

Of all the animals on Earth, none are so driven to explore as humans. _____ animals will go in search of food or water. But humans can be motivated simply by _____ possibility of discovery. So what is it exactly that caused us to spread out across _____ globe 60,000 years ago, instead of just staying in _____?

Perhaps it's in our DNA. In 1999, Dr. Chuansheng Chen led a team of _____ who were studying a gene known as DRD₄₋₇R. This gene is found in about _____ percent of all humans. It's been associated with higher rates of risk-taking, _____, and interest in new ideas. Dr. Chen found that DRD₄₋₇R is more common in _____ that move around a lot than those who don't. For example, studies in Africa show _____ the gene is much more common in nomadic tribes than in tribes that prefer to stay _____ one place. Several other researchers have studied this topic and found _____ evidence to support Dr. Chen's _____.

But can a single gene be responsible for a trait as complex as the desire _____ explore. Dr. Kenneth Kidd doesn't think so. He thinks DRD₄₋₇R might increase _____, but other equally important sets of genes give us intelligent minds and skilled _____. We then use our minds and hands to create things. He believes that not just one _____, but groups of genes work together to create complex behaviors like _____.

The context we live in also plays a role in our desire to explore. For _____, during the European Age of Exploration, explorers became rich and famous for _____ discoveries. This drove others to try to increase their wealth through exploration. In _____ case, their exploration was more likely motivated by money than by _____.

Maybe the desire to explore comes from something inside us, such as _____ DRD₄₋₇R gene. Or maybe it has more to do with what's happening in the world _____ us. Maybe both. Whatever the reason, it seems we (or at least some of us) will _____ exploring the mountains, the sea, the stars, and beyond, because that's just _____ humans do.

Of all the animals on Earth, none are so driven to explore as humans. Other animals will go in search of food or water. But humans can be motivated simply by the possibility of discovery. So what is it exactly that caused us to spread out across the globe 60,000 years ago, instead of just staying in Africa?

Perhaps it's in our DNA. In 1999, Dr. Chuansheng Chen led a team of scientists who were studying a gene known as DRD₄₋₇R. This gene is found in about twenty percent of all humans. It's been associated with higher rates of risk-taking, exploration, and interest in new ideas. Dr. Chen found that DRD₄₋₇R is more common in societies that move around a lot than those who don't. For example, studies in Africa show that the gene is much more common in nomadic tribes than in tribes that prefer to stay in one place. Several other researchers have studied this topic and found additional evidence to support Dr. Chen's claim.

But can a single gene be responsible for a trait as complex as the desire to explore. Dr. Kenneth Kidd doesn't think so. He thinks DRD₄₋₇R might increase curiosity, but other equally important sets of genes give us intelligent minds and skilled hands. We then use our minds and hands to create things. He believes that not just one gene, but groups of genes work together to create complex behaviors like exploration.

The context we live in also plays a role in our desire to explore. For example, during the European Age of Exploration, explorers became rich and famous for their discoveries. This drove others to try to increase their wealth through exploration. In this case, their exploration was more likely motivated by money than by genes.

Maybe the desire to explore comes from something inside us, such as the DRD₄₋₇R gene. Or maybe it has more to do with what's happening in the world around us. Maybe both. Whatever the reason, it seems we (or at least some of us) will keep exploring the mountains, the sea, the stars, and beyond, because that's just what humans do. (25 total points)