

THERE IS NO SCIENTIFIC ALTERNATIVE TO EVOLUTION

Evolution is one of the most thoroughly studied and supported concepts in science, and it is accepted by the scientific community as the only scientific explanation for the diversity of life.

Some critics of evolution education argue that science teachers should devote equal time to teaching alternatives to evolution. Yet no scientifically accepted alternatives to evolution exist. Before scientific claims make their way into science textbooks or science curricula, they should be tested, evaluated by experts, published in scientific journals, and gain consensus support among the scientific community. Creationism in its various forms, including intelligent design, is not science: it does not rely on natural explanations of phenomena; it is not based on observation or experimentation; it does not generate testable predictions. Moreover, it is not accepted by the scientific community as an alternative to evolution or even as science. Teaching beliefs such as creationism in science classes circumvents the rigorous process of scientific scrutiny and paves the way for other, poorly studied and non-scientific ideas to enter science curricula.

Proposals that call for “teaching the controversy”, singling out evolution for “critical analysis”, or adding “warning” stickers to textbooks suggesting that there are alternatives to evolution are equally objectionable. While there may be some disagreement about the details of evolution, as with any active field of scientific inquiry, the basic tenets of evolution are not controversial among scientists. Rather, as with atomic theory or the law of gravity, evolution is an established scientific fact. Students should be encouraged to think critically about all ideas. However, singling out evolution for criticism wrongly suggests that it is flawed. Introducing false controversy into science classes will confuse students about what is accepted as science and impair their understanding of the nature of scientific inquiry.

Resources and References

[Facing Challenges to Evolution Education](#), *Molleen Matsumura*

[Q & A on Evolution and Intelligent Design](#), *American Association for the Advancement of Science*

[Statements from Educational Organizations](#), *A collection of statements supporting evolution education compiled by the National Center for Science Education*

[What’s Wrong with Theory Not Fact Resolutions?](#), *National Center for Science Education*