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## FROM LOLLIPOPS TO COLLIE PUPS

This morning, my eight year old daughter, Shannon, asked me what Collie dogs looked like. (She had just previously asked me what my favorite dog is and I had named the Collie.)

To tease her a little, I told her that if she wanted to know what a collie looked like, she should start by picturing a lollipop. The collie pup is a descendent of the lollipop - one can even hear the association in the two names. This comment elicited the desired and expected response from her, "Daaad!", and a cute, snaggletoothed grin (she's loosening some front teeth), which were just the fuel my facetiousness needed.

I went on to explain that if she started with a lollipop and put hair on it in her imagination, she'd begin to see how collies descended from lollipops. But there was an intermediate step she should also be aware of: lollipops, gradually, over millions of years, evolved into polliwogs; polliwogs evolved into collie dogs. And, here, one could see an even closer association in the two names, proving beyond doubt that the collie dog descended from the polliwog.

Lots of "Daaaads!!" and lots of grins from both Shannon and her older sister, Megan. So, I continued.

That lollipops and collie pups were related could easily be shown by the fact that people licked lollipops, and collie pups licked people. Two incontrovertible facts.

Furthermore, if Shannon would lick the next lollipop she gets and then feel it with her finger, she would immediately see a similarity between the way it feels and the way a polliwog feels. Another evidence that the one descended from the other.

To further help answer her question about what a collie dog looked like, I suggested that she should lick her lollipop and then roll it around on the carpet - the way collie's are apt to roll around on a carpet - until it is covered with fibers from the carpet. Then, if she would just imagine it having four legs and a head, and use the lollipop stick as the tail, she would be able to begin to imagine what a collie dog looked like.

The two girls were enjoying this quite a lot, so I was encouraged to carry it just a bit further by saying that the lollipop stick goes up into the candy part of the lollipop in just the same way as the tail bone of the collie pup goes up into its body forming its backbone. It is obvious to anyone with a mind for science that the lollipop stick is the forerunner of the collie pup's tail.

Anyone, we concluded, with any sense at all can easily see these and many more evidences that collie pups evolved from lollipops.