Directions: Read both passages and answer the questions that follow.

Name: _____

Date: _____

It's In My Genes

Sometimes traits are passed on
from person on to person.
Like your eye color or your hair color,
It all happens without much coercion.
I'm tall like my Dad
And I have my Mom's eyes.
I can roll my tongue like my grandma
But my brother can't - surprise!
My brother's flat feet
Look just like my Dad's,
And he has a temper like him too
That you can see when he gets mad.

Families share a lot,
More than just a kitchen table.
Genetics are passed down too
And you can find them if you're able.
The next time you see a family
Check out their traits.
Do they share eye color or height?
Maybe even the same gait?
Genes are tricky
They can show up or not
But it is a fun game
To see how many you can spot!

Gregor Mendel and his peas
Gave us this information.
Now you and I can predict
The traits that will show up
And those that will remain hidden.

Directions: Read both passages and answer the questions that follow.

Name: _____

Date: _____

A Peas of Genetics

Have you ever wondered why some people have brown eyes, some have blue, and some have green? Or maybe you have noticed that your neighbor is much taller than you are. Genetics, or the study of inherited characteristics, can sometimes explain these traits that you notice. You might be surprised to learn that the road to genetic discovery started with a vegetable - the pea.

1

In the 1800s, a man named Gregor Mendel tended his garden in Austria. Gregor was a monk and it was his job to take care of the gardens in his monastery. When working with planting and harvesting peas, Gregor noticed that not all the peas were the same. Some were tall and some short; some were wrinkly and some smooth. The peas had different pod and flower colors as well.

2

Gregor started to pay more attention as he pollinated the pea plants and watched as the offspring grew. In his observations, Gregor found that there were two types of traits: dominant and recessive. Traits that showed up more often were called dominant, while the more uncommon traits were called recessive. He started to experiment with pollinating plants with dominant traits and recessive traits and guessing what the new offspring plant would look like when it started to grow.

3

Gregor Mendel is known as the "father of modern genetics" for his pea pollination in his monastery garden. Because of him, we can often guess a percentage of a baby's eye color or a flower's bloom simply by looking at the mom and dad.

4

1. What is the purpose of stanza 1 from the poem. What information does it provide that helps you understand the topic?

2. Based on the details in the last stanza in the poem, what can you infer about Gregor Mendel and his connection with genetics.

3. Determine the main idea of paragraph 2. How does this paragraph fit in with the rest of the passage and the overall main idea?

4. Explore the connection between Gregor Mendel's job and his discoveries regarding genetics. How did his job contribute or aid his findings?

5. Explain how the structural elements of both texts differ.

6. Analyze the following lines from the poem:

Genes are tricky/They can show up or not

Determine what information from the passage, "A Peas of Genetics" both matches and elaborates on this idea.

Do you think you received more of your traits from your mother or your father? Write an opinion piece that clearly supports your opinion. Use scientific terms learned from the passages in your persuasive essay.