

More Than One Source

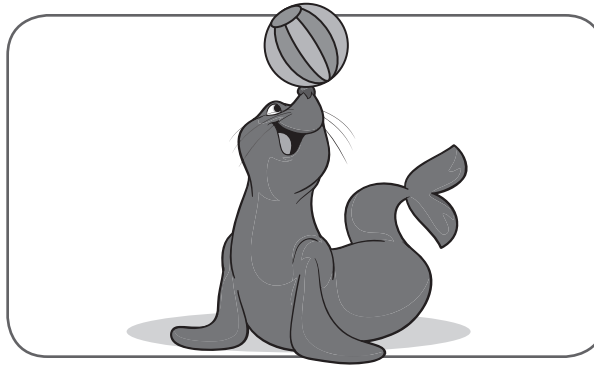
You are a living thing. The plants in your schoolyard are all living things. The birds and bugs that spend time on those plants are also living things. All living things are called **organisms** (or-ga-ni-zems).

Organisms get some of their traits from their parents. They **inherit** these traits. The shape of a plant's leaves comes from its parents. The color of a dog's fur comes from its parents.

The environment in which an organism lives can also affect its traits. For example, if a plant does not get the water it needs, it might not grow as tall as it should. Learning to talk is also the result of one's environment. A person is not born knowing how to talk. It has to be learned.

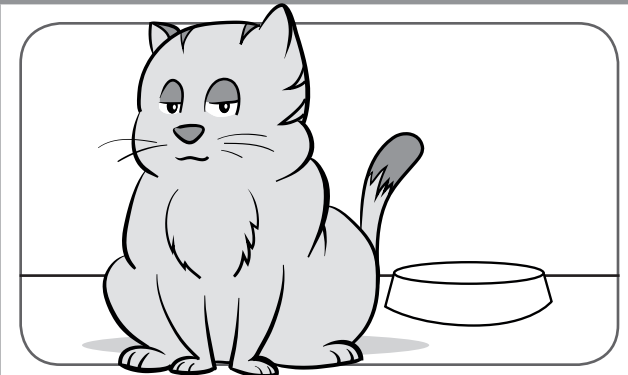
Some organisms' traits come from both sources. For example, the shape of a person's nose was passed down from his parents. But if that same person breaks his nose during a ball game, then his environment has also affected the shape of his nose.

Bonus: What is a trait?



What traits might a seal inherit?

What traits did this seal likely learn in its environment?



What traits might a cat get from its parents?

What trait was caused by this cat's environment? What makes you think so?

“More Than One Source” Answer Key

Answers will vary but may include the following:

eye color
skin color

being able to balance the ball on its nose
being able to perform tasks

eye color
fur color
fur length

Its size was likely caused by its environment. It looks much bigger than it should, as though it has been fed too much.

Bonus: a quality that makes a person or thing different from another.