

Differences between People



People differ physically from the moment of conception, but it is only after birth that an individual can be observed. Family traits and characteristics are noted by adoring parents who think the baby looks like another family member or definitely takes after the mother's side or, without a doubt, has his father's nose.

Eye color, skin color and the texture of our hair are all different and depend on our inherited genes. A baby born with ginger hair may in a few months' time have fair hair as the birth hair falls out and is replaced. Hair can be fine, thick, straight or curly, and as we grow older it gets thinner. Some hair loss is experienced at quite an early age whilst others have a full head of hair throughout their lives. People with dark hair may find that it turns to grey or white even before they reach their 40's.

European people in general have pale skin than if your ancestors come from Africa or Asia. Skin can change color if exposed to sunlight, but the tan does not last unless it is regularly topped up.

The rate at which we develop and grow is variable. Boys and girls of the same age show big differences in growth spurts especially when puberty is reached. At the age of 12, girls are much taller than boys of the same age, but at 16 years of age, boys shoot up and overtake the girls in height and body strength.

The way the body develops is not just a result of physical changes, as our mental processes have a large part to play in what we want to achieve. A desire to become a skillful footballer, a long-distance runner or a strong swimmer require stamina and years of practice to try and attain the top level. Even with hours of body building activities and work-outs in the gym, a person will not be able to compete in a Strong Man competition if they have a small frame and fragile bones.

The food we eat will, to a certain extent, determine how we grow and gives us strong bones. A lack of activity and eating too much sweet sugary food can result in people gaining excessive amounts of weight. It seems unfair that one person can eat all sorts of fattening food and not put on weight whilst others just 'looking at a cream cake' can put on pounds or kilos.

Reading comprehension questions. Select the correct answer

1. What changes take place a few weeks after birth?
2. What causes pale skin to become brown or tanned?
3. Roughly, at what stage in their development do girls start to grow in height?
4. What do we need to succeed in sport at the top level?
5. What happens to our bodies if we eat too much and do not take enough exercise?

