



# Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came To Be

*Daniel Loxton , Jim W.W. Smith (Illustrator)*

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Evolution is the process that created the terrible teeth of Tyrannosaurus rex and the complex human brain, clever enough to understand the workings of nature. Young readers will learn how a British naturalist named Charles Darwin studied nature and developed his now-famous concepts of natural selection and survival of the fittest. And how modern-day science has added to our understanding of the theory of evolution. Can something as complex and wondrous as the natural world be explained by a simple theory? The answer is yes, and now Evolution explains how in a way that makes it easy to understand.

## Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came To Be Details

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Author : Daniel Loxton , Jim W.W. Smith (Illustrator)

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# **From Reader Review Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came To Be for online ebook**

## **Joan says**

Like many juvenile books, this would be an excellent one for an adult as well. It doesn't assume prior knowledge of the subject, and explains everything clearly. While I can't honestly say I learnt new info (I was a bio major for a while), much of it was so well presented, particularly the questions at the end which were to answer those who deny evolution without actually stating that was the purpose. His explanation of why a complex organ like an eye is a perfect sign of evolution, not of a creator, is top notch. Simple enough to make it clear to children, complex enough to shut up argumentative "adults"!

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## **Amaun Clark says**

-i thought the book had a lot of pictures to go with what they where say on the other hand i thought that some of the things that they put in the book really didnt need to be in the book but other wise i thought that the book was good for the most part

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## **Ian Fraser says**

Clear, uncomplicated explanations of evolution by natural selection, full of examples of each point made, with good illustrations all of which make for a book that is easily accessible to children. The beauty and simplicity of evolution by natural selection comes across strongly. The history of Darwin's development work gives context, and demonstrates by example the scientific method, and the patience and reflection needed to develop truly original thinking. The contrary views of creationism and intelligent design are dealt with politely, but briefly. How these are easily refuted by evidence is made amply clear. Highly recommended for children up to about age 12, or creationists of any age.

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## **Jesse Winslow says**

Excellent book. Very well written, but tackles some hard questions in a difficult subject. Bought it for my daughter for her birthday, but I had to read it before wrapping it. Illustrations are quite good also. Highly recommended.

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## **Mark Victor Young says**

DD and I read this book over a couple of weeks of bedtime reading. It was really informative about the concepts behind evolution and acknowledges the dissenting opinions in a Q&A type format. Very good introduction to evolution for kids. Fun facts! Great pictures! Love it. DD's word of honour!

it was...AMAZING!!!!!!

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### **Al Santiago says**

Surprisingly in-depth for a science book aimed at younger readers, this concise and easy-to-understand introduction to the subject of evolution is great for adults too. Candid and clearly-written, it uses simple logic along with real world evidence while avoiding any kind of patronizing tone towards religion.

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### **Steve says**

This book is perfect for anyone from upper elementary to adult. It covers the basic ideas behind evolutionary theory in simple language and is full of great examples to help make the ideas more concrete.

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### **Canadian Children's Book Centre says**

Reviewed by Treavor J. Froates

Daniel Loxton, the editor of *Junior Sceptic* magazine, introduces the concept of evolution as “an amazing story of life on earth that has taken billions of years to unfold”. He then leads the reader through humans’ understanding of evolution as they discovered animals that no longer exist. The reader is introduced to the young Englishman named Charles Darwin who developed the now famous concepts of natural selection and the survival of the fittest.

Loxton continues to build on Darwin’s ideas by providing the reader with examples of how modern day science has broadened our understanding of evolution. He also explains how some species have adapted overtime to ensure their continued survival. Evolution ends with Loxton addressing questions such as: how do we know that evolution happens?; if evolution really happens where are the transitional fossils?; and finally, how does the theory of evolution relates to religion?.

*Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came to Be* addresses the theory of evolution in an easy to understand manner. This book features breathtaking illustrations comprised of photographs, drawings and computer generated images. Complex ideas are explained straightforwardly while being sensitive to the reader’s own personal and religious beliefs.

I would recommend this text to anyone wishing to learn more about the theory of evolution as it provides a solid understanding of complex concepts while maintaining the reader’s interest.

*Canadian Children's Book News* (Spring 2010, Vol. 33, No. 2)

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### **Kenny Bissett says**

Amazing. Well written, very comprehensive, but not too technical for kids to understand! The pictures are all

excellent, as well as the questions posed at the end of the book. These are common questions related to modern confusion over certain aspects of evolutionary theory.

A great book for both adults and children who want to understand the theory of evolution!

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### **Manybooks says**

Daniel Loxton's Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came to Be is a generally clear and concise, very much enlightening (read scientifically sound, research based, as well as intelligently and interestingly presented) basic introduction to the theory of evolution, to Charles Darwin and what has come afterwards (a bit wordy perhaps and thus Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came to Be is probably more suitable for older children above the age of nine or so, but still neither textually overly complicated nor also and thankfully ever narrationally silly or talking down to children, with especially the concept that evolution is indeed and in fact simply and beautifully a natural scientific process and NOT some type of personal creative endeavour with a purpose and actively individual will being both realistically and reasonably depicted, argued and yes also and indeed very much personally appreciated).

Now I do realise that for some readers the very concept of evolution is completely anathema and even considered as evil, but I do hope and pray that these same individuals would at least be intelligent, sensible and fair-minded enough to just choose not to read Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came to Be and not to dictator-like ignorantly attempt to get this book banned from classrooms (or removed from library shelves). And furthermore, I also tend to very much understand that some readers might well consider the second part of Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came to Be (the section pertaining to questions that have been posed about evolution as a theory, with clear answers and arguments as to why evolution is both viable and reasonable) as perhaps catering too much to the naysayers and evolution deniers. But really, the nine questions presented by the author are both important, nay essential and considering how often the opposed to evolution crowd both asks these questions and then very much wrongly answers them, Daniel Loxton is both to be applauded for including them and also for answering them in such a clear, easy to understand and also appreciatively never in any way vindictive or nasty manner. And the only reason why I have decided to rank Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came to Be with only three stars is that well, for a non fiction science based picture book on evolution, the lack of citations, sources, the non inclusion of a bibliographic list of suggestions for further reading and study is truly lamentable and in my opinion even rather academically unforgivable and indeed that I also on a personal aesthetic level have not all that much enjoyed Jim W.W. Smith's accompanying illustrations. Still highly recommended, although I really do have to question and wonder why the author, why Daniel Loxton has not included a bibliography in his otherwise really so very much excellent introduction to evolution, as this is truly a huge intellectual, academically problematic shortcoming with regard to Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came to Be (and one that makes me shake my head over and over again).

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### **Kate Jaimet says**

I read this book with my 8-year-old daughter who is interested in how animals came into being. Generally, it answered her questions, although I thought that some of the language was rather dry and a bit technical. I found myself adding explanations as we went along. The illustrations were beautiful.

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## Dave Wiebe says

The best primer on evolution I've read so far. It's short, simple, has great pictures, and answers the most common questions about evolution without judgment, condescension, or rudeness (ahem, Richard Dawkins).

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## Jim says

This is a nice introduction to evolution for younger readers. I even learned a few things. I especially like the 2nd section which addresses objections to evolution like "where are the transitional fossils?" Or, "what about the human and Dinosaur footprints side by side?"

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## Ibis3 says

A pretty decent explanation of evolution--surely better than what many students in the US public education system get in their whole time in primary and secondary school. I just finished reading *The Blind Watchmaker*, and I recognised many of the points and examples from there in the first part of Loxton's book (he even drops Dawkins' name a couple of times for some reason--like instead of saying "biologists" or "scientists" think he says "biologist Richard Dawkins thinks"). One significant omission was the discussion of ring species as evidence of evolution that we can see in real time.

The second part was a take down of common creationist talking points, presented in a question-answer format. Most of these were rather good, explaining things well in a short space without being either condescending or too abstruse for the target audience. I did however, think the answers to the final two questions were a bit weak and a little too much on the side of accommodation.

The first dealt with abiogenesis, and instead of being quite firm that though the details are sketchy, scientists have arrived at several plausible methods whereby living cells could have evolved from self-replicating chemicals. Instead, he stresses the fact that we don't yet know how it happened, making it sound like we have no real clue at all. At least that's how it came across. Okay, but not strong enough for my taste.

The second question was the one about religion. I mean, if he's going to bring up religion at all he shouldn't take the "non-overlapping magisteria" tack. It's rather a cop out. It's wrong to tell kids that "science as a whole has nothing to say about religion". It's an easy thing to say, and might prevent your book being banned by anti-intellectual parents, but **it's just not true**. Science has plenty to say about religious claims: in the form of evidence-based history and archaeology, in the form of controlled studies of the efficacy of prayer, miracle claims, in the form of the study of neurology and the human brain to determine whether there's any evidence for body/spirit dualism, in the study of anthropology and sociology to figure out how religion develops and operates in society and in diverse human cultures...you get my point. Sorry Daniel, "your family, friends and community" are *not* the "best people to ask about religious questions". You want a kid to develop critical thinking skills? Don't tell them to ask questions of people who may have a biased interest in selling their own religion, and say they're the best option. Tell them to be critical and ask some experts or read some books by experts on those subjects.

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Also, very important to consider when evaluating children's books:

Presence of Sexism - A

Men and women, girls and boys are presented fairly equally. Loxton seemed to make an effort to include a female scientist by talking about paleontologist Mary Anning. So overall, a good job.

There is a page talking about hominids and the misleading "March of Progress" image which would have been better had it included both a man and woman in each place.

Presence of Heterosexism - mostly N/A

As sex was hardly mentioned at all aside from a couple of places where we would have to infer it (e.g. he uses a compromise in tail lengths as an example of balance between selection for speed and selection for sexual attractiveness, but doesn't actually ever explain sexual selection).

Presence of Racism - B+

There's quite a bit of diversity among questioners, but when humans were the subject that was being discussed, the illustrations were of white people only, and the March of Progress page still made it look a little bit like modern humans in the form of white people (actually men) were the "most evolved" or what have you. Definitely not the impression he was trying to make, but it could come across that way subliminally.

My rating: 7.5/10

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### **Chris Dunbar says**

Very accurate and easy-to-understand (even for my boys) nonfic book about evolution. It delivered the material in a manner that kept a 7 and 4 year old both interested and engaged while clearly explaining the basics so they could grok it.

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