



Your facial features formed

Video transcript: Clip from *Countdown to Life: The Extraordinary Making of You* (BBC Two, 2015).

MICHAEL MOSLEY:

Now you probably look a bit like one of your parents, or perhaps a mixture of the two.

But, unless you have an identical twin, then there is absolutely nobody else on Earth who looks exactly like you do. And that's because there are so many variables involved.

One reason why we look so different may be because the genes that create the face are switched on and off at different times. And it's one of the most complicated things that happens in the womb.

Just 4 weeks ago, the embryo was the size of an apple pip. Then, genes inherited from our ancient fishy ancestors switched on and created gill-like structures called pharyngeal arches.

These changed to become parts of the ear, jaw and throat. Until, at last, a human face emerged.

The final part comes together around eight weeks.