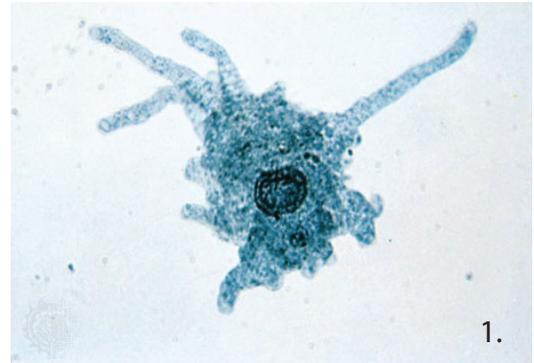


# WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

## It all began with...

About four billion years ago your true ultimate ancestor was a single-celled protozoan, something like this image.



## 55 million years ago - *Dryomomys*

*Dryomomys* is one of your very earliest precursors. *Dryomomys* is the most primitive primate known from good fossil material. (The first known primate, *Purgatorius*, dating back as far as 65 million years ago, is known only from isolated teeth and jaw fragments.) The animal most like *Dryomomys* today is the pen-tailed tree shrew. This creature would have weighed about 37 grams, roughly the same size as the smallest living primates, the mouse lemurs of Madagascar.



## 55 million years ago - *Carpolestes*

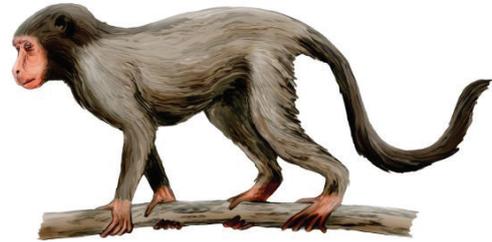
One step closer to your primate grandparents is the *Carpolestes*. This very early primate from around 55 million years ago, has features that set it apart from the most primitive primates, including a nail rather than a claw on its big toe. When alive, the animal would have weighed about 100 grams.



# WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

## 30 million years ago - *Aegyptopithecus*

The name *Aegyptopithecus* honors Egypt, where its fossil remains were found. *Aegyptopithecus* was a primitive anthropoid, a group that includes monkeys, apes, and us. It would have weighed about the same as a modern howler monkey, and its behavior would have been similar to that of living monkeys.



4.

## 20 million years ago - *Proconsul*

This is the most primitive ape that is well-known from a fossil skeleton. It lived in Africa about 20 million years ago. Although it lacked a tail (like modern apes) it would have been monkey-like in its behaviour, moving around on all four limbs. It probably weighed between 15 and 45 kilograms.



5.

## 9.5 million years ago - *Dryopithecus*

*Dryopithecus* was an advanced ape. The best-known skeleton of this genus, uncovered in Spain, is 9.5 million years old. It is estimated that this fossil individual would have had a body mass of about 34 kilograms, similar to a living chimp. Like living chimps, *Dryopithecus* would have used its powerful forelimbs while going about its life in the trees.



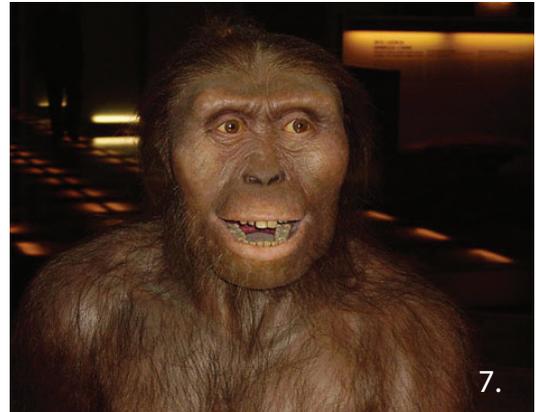
6.

# WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

## 3.2 million years ago - *Australopithecus*

*Australopiths* are the earliest undisputed members of the human family. Their most standout advance over their predecessors was their bipedalism. Their brains were still small though. The most famous *Australopith* fossil is known as Lucy (designated *Australopithecus afarensis*). Lucy dates to 3.6 to 2.9 million years ago and would have weighed between about 30 and 45 kilograms.

It's important to remind yourself at this point that you really did have a male forebear in this period, and he might have resembled this individual!



## 1.6 million years ago - *Homo ergaster*

This (your) genus, *Homo*, arose about 2.4 million years ago. The significant feature of this group was an increase in brain size from earlier primates. The best-known example from this group is Turkana boy, a skeleton about 1.5 million years old. *H. ergaster* is the first member of your line to show fully modern body size and proportions. For example, if the Turkana boy had grown to be an adult he would have been about six feet tall.



## Present day - *Homo sapiens*

This is you!

You are a bipedal primate. Your species, *Homo sapiens*, also known as modern humans, is believed to have arisen in Africa about 200,000 years ago. One of the most defining features of your group is your large brain which allows you to speak a language, reason abstractly, imagine a future, make stuff up and read this useful information.



# WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

## Image sources

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