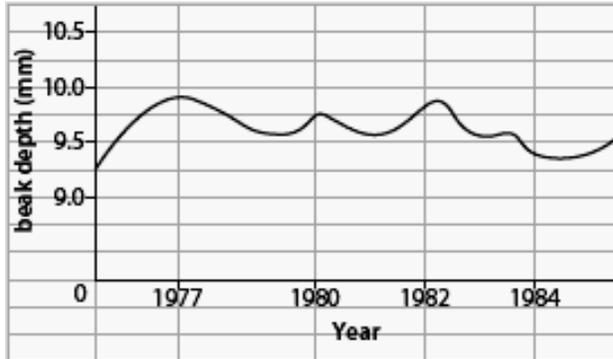


Thought Lab 4.2: Analyzing Changes in Beak Depth

Purpose: Show how beak depth in the medium ground finch changes with the passage of time.

Changes in beak depth in *Geospiza fortis*, 1977-1984.



Procedure

Use the questions below to interpret the graph.

Analysis

- 1977, 1980, and 1982 were drought years; 1984 was a wet year. What do you notice about the average beak depth in the finch population during dry years compared with wet years?
- How do the data relate to selective pressure and natural selection?
- An observer suggested that the finches exercised their beaks more when they ate large seeds that were tough to open, making their beaks stronger. Evaluate the plausibility of this explanation for the graphed data.