

16.3 Gene control

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 11 marks

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **gene control** — **structural and regulatory genes** 结构/调节基因, **inducible and repressible enzymes** 可诱导/可抑制酶, the **lac operon** 乳糖操纵子, and **transcription factors** 转录因子.

You must be able to:

- distinguish structural and regulatory genes, and inducible and repressible enzymes
- explain the control of protein production by the lac operon
- state the role of transcription factors and explain gibberellin's action via DELLA proteins

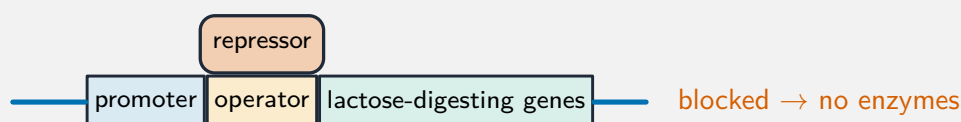
1 Worked examples

■ Genes and enzymes

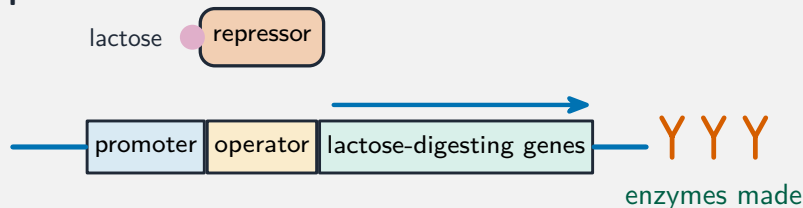
A **structural gene** codes for a useful protein (e.g. an enzyme); a **regulatory gene** controls whether other genes are switched on. An **inducible enzyme** is made only when needed; a **repressible enzyme** is normally made but can be switched off.

■ The lac operon

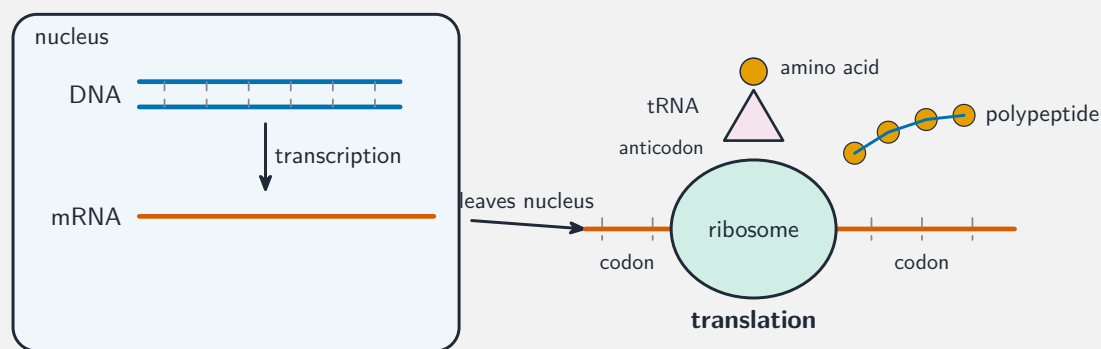
no lactose



lactose present



A repressor blocks the genes until lactose pulls it off — so the enzymes are inducible



Gene control acts on transcription and translation

- **no lactose:** a **repressor** 阻遏物 protein binds the operator and blocks **transcription** 转录—no enzymes made.
- **lactose present:** lactose binds the repressor and pulls it off; transcription occurs and the lactose-digesting enzymes are made (they are **inducible**).

■ Transcription factors and gibberellin

In eukaryotes, **transcription factors** are proteins that bind DNA and raise or lower the rate of transcription. **Gibberellin** 赤霉素 switches genes on by causing the breakdown of **DELTA** protein repressors, which normally block the factors that promote transcription.

2 Practice

2.1 State the difference between a structural gene and a regulatory gene. [2]

2.2 State what is meant by an inducible enzyme. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 In the lac operon, when **no** lactose is present, the repressor protein: [1]

- **A** is broken down
- **B** binds the operator and blocks transcription
- **C** is transcribed into mRNA
- **D** binds the lactose-digesting enzymes

3.2 What is the role of a transcription factor in a eukaryotic cell? [1]

- **A** to replicate DNA
 - **B** to bind DNA and control the rate of transcription
 - **C** to translate mRNA
 - **D** to break down glucose
-

3.3 Explain how the lac operon allows a bacterium to make lactose-digesting enzymes only when lactose is present. [4]

3.4 Explain how gibberellin switches on genes by acting on DELLA proteins. [2]

4 Go further

You are now ready for the real exam questions on this subtopic. Open the **16.3 Gene control** past-paper sheet in the Library, or try these in **Practice mode**:

- 9700/24 N25 —Q3 (gene control, calculation)
- 9700/41 N25 —Q1 (gene expression)

Solutions

2.1 a structural gene codes for a (useful) protein such as an enzyme; a regulatory gene controls whether other genes are switched on.

2.2 an enzyme that is made only when it is needed (e.g. when its substrate is present).

3.1 B. With no lactose, the repressor binds the operator and blocks transcription.

3.2 B. A transcription factor binds DNA and increases or decreases the rate of transcription.

3.3 when no lactose is present, the repressor binds the operator and blocks transcription, so no enzymes are made; when lactose is present, it binds the repressor and removes it from the operator; transcription can now occur, so the lactose-digesting enzymes are made.

3.4 gibberellin causes the breakdown of DELLA protein repressors; these normally block the transcription factors, so removing them lets the genes be transcribed/expressed.