

Unit 9: The Global Village

Narrator: Welcome to New York City. There are people here from every corner of the world, raised in different cultures, with different experiences. Today, some New Yorkers are attending a very special meeting. These people all took part in the Genographic Project. They have taken DNA tests to learn about their ancestors. Together, they are going to travel back through time and find out where we all come from.

Presenter: Good morning everybody. How are you? Let's wave those flags!

Narrator: First, everyone is divided into five groups. They are grouped according to the region of the world their most recent genetic ancestors moved to.

Presenter: You are basically standing in the part of the world, if you imagine this is a world map that your ancestors came from most recently.

Narrator: Each group is given a different colored flag. The red flags represent the people whose ancestors arrived in North and South America about 14,000 years ago.

Presenter: So, these are descendants of the first inhabitants of the Americas, the Native Americans. So, you guys are the farthest point on the human journey! Now I'm going to switch all the way to the other extreme of the globe. This big group over here, the Europeans! Let's see those flags!

Narrator: The blue flags represent people whose recent ancestors came from Europe.

Presenter: Your ancestors were pretty amazing people, too.

Narrator: They began living in Europe about 35,000 years ago. But the genetic tests show that before they came to Europe and the Americas, the ancestors of both groups lived in one region: Central Asia.

Presenter: You all share a genetic marker in common, a guy who was living in Central Asia around 40,000 years ago. So, at that point, there were no Europeans, there were no Native Americans, there were Central Asians.

Narrator: And now the pink flags representing people from East and South Asia. Their ancestors arrived in Asia about 45,000 years ago.

Presenter: Now if we could ask everybody in Central Asia and everybody in East Asia to coalesce over here to the Middle East, around 50,000 years ago or so.

Narrator: As we can see, Europeans, North Americans, South Americans, East Asians, and Southeast Asians all share a common ancestor in the Middle East. So we are now down to two groups: one in the Middle East, the other in Africa. Will they too join together? Absolutely. But where? Where did humans live first? In Africa! Human beings only moved from Africa to the Middle East about 60,000 years ago.

Presenter: Welcome home, everybody!

Narrator: This means that all of us alive today can trace our family histories back to Africa. In fact, we have spent most of our history as a species—3/4 of it—living only in Africa. From there, our ancestors began their journeys all around the globe. But what does this news mean to the people who participated in the project?

Participant: We're all very, very similar, no matter what we say or do, no matter what language we speak. We're all the same.

Narrator: Just think—every person on the planet is connected to every other person. We are truly one world.