The australopithecus afarensis essay example

Environment, Animals

[Class Title]

I’m an Australopithecus Afarensis. Our species belong to the family of hominids and lived approximately three million years ago . Accordingly, we are the most resilient hominid species and also the most popular owing to the discovery Lucy and the First Family, which were both found in Ethiopia. Evolutionists believe that we are the earliest ancestors of the human species while others are just undecided because of the many differences that our species possess as compared to the modern humans. At a glance, one would mistake us from the common chimps yet we have peculiarities that are quite different from the ordinary apes. Our facial features resembles that of a chimpanzee yet at closer inspection, we possess a “ more robust, less protruding faces”. However, when compared to humans, we lack the ridge bone behind the chin and have shallower brow ridge. Also, we lack the protruding nose that modern humans have. Instead, our noses resemble the chimpanzees. Even so, we are also more similar to humans than the common chimps in dental features. In fact, our incisors are smaller as compared to chimpanzees while our molar and premolars are larger, which resembles that of a modern man. For the same reason, our species are omnivorous and considers plants and other animals as food source. Perhaps it is for the same reason why we have been dominating prehistory primarily because we can easily adapt to our food environment. Accordingly, our species have survived for about 900 thousand years and have dominated the Eastern African region.

Our skulls are much smaller as compared to humans. In fact, it is quite amazing how in the world was I able to write this paper when my brain is

only a bit larger than the modern chimpanzee. In order to be considered human or even close to being human, one has to possess a brain size of at least 700 cc. My friend Lucy has a brain of one-fourth the average human brain. Obviously, with this brain, the intellectual capacity is limited and I exhibit ape-like behavior although I may possess a relatively smarter behavior than the common chimps. Most scientists believe that I was the junction of evolution. That it is through the emergence of my species when great apes evolved into the direction of the human species. Accordingly, we were the significant split from the shared ape ancestors of the chimpanzees and the humans seven to eight million years ago. Most evolutionists believe that plants and animals are designed so that they would survive. According to them, " If anything is true about nature, it is that plants and animals seem intricately and almost perfectly designed for living their lives" (Coyne, J., 2009). Apparently, most species possess a physical attribute that make them do their natural function in their ecological environment. Darwin's natural selection rationalization suggests that species have genetically changed over time through mutations in order to adapt to its environment (Coyne, J., 2009). Also, gradualism or the change of physical properties of organisms that usually happens over a long evolutionary period may have been the main reason why our species have evolved over time. As observed by Coyne, " The evolution of new features, like the teeth and jaws that distinguish mammals from reptiles, does not occur in just one or a few generations, but usually over hundreds or thousands—even millions—of generations" (Coyne, J., 2009).

It is also interesting to note that we are the earliest bipedal to have ever

roamed the earth. Most likely, our ability to walk on two legs is partly due to our larger brain than the common ape and partly because we are forced to dwell on the ground. Studies regarding our bone structures revealed that we are made for walking although we have retained features that make us great climbers. We have retained our long curve toes and our long fore arms suggests that we can become powerful climbers at will. However, climbing has become a lesser skill for out species. Apparently, we have developed a " femur that angles medially from the hip to the knee", suggesting that our ability to pull our hind limb is decreased as compared to the common chimp, which suggests that our ability to climb trees are also decreased. Our torsos are also smaller as compared to most apes while the shape of our pelvic bones and leg bones suggests an angled connection common to a bipedal. It should be noted though that our balance is not as good as humans. Apparently, we have a large head in proportion to our body as well as a long, extended arm that makes balancing quite difficult while standing still. Also, " Since it is the forward extension of the hip that provides the attachment for the muscles that enable us to keep our balance when standing upright", we might be able to stand upright but not for long. As a result, our locomotion and posture differ much from the modern man in such a way that we could have waddled as we walk.

In conclusion, we are genetically, physically and behaviorally closer to chimpanzees that humans. After all, it took more than a million years for the first Homo erectus to appear, which means that our species would have a lot of adaptation and natural selection to do before we can finally realize our full potential in the evolution curve. On the contrary, our far-fetched features as

compared to the human species would also suggest that we are of a different species and not human ancestors after all. If it is true that humans have evolved from us, then there is a possibility that humans would evolve into something else other than their species, which is quite unthinkable under the present circumstances. For those who believe in evolution, our species could be the missing link while for those who do not, our species is just another ape that flourished sometime three million years ago.

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