

In science, *inheritance* has a special meaning:

Inheritance is the name for the passing of traits, or **characteristics**, from parents to offspring.



This foal has inherited a very distinctive characteristic from its mother. Can you see what it is?



Which traits, or characteristics, do you think you have inherited from your parents?



When we are talking about inheritance, the word variation has a special meaning:

Variation occurs in a species from generation to generation. Although an offspring will have some similar characteristics to its parents, it will also have many different characteristics. This is called **variation**.



This is a normal process that occurs in the life cycles of all plants and animals.

Task



Look closely at the family below. Do the children have any characteristics that are similar to their parents. Label some of the similar characteristics, then answer the questions below.



1. Choose the son or the daughter to write about. Describe some of the characteristics which they have inherited from each parent:

Mother _____

Father _____

2. In what ways does their appearance vary from that of their parents? Describe some of their *unique* characteristics:

3. Can you think of some characteristics **you** have that are **not inherited**? You have some characteristics that have developed over time because of the way you are raised by your family, the food that you eat and many other factors. **Describe some of your own characteristics** that you think are **not inherited**, suggesting what factors may be responsible.
