

Teacher Resource

Charles Darwin Day

Focus Questions

1. Briefly summarise the BTN *Charles Darwin Day* story.
2. What year did Charles Darwin join the crew of the HMS Beagle?
 - a. 1731
 - b. 1831
 - c. 1931
3. What type of bird did Charles Darwin study while travelling around the Galapagos and Cocos Islands?
4. Where are the Galapagos and Cocos Islands? Find using Google Maps.
5. What did Charles Darwin notice about their beaks?
6. What is the theory of natural selection? Explain using your own words.
7. What is the name of Charles Darwin's most famous book?
8. Why is Charles Darwin considered an important scientist?
9. What did you learn while watching the BTN story?
10. Illustrate an aspect of the story.

Key Learning

Students will learn more about the life and work of Charles Darwin.

Curriculum

Science – Year 5

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment

Science – Year 6

The growth and survival of living things are affected by the physical conditions of their environment

Activity

What do you see, think and wonder?

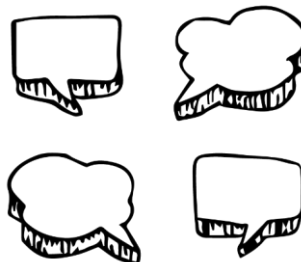
After watching the BTN *Charles Darwin Day* story, students will respond to the following questions:

- What did you SEE in this video?
- What do you THINK about what you saw in this video?
- What did you LEARN from this story?
- What was SURPRISING about this story?
- What QUESTIONS do you have about this story?

Class Discussion

As a class discuss the BTN *Charles Darwin Day* story, using the following questions as a guide. Record the main points of the discussion.

- What do you know about Charles Darwin?
- What do you know about evolution?
- What has surprised you most about Charles Darwin?
- Why do you think his ideas are still relevant today?



Activity

Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN *Charles Darwin Day* story. Here are some words to get them started.

| | | |
|-------------------|------------|----------|
| Evolution | Adaptation | Species |
| Natural selection | Variation | Survival |

Activity

Charles Darwin Research

Students will be exploring the work of Charles Darwin in more detail. They can develop their own key questions to investigate or respond to one or more of the questions below. Students can complete the following KWLH organiser to explore their knowledge and consider what they would like to know and learn.

| <i>What do I <u>k</u>now?</i> | <i>What do I <u>w</u>ant to know?</i> | <i>What have I <u>l</u>earnt?</i> | <i><u>H</u>ow will I find out?</i> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | | |

Here are some possible questions for students to research:

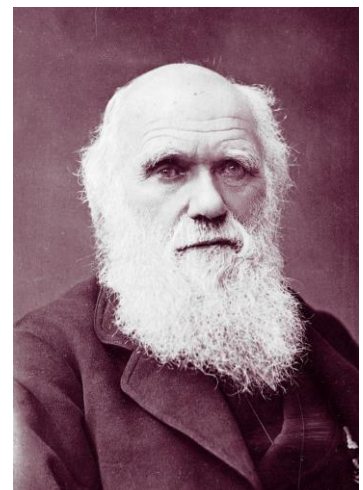
- What did Charles Darwin see and do on his five-year journey on the HMS Beagle?
- What did Darwin discover about finches on the Galapagos Islands? How did it confirm his idea of natural selection?
- Charles Darwin visited Australia in 1836. Where in Australia did Darwin visit? Show the Beagle's Australian route on a map. What observations did he make?
- How did people react to Darwin's ideas, and how did they change the way people thought about the origins of the world?
- Why was Charles Darwin reluctant to publish his theory of evolution?
- What is Darwin's most important contribution to science? Give reasons for your answer.

Activity

Who was Charles Darwin?

Before students begin to construct their biographies, hold a class discussion to find out what they already know about biographical writing. Below are some discussion starters:

- What does a biography tell us about a person?
- Where can you look to find information for your biographical writing? It could include the internet, newspaper articles, magazine articles and interviews, other biographies, historical books or television interviews. Why is it important to use more than one source of information?
- What makes a biography interesting? For example, key information and facts, a timeline of events, photographs, illustrations and quotes.



Using the biography worksheet at the end of this activity, students will find and record information about Charles Darwin. This [Charles Darwin timeline](#) will help students with their research. Some possible areas to include are:

- Where was Charles Darwin from? Locate using Google Maps.
- When was he born? Describe his family life growing up.
- What were some of Charles Darwin's achievements? Choose one to explore in more detail.
- What were some challenges Darwin faced?
- How has Charles Darwin made an impact on people's lives?

Further investigation

- Imagine you could sit down and talk to Charles Darwin. What questions would you ask about his life and achievements?

Activity

Experiment - Does saltwater kill seeds?

Before starting this activity, reading the following excerpt as a class.

I have begun making some few experiments on the effects of immersion in sea-water on the germinating powers of seeds, in the hope of being able to throw a very little light on the distribution of plants, more especially in regard to the same species being found in many cases in far outlying islands and on the mainland. Charles Darwin, Gardeners' Chronicle and Agricultural Gazette

To explore the question 'How did plants become distributed over the Earth's surface?' Darwin tested how plant seeds would survive in seawater. Students will conduct a similar experiment as explained [here](#). Before students conduct the experiment, ask them to make some predictions.

Students can then discuss the results of their experiment reflecting on:

- How many seeds germinated?
- Why did certain seeds germinate more than others?
- Why did Charles Darwin conduct this experiment?

Activity

Watch the [BTN Human Evolution](#) story then answer the following questions:

1. What part of the human body is helping us learn about human evolution?
2. What is the scientific name for modern humans?
3. Approximately how far back in time do modern humans date?
4. Where did Homo sapiens originate?
5. What did our earliest ancestors look like? Describe.
6. How are Homo habilis different to Homo sapiens?
7. The most famous Australopithecus afarensis was discovered by scientists in which country?



Useful Websites

Human Evolution – BTN

<https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/human-evolution/11481954>

What is evolution? - BBC Bitesize

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zvhhvcw/articles/z9qs4qt>

Charles Darwin Timeline – The Darwin Project

<https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/learning-resources/timeline#/>

Biography – Charles Darwin

Full name

Born

Family

Portrait of Charles

Important contributions Charles Darwin made to science...

Interesting things about Charles Darwin...

Charles Darwin's achievements