Discussion Guide

TEACHER Episode 1: Why Do We Have Thumbs?

Before watching

1. Wiggle your thumb! What can you do with it that a dog's paw can't?
2. Who is the oldest person in your family you know about? Who was their grandma?

After watching

3. What is an ancestor? Can you name one of yours?
4. Maye says everybody in the world is one big family. What does she mean?
5. Pete said, “We came from chimps.” What was his mix-up?
6. How do scientists know Lucy walked on two legs?
7. What can footprints tell you about how someone moved?

Pete's Mix-Up: a 3-minute script

Teacher: Pete said we came from chimps. Thumbs up if you agree, thumbs down if you don't.

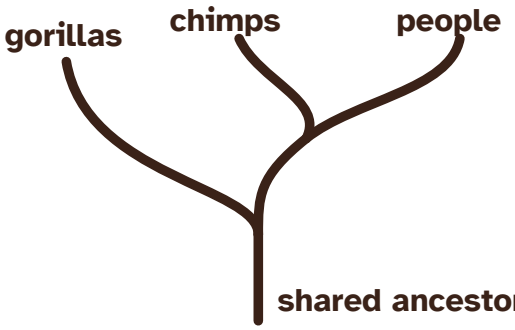
Teacher: Do you have a cousin? Did you come from your cousin? (No!) You share a grandma.

Teacher: Chimps are still here. They are our cousins. Long, long ago, people and chimps shared one ancestor. Then the family split into branches, and both branches kept changing.

All: Mix-ups are how we learn!

Talk move: If a child says “monkeys turned into people”, don't say “wrong”; say “That's Pete's mix-up! Who remembers what Maye said?”

Draw the family bush



One trunk splits into branches; every branch keeps growing. Chimps are on a branch next to ours, not below us. Avoid ladders or a “march” of figures from ape to human.