

CONTENTS

PROLOGUE

PART I. THE CELL

1 GENESIS: THE ORIGIN OF LIFE 5

1-1 What is life? 5

1-2 Spontaneous generation 6

Box 1A Vitalism versus mechanism 7

Box 1B The methods of science 8

1-3 History of the early earth 10

1-4 The primitive soup 12

1-5 The primitive organism 14

Box 1C Creation: producing life in the laboratory 1b

1-6 Heterotrophs and autotrophs 17

Box 1D The origin of life: an alternate view 19

Box 1E Does life originate abiotically today? 19

Summary 20

2 CELL STRUCTURE: THE ORGANIZATION OF LIFE 23

2-1 What is a cell? 23

Box 2A Thereby hangs a tail: a tale of resolution 28

2-2 Cell specialization: tissues and organs 48

2-3 Cells and organisms 48

Box 2B Seeing the unseen: viruses 52

Summary 54

3 OF MOLECULES AND CELLS 57

3-1 The nature of the living system: the chemicals of life 57

3-2 Carbohydrates: cellular fuel 58

Box 3A Through the looking glass: symmetry of molecules 60

3-3 Lipids: fuel, structure, and coordination 68

3-4 Proteins: fabric of the cell 66

3-5 Enzymes: proteins that make haste 70

Box 3B Curling hair and the shape of protein molecules 71

3-6 Vitamins and cofactors: enzyme helpers 74

Box 3C Beneficial poison: sulfanilamide 76

3-7 Nucleic acids: informational molecules 77

Summary 77

4 HARVEST OF CHEMICAL ENERGY: CELLULAR RESPIRATION 81

4-1 What is energy? 81

4-2 Energy currency: ATP 84

4-3 Chemical energy harvest 85

4-4 The energy cascade 86

4-5 Getting along without oxygen 86

Box 4A Beer, bread, and muscle: molecular changes in pyruvic acid 88

4-6 Anaerobic respiration: cost accounting 89

4-7 Getting along with oxygen 89

4-8 Aerobic respiration: cost accounting 92

Box 4B Why cyanide kills 92

4-9 Where is ATP used? 93

4-10 Chemical energy harvest: evolution and cellular location 94

Summary 94

5 HARVEST OF LIGHT ENERGY: PHOTOSYNTHESIS 97

5-1 All flesh is grass 97

5-2 The energy cascade revisited 98

5-3 Light and chlorophyll: light phase 99

5-4 Carbon dioxide and sugar formation: dark phase 102



5-5 Cellular location and evolution of
photosynthesis 102

Box 5A Weed killers 103

5-6 Efficiency and implication of photosynthesis 103
Summary 104

**6 COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CELL
GENERATIONS: NUCLEIC ACIDS 107**

6-1 Inheritance: general features 107

6-2 Inheritance: chemical structure 108

6-3 Genetic code: four-letter alphabet, three-letter
words 112

Box 6A An inborn error: PKU and idiocy 113

6-4 Copying and translating the genetic code: RNA
and protein 115

Box 6B The library of heredity 116

6-5 Implications of the genetic code 121

6-6 Genetic engineering: recombinant DNA 122

6-7 Prospects for the refabrication of man 123

Box 6C Redesigning bacteria 124

Summary 124

**7 CELLS IN ACTION: DUPLICATION AND
CONTROL MECHANISMS 129**

7-1 Cell duplication 129

7-2 Chromosome structure 136

7-3 Control of cellular activity 138

Summary 148

8 CANCER: CELLS OUT OF CONTROL 151

8-1 What is cancer? 151

8-2 Carcinogens: cancer-causing agents 153

Box 8A The cancer screen 157

Box 8B Human mammary tumors 158

8-3 The causes of cancer: some hypotheses 159

Summary 162

PART II. THE HUMAN ORGANISM

**9 PERPETUATION OF LIFE I: SEX CELL
FORMATION AND FERTILIZATION 167**

9-1 Sexuality and meiosis 167

9-2 The male reproductive system 170

9-3 The female reproductive system 174

Box 9A Sperm banks 176

9-4 Coitus (copulation) 182

9-5 Fertilization 183

9-6 Contraception 185

Box 9B Detection of ovulation 186

Box 9C Pregnancy: signs and symptoms 187

9-7 Control of the female reproductive cycle:
the pill 188

Summary 189

Box 9D Sterilization for both sexes 190

**10 PERPETUATION OF LIFE II:
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 195**

10-1 From egg to embryo 195

10-2 The fetus 202

10-3 The placenta: lungs, kidneys, and digestive
tract for the human fetus 206

10-4 Parturition (birth) 208

Box 10A From water to land: a baby is born 210

10-5 The mammary glands and lactation 211



5-5 Cellular location and evolution of
photosynthesis 102

Box 5A Weed killers 103

5-6 Efficiency and implication of photosynthesis 103
Summary 104

**6 COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CELL
GENERATIONS: NUCLEIC ACIDS 107**

6-1 Inheritance: general features 107

6-2 Inheritance: chemical structure 108

6-3 Genetic code: four-letter alphabet, three-letter
words 112

Box 6A An inborn error: PKU and idiocy 113

6-4 Copying and translating the genetic code: RNA
and protein 115

Box 6B The library of heredity 116

6-5 Implications of the genetic code 121

6-6 Genetic engineering: recombinant DNA 122

6-7 Prospects for the refabrication of man 123

Box 6C Redesigning bacteria 124

Summary 124

**7 CELLS IN ACTION: DUPLICATION AND
CONTROL MECHANISMS 129**

7-1 Cell duplication 129

7-2 Chromosome structure 136

7-3 Control of cellular activity 138

Summary 148

8 CANCER: CELLS OUT OF CONTROL 151

8-1 What is cancer? 151

8-2 Carcinogens: cancer-causing agents 153

Box 8A The cancer screen 157

Box 8B Human mammary tumors 158

8-3 The causes of cancer: some hypotheses 159
Summary 162

PART II. THE HUMAN ORGANISM

**9 PERPETUATION OF LIFE I: SEX CELL
FORMATION AND FERTILIZATION 167**

9-1 Sexuality and meiosis 167

9-2 The male reproductive system 170

9-3 The female reproductive system 174

Box 9A Sperm banks 176

9-4 Coitus (copulation) 182

9-5 Fertilization 183

9-6 Contraception 185

Box 9B Detection of ovulation 186

Box 9C Pregnancy: signs and symptoms 187

9-7 Control of the female reproductive cycle:
the pill 188

Summary 189

Box 9D Sterilization for both sexes 190

**10 PERPETUATION OF LIFE II:
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 195**

10-1 From egg to embryo 195

10-2 The fetus 202

10-3 The placenta: lungs, kidneys, and digestive
tract for the human fetus 206

10-4 Parturition (birth) 208

Box 10A From water to land: a baby is born 210

10-5 The mammary glands and lactation 211

10-6 Birth defects 213

Box 10B Abortion 216

Summary 217

11 PROCESSING NUTRIENTS: DIGESTION 221

11-1 Why do we eat? 221

Box 11A A peephole into the stomach 222

11-2 Intake apparatus: food processing 223

11-3 Digestion: food degradation 223

11-4 Absorption: food uptake 224

11-5 Defecation: waste expulsion 229

11-6 Nutrition: the use of processed nutrients 229

11-7 Trouble along the alimentary canal 231

Box 11B Ulcers: the price of success 232

Summary 234

**12 INTERNAL TRANSPORT:
CIRCULATORY SYSTEM 237**

12-1 Why do we need a circulatory system? 237

12-2 What does the circulatory system do? 238

12-3 The heart: a remarkable pump 240

Box 12A Artificial pacemakers 246

Box 12B Heart attack 248

12-4 Cardiovascular plumbing at work 249

Box 12C The Death of Lenin 256

Summary 255

13 BLOOD AND IMMUNITY 259

13-1 Blood: a tissue that flows 259

13-2 Against the foreign peril: immunity 264

**Box 13A Counting the reds and whites: barometer of
disease 266**

Box 13B Putting antibodies to work 272

Box 13C New organs for old: transplantation 275

Box 13D Wayward antibodies: allergy 276

Summary 277

14 GASEOUS EXCHANGE: RESPIRATION 281

14-1 Why do we need a respiratory system? 281

14-2 The respiratory tree 283

14-3 Alveolus: rendezvous of blood and air 285

Box 14A Smog, smoking, and emphysema 288

14-4 How do we breathe? 290

14-5 Control of breathing 291

14-6 Low pressure: high pressure 296

Box 14B Why can't we breathe underwater? 296

Summary 298

15 CHEMICAL BALANCE: THE KIDNEY 301

15-1 What does the kidney do? 301

Box 15A What is urea? 302

15-2 Structure and function of the kidney 303

15-3 Regulation of fluid and salt balance 309

15-4 Discharge of urine 311

Box 15B The artificial kidney machine 312

Summary 314

16 CHEMICAL COORDINATION: HORMONES 317

16-1 The nature of hormones 317

16-2 The human hormonal orchestra:
endocrine glands 318

Box 16A Giants and dwarfs 322

Box 16B Rickets 328

Box 16C The critical cortex 334

16-3 Management of the endocrine orchestra 336

16-4 The molecular activity of hormones 337

Box 16D The hypothalamus and history 338

Summary 341

Box 22A Preparing chromosomal pictures 451

22-3 Phenotype and genotype 454

Box 22B Mendel and his peas 456

22-4 Transmission of genes 458

22-5 Multiple alleles: blood will tell 463

Box 22C Hemophilia and history 466

22-6 Polygenes and skin color 468

Box 22D The Charlie Chaplin paternity suit 469

22-7 Chromosomal abnormalities 471

Summary 478

23 GENES IN POPULATIONS:

AN INTRODUCTION TO EVOLUTION 483

23-1 Sickle cell: a molecular disease 483

23-2 Our changing genes: mutation 484

23-3 Genes in populations 486

**Box 23A Ill winds blow over the *Lucky Dragon*:
radiation as a mutagen 489**

23-4 Natural selection 491

23-5 Eugenics: improving our genes by selection 494

Summary 496

24 THE EVOLUTION OF MANKIND 499

24-1 Man's place in nature 499

24-2 What is a man? 501

24-3 Darwinism: from finch to man 508

24-4 The road to man 512

24-5 The races of man 520

24-6 What is man's evolutionary future? 523

Summary 524

25 MAN AND THE ENVIRONMENT 527

25-1 What's ecology? 527

25-2 Energy flow 528

25-3 Food chains and ecological pyramids 530

25-4 The danger of accumulated chemicals 533

25-5 Recycling matter 537

25-6 Homeostasis and succession in the ecosystem 544

25-7 Agriculture and unbalanced ecosystems 547

Box 25A Nuclear garbage 549

Summary 550

26 ABOARD THE SPACESHIP EARTH 553

26-1 The inhabitants of the spaceship earth and how
they grew 553

26-2 Implications of population growth on
spaceship life 561

Box 26B Last chance to keep off the grass? 564

Box 26B Thermal pollution: we can't break even 571

26-3 Limits on population growth:
strategy for survival 573

Summary 576

EPILOGUE 579

APPENDIX

A SIMPLE CHEMISTRY FOR BIOLOGY 583

**B MEASURING UP OR OUR SYSTEM IS DYING
INCH BY CENTIMETER 589**

INDEX 591