**Charles Darwin – What a guy!**

Ship ahoy! We’re off on an exciting expedition with Charles Darwin and his crew on HMS Beagle. Can you trace his route across the vast ocean? Stop at the magical Galápagos Islands to see the amazing species that helped Darwin develop his theory of evolution by natural selection. Do you know what’s so special about a lava lizard, or why the blue-footed booby has blue feet? See how animals adapt to their environment over time and meet some of the world’s greatest explorers and naturalists! Imagine how humans will evolve in millions of years. It’s a scary thought! Ready to trace the origin of species? Let’s set sail!

**Session 1**

Use a range of historical sources to answer the question, 'Who was Charles Darwin and why was he so important?' Discover where and when he was born, where he lived and what he studied. Find out how he came to be part of the scientific expedition on HMS Beagle and why it was so significant to his theory of evolution. Create a timeline to illustrate Darwin’s life up until his death on 19th April 1882.

**Note:** Both the [Natural History Museum](https://www.nhm.ac.uk/) and the [Royal Museums Greenwich](https://www.rmg.co.uk/) websites have useful information about the life and times of Charles Darwin. Children could compare Darwin to Alfred Wallace who also published work on evolution by natural selection.

**Session 2 – 15 Choose any of the following (some may take you several days):**

• Look at photos of the different archipelago islands that Charles Darwin visited. Design and draw your own archipelago island.

• Make a fact file about different fossil types .

• Create a true or false quiz about Charles Darwin and his scientific expedition on HMS Beagle.

• Explain how animals such as polar bears, monkeys and sharks have evolved to suit their environment. Design a new fantastical creature that has evolved to suit its unique environment.

• Learn more about Charles Darwin and his work on the Natural History Museum website.

• Create your own Darwin’s Delight word search using words you have learnt during the project. Challenge a grown up to solve your puzzle.

• Research HMS Beagle and make a fact-filled poster to display the information you find about the ship.

• Find out more about other famous scientists who had an interest in evolution and inheritance, such as Alfred Wallace or Mary Anning.

• Imagine you are the young scientist, Charles Darwin, out on his scientific expedition on HMS Beagle. Write an extract from his journal that describes part of the journey. It could be the start of the voyage, arriving at one of the islands, or discovering different animal species.

• What can you discover about Lonesome George, the last giant Pinta Island tortoise? Research conservation charities such as the World Wildlife Fund, to learn about current endangered species.

. • Visit the Great Plant Hunt website and be a plant detective – just like Charles Darwin!

Create a power-point explaining all about Charles Darwin’s journey to the Galapagos Islands.