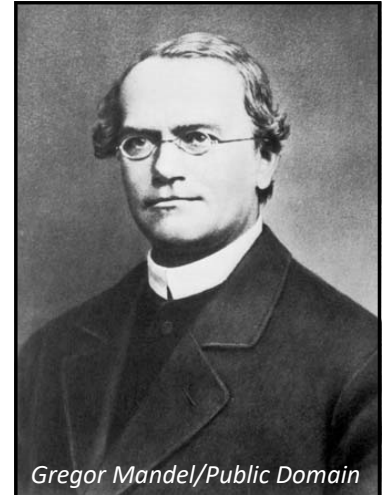


Name: _____

Discovery of Dominant and Recessive Traits

A long time ago in 1860, there was a man named Gregor Mendel who was very interested in heredity and genetics. Gregor was so fascinated by genetics that he started performing experiments on the plants in his garden. The type of plants that he studied were mostly pea plants. Mendel focused on the traits of his pea plants. He studied their height (*tall or short*), their color (*purple or white*), their size, their flowers, their pea shape (*round or wrinkled*), and their seeds. He really wanted to find out if the seeds when planted, would have the same traits as their parent plants. He wondered if the plants (offspring) would inherit the same traits as the parent plants. In one experiment, Mendel planted a seed



Gregor Mendel/Public Domain

from the mother plant that was purple and the father plant that was white. He found out that the offspring plant was purple, not white and not mixed which told him purple was the dominant color. Mendel made some important discoveries over a period of seven years with over 20,000 plants! He discovered that height was a trait inherited by both the mother and father plant. Mendel's most important discovery was '**dominant**' and '**recessive**' traits. Mendel noticed that the offspring plants had some traits that the parents did not have and he called these dominant traits, he then called the traits that seem to be hidden, recessive traits. We know now that a dominant trait can mask or hide other traits. A recessive trait can be hidden in one generation but can appear in the next. Therefore, this means, sometimes, a child may have more traits from a grandparent than a parent. Today, scientists have agreed that indeed, many traits are inherited from our parents.

QUESTIONS:

- ❶ What types of plants did Gregor Mendel experiment on?
- ❷ What was Gregor Mendel trying to find out?
- ❸ What discoveries did Gregor Mendel make?
- ❹ How did Gregor Mendel make his discovery?
- ❺ How does the work that Gregor Mendel did, help us today?