



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
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## **Gotta Evolve 'Em All! Evolutionary Ideas for 1st Graders**

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This is a unit for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classrooms and will address the Next Generation Science Standards 1-LS3-1 Heredity, 2-LS4-1 Biological Evolution, and the Common Core State Standards for Speaking and Listening and Writing. The goal is for students to be introduced to the idea that evolution does not happen within an individual, but must happen across generations for a population or species to become better adapted to its environment. Similarly, adaptations do not spring forth all at once unlike for popular characters such as Spiderman; rather, it takes many generations of evolution for major changes in the traits of a species to occur. To do this we will discuss natural selection and how this process contributes to evolution. We will discuss how Pokémon “evolve”. We will then discuss how birds evolved from dinosaurs. We will revisit Pokémon and discuss how they do not really evolve, in the true sense of a population evolving by natural selection. Our activities will include adapting Mr. Potato Head to survive in new environments and piecing together the transitional forms from dinosaur to bird. For our culminating activity, students will choose a Pokémon (or other organism), design adaptations that their creatures will evolve, and will identify why those adaptations were key to the survival of the species. Students will also provide transitional forms to show how their creature changed over time.

(Developed for Science, grade 1; recommended for Science, grades 1-2)

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