

The evolution of the Quaternary Period, or “How the Pleistocene got so big and the Holocene got so small”

Students introduced to the Quaternary and its two epochs, the Holocene and Pleistocene, have good reason to ask

“Why would anyone divide 2.5 million years into two parts, one about 10,000 years (or 0.01 million years) and the other 2.49 million years? That’s less than 1% vs. more than 99% !”

The best answer is “Because we didn’t know what we were doing (back in the 1800s)”. This page tries to explain in more detail.

