

Inherited Traits of Plants and Animals

Note-taking Guide - Answer Key

*offspring, parents, choose, leaf shape, traits, wings, apart, tusks,
white, instinct, different, looks, flower color, larger, inherit, shape,
behavior, size, taught, grizzly, inherited, scent, hair color, plants,
fish, migrating*

Both elephants have four legs, a trunk, a tail, and tusks.

The African elephant has larger ears and is larger in size than the Asian elephant.

Organisms have different shapes, sizes, and body parts.

The characteristics that help us identify different organisms are called traits.

Traits of all organisms are passed on from parents to offspring. That's why they are also called inherited traits.

Both the mother and baby polar bears have white fur coats, and wide front paws with slightly webbed toes.

These inherited traits make polar bears different from other bears, such as the grizzly bears.

The baby Macaroni penguin will inherit this trait from its parents.

Inherited traits also include types of behavior or action.

Penguins are birds that use their wings to swim. Swimming is a behavior inherited by penguins from their parents.

Penguins and fish are born knowing how to swim. They do not need to be taught. A behavior that an animal is born with is called an instinct.

Some other examples of instincts include carrying young, migrating, hibernating, and eating when hungry.

Sean has his mom's hair color, with an oval-shaped face just like his dad's!

Sean inherited the way he looks from his parents.

Parents can't choose which physical traits they pass on to their children.

Look at the shape of the flowers. We can tell them apart because the petals are shaped differently.

We can also identify flowers by their scent because different flowers produce different scents.

Like animals and humans, plants also pass on many traits to their offspring.

A bluebonnet plant inherits its stem length, flower color, and scent from its parent plant.

Some other inherited traits of plants include leaf shape, type of fruit, and plant height.