

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*In 1925, Tennessee passed the following law, called the Butler Act:*

It shall be unlawful for any teacher . . . to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.

*The Butler Act made it illegal to teach from textbooks like the one below.*

### **Textbook – A Civic Biology, 1925**

#### **The Doctrine of Evolution.**

We have now learned that animals may begin with very simple one-celled forms and end with a group which contains man himself. The great English scientist Charles Darwin explained the theory of evolution. This is the belief that simple forms of life on the earth slowly gave rise to more complex forms.

#### **Man's Place in Nature.**

We see that man must be placed with the vertebrate animals because of his vertebral column. We place man with the apelike mammals because of structural likeness. The group of mammals which includes the monkeys, apes, and man we call the primates.

#### **Evolution of Man.**

There once lived races of men who were much lower in their mental organization than present people. If we follow the early history of man, we find that at first he must have been little better than one of the lower animals. Gradually he must have learned to use weapons and kill his prey, first using rough stones for this purpose. Man then began to farm the fields, and to have permanent houses. Civilization began long ago, but even today the earth is not entirely civilized.

**Source:** *Excerpt from widely-used biology textbook, A Civic Biology, written in 1914 by George W. Hunter, a biology teacher from New York City.*

#### **Questions:**

1. (Close reading) How does this textbook explain where man came from?
2. (Contextualization) Why might people in Tennessee in 1925 have wanted to outlaw this textbook?