

Cytochrome C Comparison Lab

PURPOSE: To compare the relatedness between organisms by examining the amino acid sequence in the protein, Cytochrome C.

BACKGROUND: Genes are made of DNA and are inherited from parent to offspring. Some DNA sequences code for mRNA which, in turn, codes for the amino acid sequence of proteins. Cytochrome C is a protein involved in using energy in the cell. Cytochrome C is found in most, if not all, known eukaryotes. Over time, random mutations in the DNA sequence occur. As a result, the amino acid sequence of Cytochrome C also changes. Cells without usable Cytochrome C are unlikely to survive.

METHOD:

A. Compare the amino acid sequence of Cytochrome C in various organisms.

1. Mark the amino acids which are different Use the example to show you how.

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- - - - G D V A K G K K T F V Q K C A Q C H T V E N G G K H K V G P N L W G L F G R K T
- G V P A G D V E K G K K I F V Q R C A Q C H T V E A G G K H K V G P N L H G L F G R K T
  
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Note that some of the amino acids are always the same in all species, these have been shaded blue or light gray.

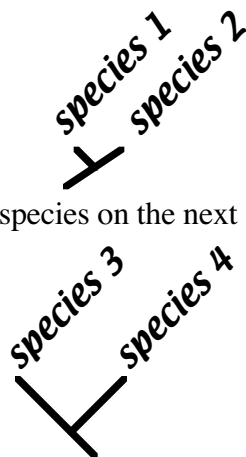
2. Count and record the total number of differences.

| | |
|----------------|----|
| Tuna & Fly: | 24 |
|----------------|----|

3. Note: Be sure to study the entire molecule. Each protein sequence has 103-112 amino acids; the sequence extends onto two (2) lines.
4. Share your data with the rest of the class and complete Table 1.

B. Make a *branching tree*, or *cladogram* using the data in Table 1.

1. The two most closely related species have the fewest differences in amino acid sequence. Place the two most closely related species on the two shortest branches of the tree.



2. Place the next two closest species on the next shortest branches.

3. Place the species which is the next closest on the next longest branch. Continue until all the species have been placed.

C. Answer the *questions*.

AMINO ACID SEQUENCES IN CYTOCHROME-C PROTEINS FROM DIFFERENT SPECIES

Table of amino acid sequences for various species (Human, Chimpanzee, Rhesus monkey, Horse, Donkey, Common zebra, Pig, Cow, Sheep, Dog, Gray whale, Rabbit, Kangaroo, Chicken, Turkey, Penguin, Pekin duck, Snapping turtle, Rattlesnake, Bullfrog, Tuna, Screwworm fly, Silkworm moth, Tomato horn "worm", Wheat, Rice, Baker's yeast, Candida yeast, Neurospora) with columns for amino acid number (1-93) and amino acid symbols.

[CONTINUED FROM ABOVE]

Continuation of amino acid sequences for species (Human, Chimpanzee, Rhesus monkey, Horse, Donkey, Common zebra, Pig, Cow, Sheep, Dog, Gray whale, Rabbit, Kangaroo, Chicken, Turkey, Penguin, Pekin duck, Snapping turtle, Rattlesnake, Bullfrog, Tuna, Screwworm fly, Silkworm moth, Tomato horn "worm", Wheat, Rice, Baker's yeast, Candida yeast, Neurospora) with columns for amino acid number (60-110) and amino acid symbols.

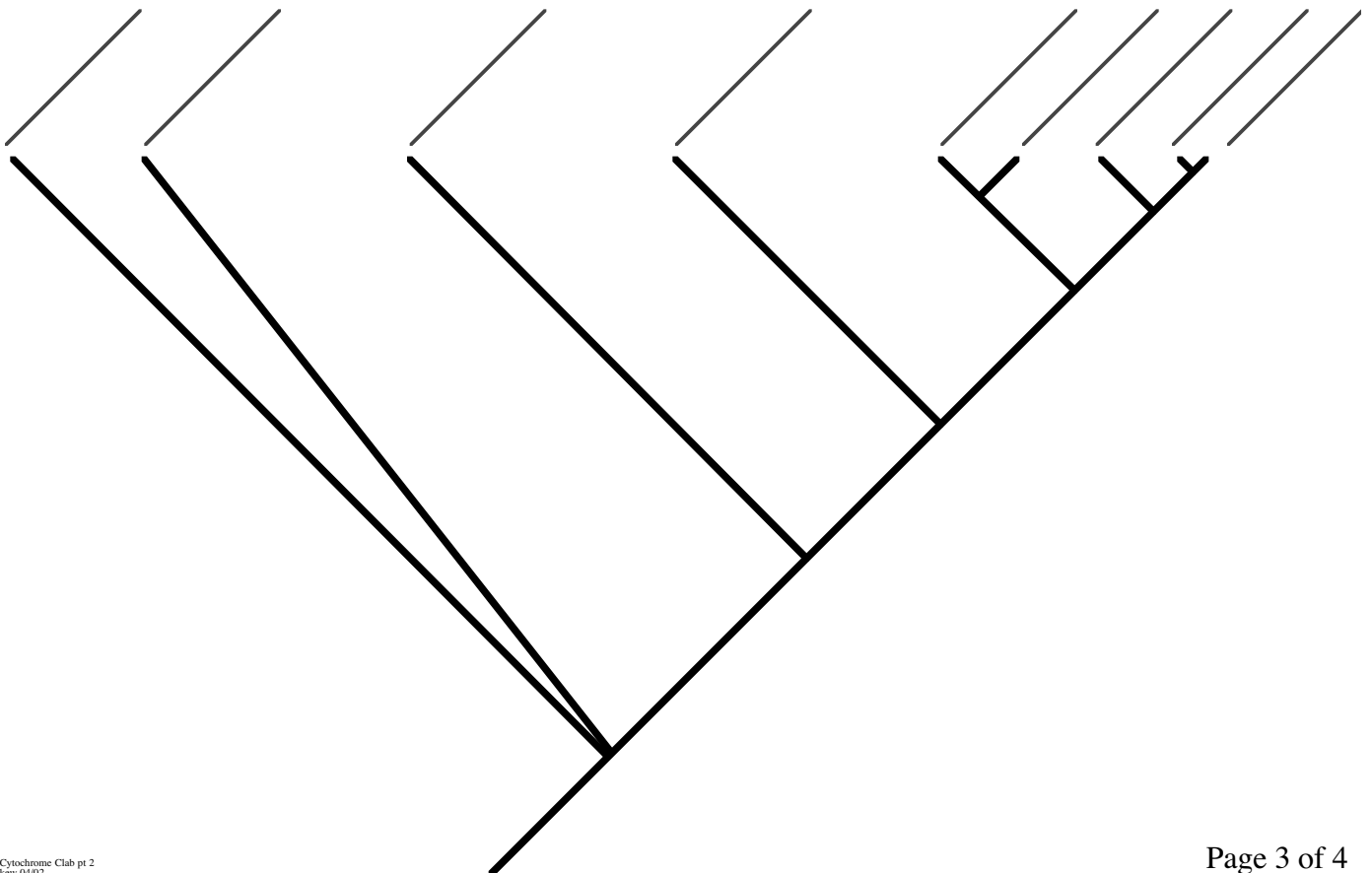
AMINO ACID SYMBOLS
A = Alanine
C = Cysteine
D = Aspartic acid
E = Glutamic acid
F = Phenylalanine
G = Glycine
H = Histidine
I = Isoleucine
K = Lysine
L = Leucine
M = Methionine
N = Asparagine
P = Proline
Q = Glutamine
R = Arginine
S = Serine
T = Threonine
V = Valine
W = Tryptophan
Y = Tyrosine

Symbols in light blue or gray represent amino acids which show NO differences in any organism on the list, so you can ignore them. (Adapted from Strahler, Arthur, Science & Earth History, 1987, p. 348)

Table 1: Differences between amino acid sequences in Cytochrome C protein for nine species.

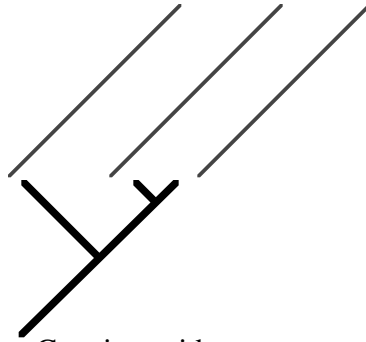
| | horse | donkey | whale | chicken | penguin | snake | moth | yeast | wheat |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| horse | <i>0</i> | | | | | | | | |
| donkey | | <i>0</i> | | | | | | | |
| whale | | | <i>0</i> | | | | | | |
| chicken | | | | <i>0</i> | | | | | |
| penguin | | | | | <i>0</i> | | | | |
| snake | | | | | | <i>0</i> | | | |
| moth | | | | | | | <i>0</i> | | |
| yeast | | | | | | | | <i>0</i> | |
| wheat | | | | | | | | | <i>0</i> |

**Cladogram, or Branching Tree,
Based on Cytochrome C Amino Acid Sequence**



QUESTIONS:

1. How many Cytochrome C amino acid sequence differences are there between chickens and turkeys? _____
2. Make a branching tree, or cladogram for chickens, penguins, and turkeys.



3. a. Predict the number of Cytochrome C amino acid sequence differences you would expect to see between
 - i. horse and zebra _____
 - ii. donkey and zebra _____
- b. What other information did you use to make this prediction?

4. Use this Cytochrome C sequence difference data to add a branch to the tree on page 3.

| | horse | penguin | snake | tuna | silkworm moth | yeast | wheat |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| tomato hornworm moth | 26 | 18 | 24 | 28 | 5 | 42 | 38 |

5. List three other things used to determine how organisms are related to each other.

6. Explain why more closely related organisms have more similar Cytochrome C.

7. Other data, including other genes, suggests that fungi are more closely related to animals than plants. What are some reasons that the Cytochrome C data suggests that fungi, plants, and animals are equally distantly related?

