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## **Lesson plans**

**SUBJECT: Darwin and his voyage on the Beagle**

**Grade:** C class of Junior high school

**Students' age:** 14-15

**Level:** B1+, B2 (mixed ability class)

**Method:** task-based learning

**Duration:** 3 forty-five-minute sessions

**Aids:** Board, video, video-projector, laptop, internet access, world map, worksheets

**Sources:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_Darwin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Darwin)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfo3m939BWY>

<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/science-of-natural-history/expeditions-collecting/beagle-voyage/index.html>

<http://www.darwinbirthplace.com/tour>

<http://www.darwin200.org/media-information.html>

<http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk>

**General Aims:**

- To insert cross-curricular approach in teaching / learning procedures
- To connect English with other subject matters (biology, geography)
- To teach content and language.
- To integrate all language skills
- To encourage pair and group work
- To address different learning styles

### **1<sup>st</sup> Session**

Language related learning objectives:

- for students to learn vocabulary related to Darwin's personality
- for students to be able to answer comprehension questions while watching a video divided in three parts, watching each part twice.

Content learning objectives:

- for students to get information and knowledge about Darwin's personality and his life before setting out on his voyage on the Beagle.

**Process:**

The teacher informs the students about the learning objectives and gives them an outline of the lesson. (2 minutes)

### **Stage 1 Brainstorming**

Students are asked to brainstorm with words related to Darwin and his theory of evolution. The teacher writes the words on the board adding the English version of the words that students say in Greek. (5 minutes)

### **Stage 2 Completion of a task**

Students are given worksheets to fill in information they get while watching a ten-minute video on Darwin's early years.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfo3m939BWY>

They are asked to complete the task while watching and they are given another five minutes to work in pairs and share information.

The video is played in three parts corresponding to the three activities in the students' worksheets. Each part is played twice.

The class discusses the answers in plenary (35 minutes)

### **Stage 3 wrap up**

The teacher summarizes and informs the students that they will follow Darwin on his voyage in the next session (3 minutes)

### **2<sup>nd</sup> session**

Language related learning objectives:

- for students to learn vocabulary related to the texts and to the thematic area they refer to (Darwin's voyage)
- for students to be able to write in 15 minutes a short text of about 60-70 words describing the voyage on the Beagle.

Content learning objectives:

- for students to be able to draw Darwin's voyage on a world map based on texts, pictures, simulations
- for students to learn about Darwin's voyage, that is the various stops and the discoveries.

### **Process**

The teacher informs the students of the learning objectives and gives them an outline of the lesson. (2 minutes)

### **Stage 1 Completion of 1<sup>st</sup> task**

The teacher can ask a lead-in question to the task that follows.

Students are given copies of the world map and are asked to draw the Beagle's itinerary on the map while watching a simulation of the voyage projected on the board. <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/science-of-natural-history/expeditions-collecting/beagle-voyage/index.html>

They are also advised to make notes of what they think is important for the following task. Students compare their maps in pairs and make corrections. (20 minutes)

### **Stage 4 Completion of 2<sup>nd</sup> task**

Students are asked to write a short text to give an account of the voyage based on their maps and any notes they kept during the previous stage. Students hand in their writing task (15 minutes)

### **Stage 5 Completion of 3<sup>rd</sup> task**

Students are given a puzzle with the places that Darwin visited during his voyage on the Beagle. Working in pairs they read out the words once they have both completed the task. (5 minutes)

### **Stage 6 Preparation of the presentation**

Students are asked to decide and arrange how they will present what they learned. They can work individually, in pairs or groups. Their presentation must refer either to the life and personality of Darwin or his voyage. The presentation can be in the form of a narration, a poster, a dramatization, a script, a poem, a song, a mime, etc. (3 minutes)

Students are given extra resources like:

<http://www.darwinbirthplace.com/tour>

<http://www.darwin200.org/media-information.html>

<http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk>

Besides they can use the teaching material and the knowledge they gained in the biology classes. Students are also informed about the time length of the presentations. Time allowed for the presentations is 40 minutes. This time is allotted accordingly. (If 20 students is the case each student is allotted 2 minutes to speak and present his/her work)

### **3<sup>rd</sup> session Presentation**

Language related learning objectives:

- for students to be able to talk about Darwin's personality and his voyage on the Beagle in English
- for students to be able to present and communicate their knowledge in English.

Content learning objectives:

- to consolidate the knowledge they gained during the 2 previous sessions
- to enhance their knowledge

### **Process**

Students take turns in presenting their work. (40 minutes)

### **Stage 6 Evaluation**

Students are invited to discuss in groups of 4 or 5 what they learned in the two sessions about Darwin and what else they need to learn. They are also asked whether they had difficulties in coping with the language and what they need to improve. The groups hand in a short report of their discussion (5 minutes)

Note: The evaluation can also be in the form of a questionnaire