1. What is life?

Many things you can see from here are alive, others are not. Living things are often called **organisms.** The living things around you might include other people or animals and also plants. There may also be smaller living things you can't see with your eyes, for example bacteria and fungi.

All these things or organisms carry out seven vital processes special to living things- so called life processes. The seven life processes are: Nutrition, respiration, excretion, sensitivity, movement, reproduction and growth.

- Nutrition includes feeding and photosynthesis. Our food contains the necessary molecules and energy we need, plants however don't need to eat. They create their own "food". With the help of the sunlight they convert CO₂, minerals and water into the molecules they need.
- Respiration is the releasing of energy from molecules we consumed as food. It happens in every living cell in every living organism.

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- Excretion is the removal of waste products from the body. Certain chemical reactions in our body (so called metabolic reactions, for example respiration) produce harmful substances, which we must get rid of.
- Sensitivity involves responding to change in the environment of a living thing. For example, plants and animals are sensitive to light. An animal might respond with movement, a plant with growing in a particular way.
- Movement of an animal is obvious. A
 plant doesn't move its whole body, but
 parts of the body can move (e g
 sunflowers that turn their head towards the
 sun).
- Reproduction is the formation of new organisms from themselves. Sometimes a single organism just grows a new one from its body. Sometimes you need a male and a female organism to produce new cells which then divide and grow to a new organism (like human reproduction).
- Growth is a permanent increase in size.
 Usually new born organisms are small and when they grow older they get bigger.
 Growth happens as individual cells get bigger or the number of cells increases.

In the upcoming weeks of biology we will examine some of these life processes.

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