methanogen	a member of the archea that lives by using hydrogen and producing methane; many are found in digestive alimentary tracts of ruminants and humans, others in sewage and swamps
multicellular organism	one that consists of numerous cells that are specialised to carry out specific functions within the systems of the organism
nitrogen-fixing bacteria	bacteria that convert atmospheric nitrogen to a form able to be used by plants; some live in root nodules in a mutualistic relationship with leguminous plants
nutrients	food materials that provide energy and/or contain substances vital for normal functioning
order	a special grouping used in classification above family and below class

organic molecules	a class of compounds found in or produced by living organisms and contain, or are based on, carbon
oxic	containing oxygen
palaeontology	the study of fossils and the associated life forms existing in earlier geological periods
photosynthesis	the process by which plants make their own food (sugars) using carbon dioxide, water and sunlight, in the presence of chlorophyll and releasing oxygen
primitive	early in the evolutionary history of an organism

procaryotic cells	cells without a nucleus or organelles
protein	a group of organic compounds made up of amino acids units; essential for growth, repair and life processes (enzymes)
respiration	aerobic respiration is the process by which living organisms obtain energy by using glucose and oxygen and producing carbon dioxide and energy
species	the level of greatest similarity in classification; it consists of a group of organisms that share a common gene pool through interbreeding
stromatolites	mounds of sediments trapped into glue-like mats of cyanobacteria; they were widespread in Precambrian times

technology	applied science, such as the development of the electron microscope or x-ray machines
terrestrial	living or growing on land as opposed to aquatic
timeline	a diagram of more usually a line drawn to scale representing a sequence of events over time
Urey and Miller's experiments	experiments designed to model early earth and show that organic molecules could arise from high energy sources such as electricity, ultra-violet light, and hydrogen, methane and ammonia and water-vapour