

Gregor Mendel



Key Terms

- genetics
- traits
- friar
- offspring
- common

Making Connections

Discoveries about traits, like Mendel's, have shown cat breeders how to create pet cats that look like tiny tigers!



Gregor Mendel is known as the “Father of **Genetics**.” He studied the way certain **traits** are passed down from parents to their children. Gregor was born in Austria in 1822 with the name Johann Mendel. As Johann grew up, he wanted to continue going to school. Unfortunately, it was difficult for his family to afford to pay for school. His younger sister, Theresia, even gave up money so that Johann could go to school. Years later, Johann showed his thankfulness by helping to pay for two of her sons to become doctors.

Johann eventually decided to become a **friar**. Upon joining the abbey, a place where friars live and work, he changed his name to Gregor. At the abbey, he continued his education and studied the plants in the gardens.

Gregor became a priest and then tried to become a high school teacher but was unable to pass the tests for teachers. So, Gregor continued his studies at the abbey. He worked on pea plants and studied how the baby pea plants looked similar to or different from the parents. He studied over 30,000 pea plants! From his studies, Gregor realized that some traits that are passed down from parents to **offspring** are more **common** than others.

Gregor became the director of the abbey and was not able to study science in his later years. It was not until years after his death that other scientists realized how important his work was.

Interesting Facts:

- Mendel studied over 30,000 pea plants!
- Gregor Mendel studied genetics, which is the study of inheritance.
- By studying peas, Mendel realized that some traits are dominant (more powerful) and some are recessive (less powerful).