

# Gamete Encyclopedia Article

## Gamete

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

# Contents

<a href="#">Gamete Encyclopedia Article.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Gamete.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>

# Gamete

A gamete is a sexual reproductive cell such as a sperm or an egg that must fuse with another gamete to produce a zygote, and eventually, a new organism. Gametes are typically haploid ( $1N$ ), containing only half the number of the chromosomes needed to form a new diploid ( $2N$ ) organism. During fertilization, two unlike gametes, each containing a single set of chromosomes, fuse to produce a diploid cell, or zygote, containing paired chromosomes. The zygote develops into a new diploid organism. Specialized cells of the mature organism undergo meiosis to form haploid gametes that begin the process of reproduction again. Although fusing gametes normally differ from each other genetically, they may be identical in form (isogamy) or they may differ in size and shape (heterogamy). An extreme case of heterogamy, where one gamete is large and nonmotile (the egg), and the other is small and motile (the sperm) is called oogamy. Oogamy is the type of gamete formation typical of animals, plants, and some forms of fungi and algae. Isogamy and heterogamy are found in many fungi, algae, and protista.