

Human Genome Project



5 minutes

What You Will Do

Get a basic understanding of the Human Genome Project using a simple code.

Get it Together

- ◆ Pencil
- ◆ Paper

Procedure

1. Write the entire alphabet on a sheet of paper.
2. Number each letter, 1 through 26. Each number should appear under each letter.
3. This is your secret code. Now write your name using this code. Remember to substitute the number for each letter.
4. Give your coded name to another person and ask her if she can figure out your secret code.
5. Write short sentences in code and repeat Step 4.



A Closer Look

Imagine trying to crack a code that is 3.1 billion characters long. That's exactly what scientists working on the Human Genome Project are doing. Your genome is all the DNA packed into one cell of your body. Scientists estimate that the 23 pairs of chromosomes that make up the human genome contain about 60,000 to 80,000 genes. A gene is a segment of DNA that give us our own personal traits.

What Now?

Try to invent your own code and see if anyone can "crack" it.