

For the teacher

Worksheet 1

PART I

Watch the video and fill in the missing information

- 1. Charles Darwin was born----- ago.
- 2. He wanted to know how the whole of the natural world -----
- 3. He wanted to know how continents -----
- 4. He wanted to know how ocean basins -----
- 5. He wanted to know how life-----
- 6. His book *On the Origin of Species* was published ----- ago.

PART II

A. Circle the correct answer

- 1. As a child Charles liked
 - a. playing b. asking questions c. being with friends
- 2. As a child he was interested in
 - a. natural history b. sports c. religion
- 3. As a child he had a talent in
 - a. telling lies b. inventing stories c. telling jokes

B. Write three adjectives the speaker uses to describe Darwin's character.

- 1. ----- 2. ----- 3. -----

PART III

Mark the sentences T (true) or F (false) according to what you hear

- 1. He came of a religious family. _____
- 2. His grandfathers were scientists. _____
- 3. He went to Cambridge to become a biologist. _____
- 4. While in Cambridge he never questioned the teaching of the bible. _____
- 5. His voyage on the Beagle changed the way he looked at things. _____
- 6. Darwin was initially a geologist. _____
- 7. Darwin was influenced by Lyell's book 'The Principles of Geology'. _____
- 8. On the Beagle, Darwin didn't change his mind about becoming a vicar. _____

Answer key

PART I

- 1. 200
- 2. interconnected
- 3. emerged
- 4. formed
- 5. evolved
- 6. 150

Part II

A.

1. b
2. a
3. b

B.

1. inventive
2. charming
3. solitary
or serious

PART III

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. F
5. T
6. T
7. T
8. F

Transcript:

Two hundred years ago he was born. He wanted to know how the whole natural world interconnected. He wanted to know how continents emerged. How ocean basins formed. He wanted to know how life evolved.

One hundred and fifty years ago, it was published. It transformed the way that western cultures have regarded the divine in the natural world. One man on one voyage changed the way we see ourselves. He did question the need for a supernatural creator. But what drove him to explore a new explanation for all living things and why was it so controversial?

I've studied Darwin all my life and behind that great big beard he still remains an enigma.

One hundred and fifty years later we explore this enigma examining the ideas of Charles Darwin in the light of today's knowledge. Do they still have relevance? Does his science still make sense? We embark on a journey of understanding. We'll revisit the voyage that shook the world.

One of the astonishing things about Darwin as a thinker was the way that he always asked questions. And we can see it from an incredibly early age that he always wanted to know things, why this, why that, why not something else? but isn't that the way science gets made, isn't that how a good scientist proceeds, that is never content with taking things at surface value? I always thought I would love to know Darwin as a little boy, inventive, charming, interested in natural history, quite a solitary child, liking to take long walks on his own, inventing things. Darwin himself says that, as a child, he used to lie, or at least he, to put it in another way, he says, he used to fabricate big stories big imaginary stories. The ability to theorize, to create fantasies to play long stories out of nowhere is one of the great gifts of a scientist. And these are skills that Darwin had from a very early age.

The foundations of Darwin's ideas were laid before he was born in 1809. His father was a wealthy society doctor from Shrewsbury, his mother from the famous Wedgwood pottery family. Charles was surrounded by mass of religious influence- the Church of England, his mother's Unitarian faith; most of all the ideas of his grandfathers lay the

foundation for Darwin's later career. Erasmus Darwin and Josiah Wedgwood were free thinking rationalists and humanists. As members of the Lunar Society they were noted for challenging conventional thought and philosophy, politics, religion and science.

They were interested in invention and they didn't set any limits for themselves. Erasmus Darwin, his grandfather, for example, imagined chariots in the air, imagined air travel and in a way this of course has happened.

Erasmus Darwin is a fascinating character. He developed a world view which did include the general idea of the evolution and it is expressed in biological treatise he wrote and he called the Zoonomia, there's a whole chapter about what we would call the evolution.

Grandad's Zoonomia inspired a boy whose greatest delight's creating grand stories and investigating nature. Later in life when Darwin explores the possibility of evolution, passages of Zoonomia would be added to his beloved notebooks; notebooks filled with thoughts, questions, ideas- ideas that grow as the boy becomes a man.

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He was a thinker who would like to enjoy himself. With his friends, he would spend hours hunting, collecting specimens and discussing the wonders of the English countryside.

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It seems that Darwin was also a serious young man who was not just out to amuse himself. He went to Cambridge with the understanding he would ultimately train to become a member of the English clergy and that he would become a country vicar which would be a career path that would suit him as a naturalist very much.

However Charles was beginning to question some teachings of the Established Church. Then in 1831 at the age of twenty two he received a chance of a life time. It would seriously challenge Darwin's vision of a comfortable life as a country vicar- a voyage around the world.

Well as sitting here in this room that Darwin occupied at Christ College I think about him going out from Cambridge onto the voyage on the Beagle making discoveries that changed his whole way of looking at things.

Once Darwin was on the Beagle this commitment to becoming a parson faded away; that he writes about it less and less, he begins to see a different kind of life opening up in front of him, a life to which he really, really wanted to give himself.

It's often said that Darwin was a naturalist on board the Beagle and that's true in a way but he wasn't appointed as a naturalist; he was asked to join that voyage more as a companion to the captain, somebody who would pay his own way and contribute something of value to science.

It was an amazing experience for anyone and for a young man like Darwin who had the intellect and the curiosity to make something of it, it was just an incredible voyage.

The first of this grand ocean going adventure gave to Darwin two months to think. His thoughts were filled by a gift from the Beagle's captain, Robert FitzRoy, a book that appealed to Darwin's primary passion Principles of Geology Volume One by the Scotch Geologist Charles Lyell.

Darwin as a young man was a geologist originally and he was a follower of Lyell's uniformitarian geology which supposes very slow changes over an immense span of time for the earth's history.

And in this book Lyell argues that the present is the key to the past, that is, that currently operating geological forces are sufficient to explain all of geological history. But by the way Lyell in volume one of the Principles of Geology really attacks this point of view of trying to use Genesis as a guide to Geology.

Lyell couldn't accept the biblical account over recent creation. Indeed, his expressed wish was to free science from Moses's.

Transcribed by Marina Kollatou

From video: Darwin's voyage_ Darwin the voyage that shook the world

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BJl2HQKXc&feature=related>