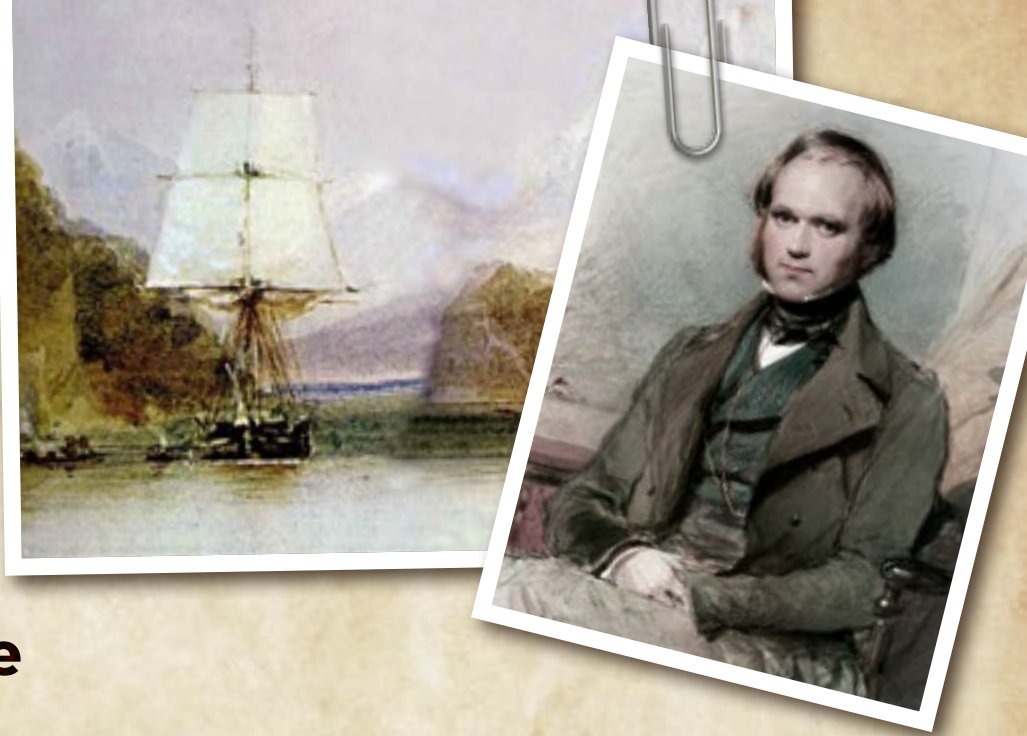




Darwin's Adventures on The Beagle



Charles Darwin is a famous scientist who was interested in studying animals, plants, fossils and the natural world.

In 1831, at the age of 22, he left on an epic five year adventure, exploring the world on a ship called HMS Beagle. Darwin was responsible for collecting and making notes about the animals, plants and rocks of all the places they visited. This trip made him think about how the world and its wildlife came to be, and how it developed or 'evolved' over time, through a process he called natural selection. In 1859 he wrote a very famous book called the Origin of Species about his ground-breaking ideas, which changed the way humans see themselves and the world around them.



From: https://kids.kiddle.co/Charles_Darwin



Darwin's Project Ideas

- ◆ If you could go on a once-in-a-life, amazing trip around the world, where would you go? Draw your route on a map and think about how you might travel. Find out about some of the places you might see and make a travel journal of your trip.

Darwin sketched and wrote in great detail about all the amazing things he saw. When he visited the Galapagos Islands he couldn't believe all the strange creatures that lived there! Research the Galapagos Islands and find out about the animals and plants that live there. Make a field notebook about some of the creatures that he might've found.

- ◆ Darwin was really interested in all the different types of finches (small birds) on the islands. He noticed that although they were all similar in many ways, each type of bird had a different beak, depending on what they ate (in the same way we use different tools for different jobs). Imagine you have discovered a new type of bird, that has never been seen before; dream up a new beak for your bird and think about how it might use its beak as a tool to eat with. For example, toucans have giant beaks to pluck and crush fruit; birds with small blunt beaks use theirs to eat seeds; parrots have strong beaks for cracking nuts. What about a beak that can open tin cans? Or one useful for ripping plastic bags? Or unwrapping sweets? Or drinking juice from cartons?



Photo by Sharp Photography

- ◆ Invent a new creature – be as imaginative as you can! Think carefully about its features and use real life animal adaptations for inspiration. For example, giraffes have a super-long neck so they can reach the leaves on the trees to eat them. Tigers have stripes to camouflage (blend in to their background) in order to sneak up on their prey. Monkeys have long arms so they can swing through the trees. What will your creature look like? Draw or make a 3d version of your creature.

Darwin was fascinated by the ichneumon wasp, which laid its eggs inside caterpillars. When the eggs hatched, the grubs would eat the caterpillars alive, from the inside out. Make a fact file about gruesome creatures to show people how amazing they are, eg, look up assassin bugs, vultures, zombie snails, goliath bird spiders, hagfish, botflies...

- ◆ Darwin came across lots of really amazing fossils on his travels. Press a plastic toy dinosaur into clay to make a mould (or shape the clay into a boneshape if you prefer) then pour plaster of paris in the mould to make your 'fossil'. When it is dry, you could bury it somewhere in the garden for your family to discover and have a fossil hunt.



- ◆ Darwin collected lots of specimens to send back to England for his fellow scientists to identify. Using whatever recycled items you can find at home, make your own collection of curious bugs. You could use bottle tops for bodies, pipe cleaners for legs, shiny sweet wrappers for wings, bubble wrap for eyes. Give them crazy names and then mount them with their label on a piece of cardboard.
- ◆ More than 120 species have been named after Darwin. If you had a creature named after you what would it be? What would it look like? Can you draw it?
- ◆ Darwin collected many different seeds from the places he visited on his trip and then tried to grow them when he returned home. Some seeds, like rhubarb and celery grew really well, others not. Do you have some seeds at home you could plant in pots? Why not set up a mini experiment to see what conditions your seeds like best to grow – you could grow some on a sunny window sill, others in a north-facing window, some in the dark. Don't forget to keep them watered and make a label to remind yourself what you are growing.
- ◆ Think about your favourite type of animal – eg, horses, monkeys, apes, big cats, etc. Make a scrap book showing their similarities and differences.
- ◆ Make a fact file about Charles Darwin. Imagine you are a reporter that could go back in time -what questions would you like to ask the man himself?
- ◆ Find out a bit more about Darwin's Theory of Evolution. Can you write a mini-book about it, to explain it to other children?
- ◆ Think carefully about how humans might evolve in the future – might we all have extra long, nimble thumbs for super-fast texting? How might our bodies adapt to global warming?

