiments which have little to do with the conditions present on the early earth. There are also many problems in relating these experiments to the evolutionary origin of life.

The jump from an unorganized blob of chemicals to a complex, coordinated living cell is a fantastic jump. Even a simple living cell is thought to need over 2000 specific proteins to function properly. Calculations have shown that it is statistically impossible to arrive at even one small-sized specific protein by chance, much less 2000! (See May/June 1985 T&B.)

The principle that "life comes only from life" is still an accurate scientific principle, and it is also Biblical. Scripture tells us the first life on earth came from God Himself when he made the various types of animals and finally breathed into man the breath of life. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." Indeed, life comes only from life today, and the first life on earth came from the eternal source of life, the great Creator God Himself.

## A Reducing What?

Textbooks frequently make statements like "several billion years ago the primitive earth had a reducing atmosphere." What does that mean? Instead of containing large amounts of free oxygen as our present atmosphere does, it supposedly contained large amounts of hydrogen, methane, ammonia and other gases. This type of atmosphere would kill most everything that lives today.

What is the basis for such statements in the books? The idea first caught on not because of observation, but because it was essential in the evolution model. If non-living chemicals eventually get together to form living cells by chance naturalistic processes, an oxygen-free environment would be necessary since the very first steps of this process could not take place with free oxygen in the atmosphere. Thus, scientists who had already rejected a supernatural explanation of the origin of life and were firmly convinced that life evolved accidentally, were forced to believe that the early earth had an entirely different type of atmosphere than today. So the idea of a reducing atmosphere started as an assumption based on the assumption of evolution.

Is there evidence to substantiate this belief? It seemed like it when a graduate student discovered a layer of alternating red and black bands of iron. The red bands of iron had evidently been formed in an environment containing free oxygen and the black bands formed without it (under the so-called "reducing atmosphere"). Here was "proof" at least for the time period when the earth began to have a change in its atmosphere. Biologists were enthusiastic about the discovery, and the statement became even more entrenched as fact.

Unfortunately for evolutionary biologists, below this banded iron formation was another massive layer of rock which was rich in red (oxidized) iron. This shows conclusively that the atmosphere had contained much free oxygen prior to the deposition of the banded beds. Subsequently, other arguments were suggested to substantiate the claim that the "primitive" earth atmosphere had little or no free oxygen. These arguments are carefully evaluated and exploded by two very respected geologists, Clemmey and Badham, in an article appearing in the March 1982 issue of *Geology* entitled "Oxygen in the Precambrian Atmosphere: An Evaluation of the Geological Evidence." After much detailed research, they concluded that from the time of the earliest dated rocks, Earth had an atmosphere with plenty of breathable oxygen. Evolutionists must look for other ways to explain how life originated, and indeed many are desperately looking to do just that.



If you missed out on the Creation Family Camp at Camp Redcloud, you missed a great week. Participants have reported they thoroughly enjoyed the week of family fun and learning. Redcloud staff members were extremely helpful and gracious, and clearly demonstrated Christian servanthood. We all learned a lot from them. We appreciated their expertise in leading the group activities — rappelling, horseback riding, mountain biking, jeeping, and mountain climbing — and their skills in the kitchen, providing hungry campers with super meals. We personally were also pleased with the interest in the creation seminar. Participants learned a great deal, and most have plans to immediately use the material in teaching classes, working with their own children, etc. We want to express our thanks to Dorothy Hahn for providing the children with their very own “hands-on” creation seminar while the adults were in lectures and to the Redcloud staff for making it a very special week for all. If you missed the fun this year, start making plans for next year — we hope to see you there!

— Reminder —

Just a reminder, Alpha Omega Institute is a non-profit organization supported by the donations of people who feel we are doing a needed and worthwhile work. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to this work — your donations are very much appreciated. If you have not yet begun contributing, we encourage you to do it today. Faithful partners in giving and prayer make this work possible.

Are there topics you’d like to see covered in *Think and Believe*? If so, drop us a note and we’ll see what we can do. Your input is appreciated and helps keep us on track!

# Alpha Omega Institute

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Would you like additional information about any one of the condensed articles or on another subject that we haven’t even touched upon as yet? Write to us and we will gladly send you some.

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Do you know any school-aged children — your own, grandkids, nieces, nephews, neighbor kids, kids at church, etc.? If so, you need to be aware of the following resources available to help them deal with the evolutionary bias so common in textbooks and on TV.

¶ Dinosaurs are frequently used to lead children into evolutionary thinking. Help them see the other side of the story with these two clearly written and beautifully illustrated hardcover books:

*The Great Dinosaur Mystery and the Bible* (\$12.00)  
*Dinosaurs: Those Terrible Lizards* (\$10.00)

■ What about the fossils? Do they “prove” evolution? How do creationists interpret fossil evidence. These two children’s books will give you a concise answer:

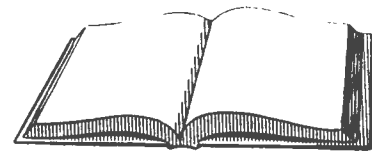
*Dry Bones and Other Fossils* (\$7.00)  
(\$13.00 with 70 minute read-along cassette)  
*Fossils: Key to the Present* (\$5.50)

■ Would you like to counteract the amoral sex education children get in public schools? This brand new book by Dr. Gary Parker tastefully presents a Bible-centered account of reproduction and embryonic growth in a unique conversation style with beautiful illustrations:

*Life Before Birth* (\$11.00)  
(Read-along cassette, \$6.00 extra)

■ All of the above may be ordered directly form Alpha Omega Institute, Box 4343, Grand Junction, CO 81502.

\*Note: Prices already include shipping and handling.



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