

The Modern World – 20th Century

DNA and Genetics

What's the idea?

- DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is the basic building material of all living things. It was discovered in 1953 by two scientists, James Watson and Francis Crick.
- They believed that their discovery would change the future of medical research.

Tell me more

- DNA is organised into sections called genes. Every cell in the body contains all the genetic information of an individual's physical characteristics. Genes are inherited. This information is stored in a set of molecules called DNA.
- Scientists are now able to study single genes.

What next?

- It has taken scientists twenty-five years to find out how to manipulate DNA in order to affect health.
- The discovery of DNA has enabled scientists to test for genetic disorders and repair them.
- A new treatment, called Genetic Engineering, has come about because we now understand the fundamentals of our genetic make-up.