



## Cartoon Guide to Genetics

*Larry Gonick , Mark Wheelis*

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Have you ever asked yourself:

Are spliced genes the same as mended Levis?

Watson and Crick? Aren't they a team of British detectives?

Plant sex? Can they do that?

Is Genetic Mutation the name of one of those heavy metal bands?

Asparagine? Which of the four food groups is that in?

Then you need *The Cartoon Guide to Genetics* to explain the important concepts of classical and modern genetics—it's not only educational, it's funny too!

## Cartoon Guide to Genetics Details

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Author : Larry Gonick , Mark Wheelis

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## **Vera Maharani says**

This is awesome.

Ever think biology sucks? And genetics...what the hell is that?

I find this book funny and helps me a lot to learn genetics. Yes, the 'simpler' one like Mendellian genetics to the 'more complicated' one like molecular genetics! I first read it back in junior high and I could understand it well, even back then. Every so-called 'hard' subjects should be cartooned!

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## **Amy says**

We've been using this book along with the kids' science for years. It's a super fun way to explore biology and genetics, but I'm finding that the format doesn't work for everybody.

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## **Rex Hurst says**

Larry Gonick, author of the wonderful Cartoon Guide to the Universe, has found his niche with educational comics and this book is a great example of it. He's tackled many subjects and I found this to be thoroughly researched and presented in an easy to understand manner. And a bibliography is provided if you want to delve deeper into the subject- which I did not.

This is as much a history of genetic research as it is about the basics of the subject. He begins with primitive man, moving on to the early philosophers such as Aristotle, before arriving at the real breakthrough moment with the research of Gregor Mendel- the Catholic monk, gardener and scientist.

The book is a good primer and the basics of genetics- DNA, amino acids, proteins etc.- are not going to change. When I was a middle school English teacher I used to stock up my classroom library with his books: The Cartoon Guide to the Universe, to the Modern World, Statistics, Biology and so on. And they were always well received by my students, often being one of the first ones stolen from classroom.

What I disagree with in this text is that he promotes the "theory" that "primitive man", whether he means homo sapiens or an ancestor species is unclear, could not differentiate between sex and procreation. After reading his source material, this is about as spurious a theory as I've ever read. Evidence is nearly nonexistent and conjecture abounds. It's almost conspiracy level leaps the author takes to piece this together.

The other problem with the book is that often the information is out of date or, most common, there are discoveries and breakthroughs not recorded by the text. The version I have is from 1991 so there is a gap of 16 years of information. For instance it states that it was believed by scientists to be over 200,000 genes, but it is now known to be only around 20 to 30,000 of them.

Still as a beginning delve into the subject, this would be a good place to start and, apart from what I mentioned earlier, the bibliography is solid. Offering a person a good point to keep learning if they are so inclined.

### **Aleisha Zolman says**

this was a bit better than the the cartoon guide to chemistry. maybe i know more about it so that it makes it so, but it was definitely less formula driven. a good review for me in some areas, enough knowledge of key experiments and people and concepts to take a test to certify in Biology. I hope.

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