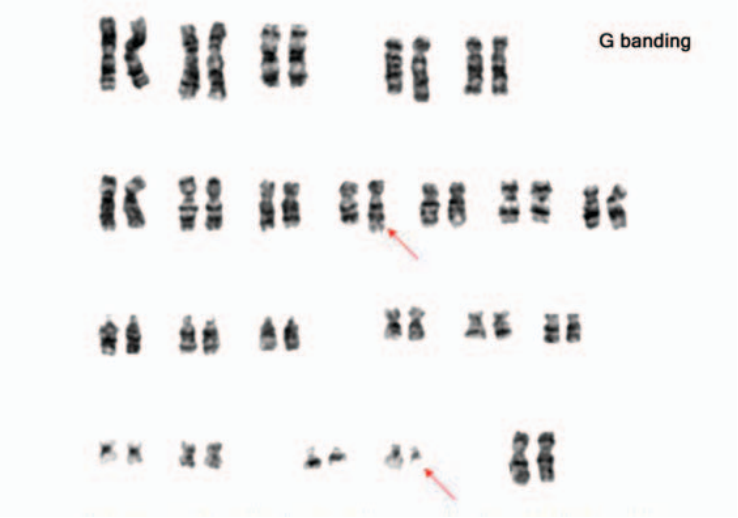

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Figure 5. Karyotype of a Patient with Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia Indicating Chromosomal Deformity

Part 4: Modeling Meiosis

Meiosis resembles mitosis but serves a very different purpose. Meiosis is a cell division resulting in the halving, or reduction, of chromosome number in each cell. A diploid organism has two sets of chromosomes (2n), while a haploid cell or organism has one set (1n). Meiosis produces gametes (ova and sperm) in animals and spores in fungi, plants, and protists. Three other important characteristics of meiosis are the exchange of genetic material ("crossing over") between homologous chromosomes, the independent assortment of the chromosomes, and the separation of alleles of the same gene (Figure 6). These characteristics, along with random fertilization, increase the genetic variability in the offspring. These mechanisms are essential to our understanding of genetics and evolution in sexually reproducing organisms.

The hallmark of sexual reproduction is the great diversity seen in the gametes and in the resulting offspring produced by fertilization. Meiosis is integral to this process because this type of cell division produces the sex cells, gametes. Before you begin the modeling exercise, your teacher will ask you to discuss these questions.

- How do sexually reproducing organisms produce gametes from diploid progenitors?
- How does the process increase gamete diversity?
- What are the outcomes from independent assortment and crossing over?
- How does the distance between two genes or a gene and a centromere affect crossover frequencies?

Use the model chromosomes from Part 1 to explain meiosis and crossing-over events. During your investigation, answer the following questions:

- When is the DNA replicated during meiosis?
- Are homologous pairs of chromosomes exact copies of each other?
- What is crossing over?
- What physical constraints control crossover frequencies?
- What is meant by independent assortment?
- How can you calculate the possible number of different kinds of gametes?
- What happens if a homologous pair of chromosomes fails to separate, and how might this contribute to genetic disorders such as Down syndrome and cri du chat syndrome?
- How are mitosis and meiosis fundamentally different?

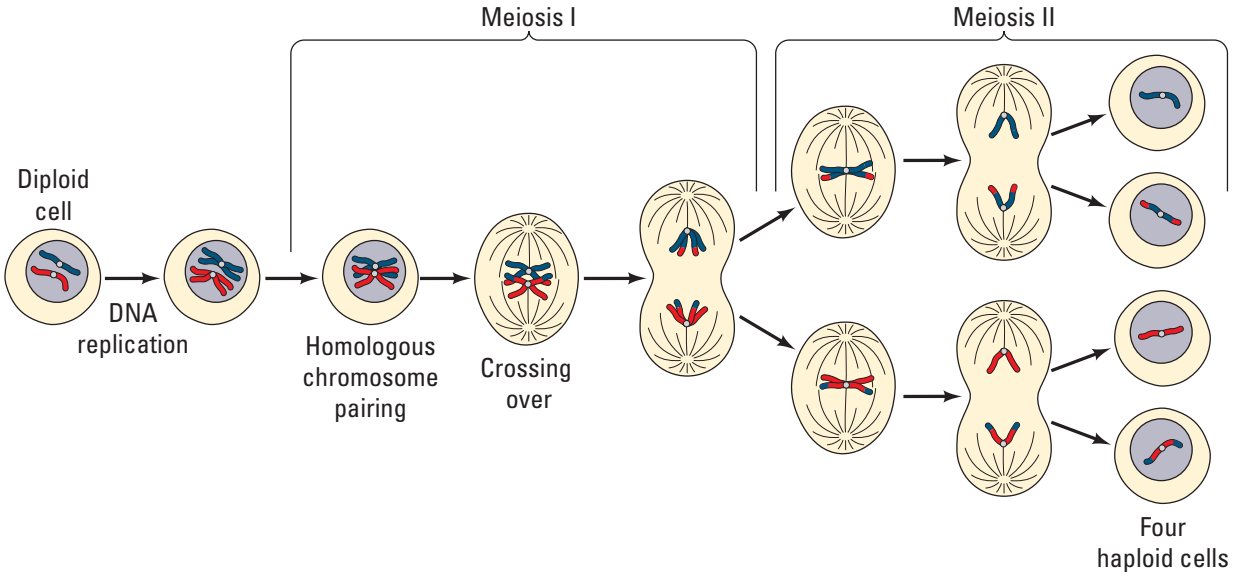

Figure 6. Meiotic Cell Division Emphasizing Chromosome Movement

Part 5: Meiosis and Crossing Over in *Sordaria*

The fungus *Sordaria fimicola* exchanges genetic material when two mycelia meet and fuse. The resulting zygote undergoes meiosis to produce asci; each ascus contains eight haploid spores. A single gene determines the spore color.

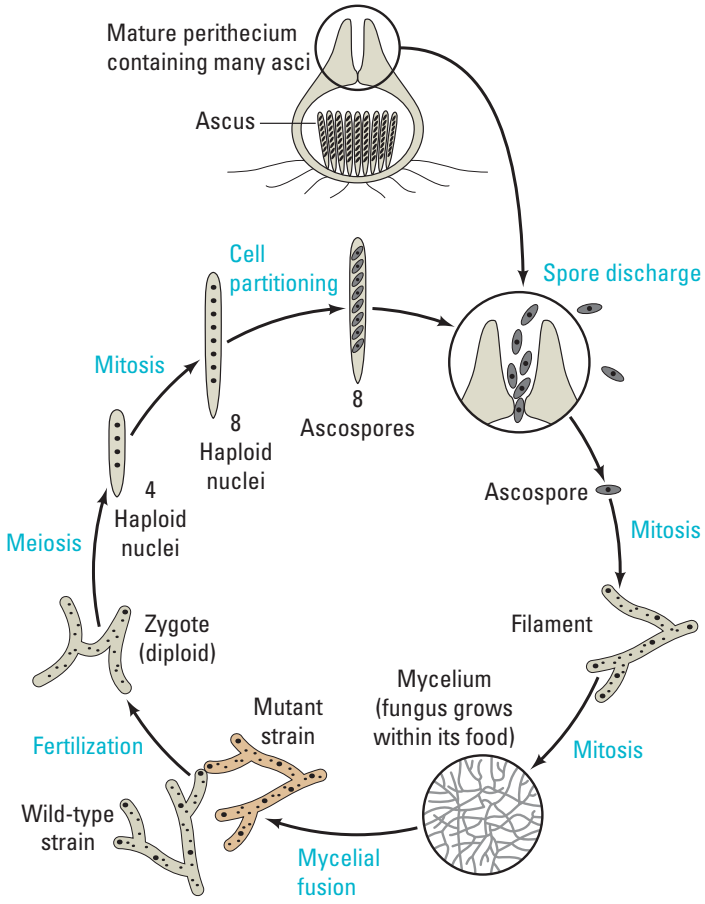

Figure 7. *Sordaria* Life Cycle

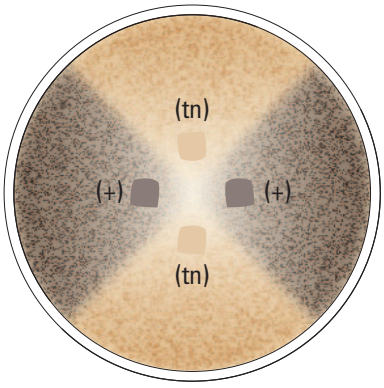

Figure 8: *Sordaria* Cross Plate

A cross was made between wild type (+; black) and tan (tn) strains. The resulting zygote produces either parental type asci, which have four black and four tan spores in a row (4:4 pattern), or recombinant asci, which do not have this pattern.

- How do you explain the differences between the recombinant asci and the parental types?
- What meiotic event can account for this difference?
- Using the model chromosomes from Part 4, predict the possible meiotic outcomes.

1. Place a drop of water onto the microscope slide.
2. Gently scrape some perithecia from the agar plate near where the two strains meet.
3. Place a cover slip over the perithecia and put a scientific cleaning wipe over the cover slip.
4. Gently press down on the cover slip using the eraser end of a pencil.
5. Count at least 50 asci, and score them as either parental or recombinant (crossing over).
6. Enter the data in Table 3 and make the calculations. One map unit equals one recombinant per 100 total events. The percentage of asci showing crossover divided by 2 equals the map units in this activity. This is done because each spore produced by meiosis undergoes a mitotic division.

Table 3. Analysis of Results

Number of Asci Showing 4:4 Pattern	Number of Asci Showing Crossover	Total # of Asci	% Asci Showing Crossover Divided by 2	Gene to Centromere Distance (Map Units)

Evaluating Results

1. Why did you divide the percentage of asci showing crossover (recombinant) by 2?
2. The published map distance between the spore color gene and the centromere is 26 map units. How did the class data compare with this distance?
3. How can you account for any disparities between the class data and the published data?
4. Illustrate what happened during meiosis to produce the results you found.
5. Do you think the Philadelphia chromosome is a result of crossing over as seen in this part of the investigation or some other chromosomal abnormality? Explain your answer.
6. Do you think the cell cycle described for mitosis could be applied to meiosis as well? Explain your answer.

Where Can You Go from Here?

1. Can the same (or any) environmental factors you tested above affect the amount of crossing over that occurs in *Sordaria*? How would you set up an experiment to test this? For example, how does humidity or pH affect the crossover frequency?
2. Revisit the learning objectives stated earlier. Do you better understand mitosis and meiosis? Could you teach this to another class?
3. How do the mechanisms of cell replication affect genetic diversity and evolution? Consider the mechanisms such as crossing over, independent assortment, segregation, nondisjunction, and random fertilization.
4. Prepare a video or write and produce a play about the process of chromosome movement.
5. Investigate how growth factors affect the cell cycle. This will help you review cell communication.
6. Research what tumor suppressors do in the cell cycle and which types of cancers may be caused by mutations in tumor suppressor genes. Specific examples include human papillomavirus (HPV), retinoblastoma protein (Rb), BRCA1 and BRCA2, and p53.