

# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

## 7th Grade Life Science: Cloning- Is it Ethical?

Seventh grade students wrapped up a unit on cellular processes and DNA by researching the science and ethics of cloning. After considering pop culture examples of cloning such as Jurassic Park, they dove into an article about the impossibility of cloning a dinosaur that introduced them to the science of cloning animals in real life. Another article and a few videos later, students were prepared to answer the question, "Is it ethical for scientists to clone an animal?" and defend their position scientifically and biblically. As a guide for their Biblical worldview, students considered the Creation Mandate found in Genesis 1:26-28 where God commands humans to rule over and subdue the Earth as well as Jesus' teaching in Matthew 10:29 about the value God places on animal life. They also focused on the image of God in human beings that sets people apart from animals. Students then discussed acceptable and unacceptable reasons for cloning and the possible consequences, both positive and negative. Finally, they compared the outcomes of cloning with the outcomes of following Biblical principles to determine if cloning promotes human flourishing, a thriving creation, and the glory of God.

There were several differing opinions and it was fascinating to hear the different perspectives, opinions and explanations of the students.

Lila Farley believes that cloning under any circumstance is wrong, "Cloning is not acceptable in any circumstance because we are destroying God's creation, the humans and animals, and we are disobeying the Creation Mandate... Although God always puts humans before animals, he still loves and cares for animals (Matthew 10:29)"

Brianne Ang, however, had a different perspective. In her essay, she states, "Animals should only be cloned if scientists can control embryo waste, control animal population and follow God's Creation Mandate... In Genesis 1:28, God instructs mankind to flourish, but also to subdue and rule over animals including caring for them. Therefore, animals should only be cloned in a kind & humane way"



# SCIENTISTS AT WORK

For their lab, students worked together in their lab groups and extracted DNA from a strawberry. While this is a very basic form of DNA, it's was a fun way to put what they've learned into practice.

