

capitolo 2 L'evoluzione dei viventi

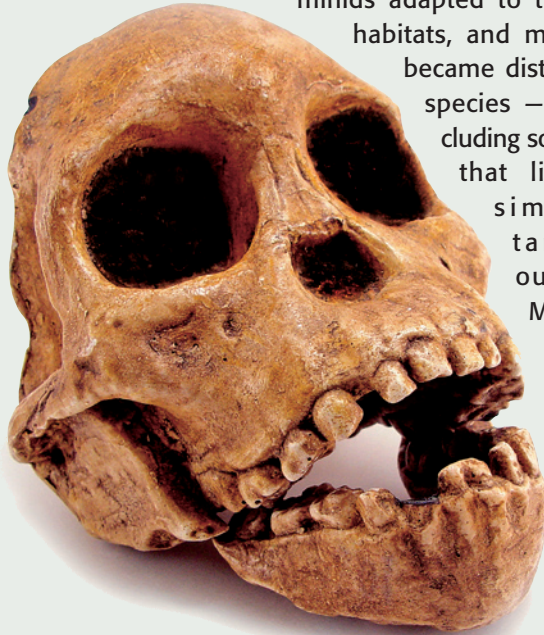
verifica la comprensione

Leggi il brano e rispondi alle domande.



Humans evolved too

Like all other living things, humans have evolved, a process well documented by the fossil record. In different places, at different times, groups of early hominids adapted to their habitats, and many became distinct species – including some that lived simultaneously. Most of



these species became extinct. But one – modern humans, *Homo sapiens* – ultimately survived and flourished.

Fossils only tell part of the story. Recent studies of DNA – the information encoded in living cells – have revealed new details of our evolutionary history. DNA comparisons, for instance, indicate that chimpanzees are humans' closest living relatives. In fact, the two groups diverged from a common ancestor only five to seven million years ago. Likewise, analyses of human DNA suggest that all modern humans are descendants of people who lived in Africa between 100,000 and 150,000 years ago. Further studies promise to reveal even more details of our rich history.

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- What makes us think that humans originated through a process of evolution by natural selection?
- What do hominid fossil records show?
- What group of great apes is the most similar to humans? What studies have allowed us to individuate this close relationship with man?