

## Student Worksheet

### DIRECTIONS

Read the following news story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions. Use additional paper if necessary.

### STORY

**200 Years Later, Darwin's Theories Still Inspire Science, Economics and Politics,**  
2/13/2009

[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/science/jan-june09/darwin\\_02-13.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/science/jan-june09/darwin_02-13.html)

### READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is "On the Origin of Species"?

2. Why was "On the Origin of Species" considered radical?

3. What is natural selection?

4. What is the "tree of life"? Why is it important?

5. What is "intelligent design"?

**6. What is the significance of the fight between evolution and intelligent design?**

**7. According to Gallup, what percentage of Americans believe in evolution?**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

**1. Do you think it's right to apply Darwin's natural selection theory to anything besides biology? (Economics, history, etc)**

**2. How does Darwin's "survival of the fittest" theory resonate in American society and culture?**

**3. Some economists say that the up side of the current economic recession is that only the strong (the "fittest") businesses, banks and institutions will survive. What do you think?**

**4. Do you think that evolution should be taught in schools? Why or why not? Should intelligent design? Creationism?**

**5. Who decides what is taught in school? How are those decisions made? Do you agree with them? Why or why not?**

**Extension Activity**

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.