

THE GENETICS OF LEARNING AND MEMORY

What's in a Name?

The fruit fly (*Drosophila melanogaster*) is one of scientists' favorite pets. Traditionally, fly genes have been named according to effects of their mutations. For example, Thomas Morgan named the first fly mutant white for its white eyes.

A fly named
"white"



Scientists have given genes such creative names that the fly has become famous for them. Here are some examples:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Origin</u>
<i>dunce</i>	<i>dunce</i> flies are poor learners.
<i>barbie</i> and <i>ken</i>	Both male and female mutants lack external genitalia, just like Barbie and Ken dolls.
<i>cheap date</i>	<i>cheap date</i> mutants have a low tolerance to alcohol.
<i>groucho</i>	<i>groucho</i> mutants have more bristles in their face than normal, just like Groucho Marx.
<i>swiss cheese</i>	<i>swiss cheese</i> mutants have swiss-cheese-like holes in their brains.
<i>tudor</i>	<i>tudor</i> mutants don't have any offspring, just like the royal Tudor family in medieval England.