

Planet Earth - The Galapagos Knowledge Organiser

Key knowledge

- ✓ The Galapagos islands are located in the Pacific Ocean, 973 km (605 miles) off the west coast of the continent South America.
- ✓ The Islands belong to the South American country Ecuador.
- ✓ The Galapagos are an archipelago of volcanic islands that span across the equator line.
- ✓ The islands are home to over 25,000 people clustered in small towns, People live on only 5 of the 19 islands of the Galapagos.
- ✓ The islands are famous for having many native animals, including giant tortoises, that are found nowhere else on Earth.
- ✓ The unique animals found on these islands were studied by famous scientist Charles Darwin during the second voyage of HMS Beagle in 1835.
- ✓ Living things have changed over time and fossils provide information about living things that inhabited the Earth millions of years ago.
- ✓ Living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents.
- ✓ Eye colour is an example of an inherited trait, but so are things like hair colour and the shape of your earlobes.
- ✓ Animals and plants are adapted to suit their environment in different ways and adaptation may lead to evolution.
- ✓ Evolution is the gradual process by which different kinds of living organism have developed from earlier forms over millions of years. Scientists have proof that living things are continuously evolving - even today.

Big Questions

What makes the Galapagos such a unique archipelago?

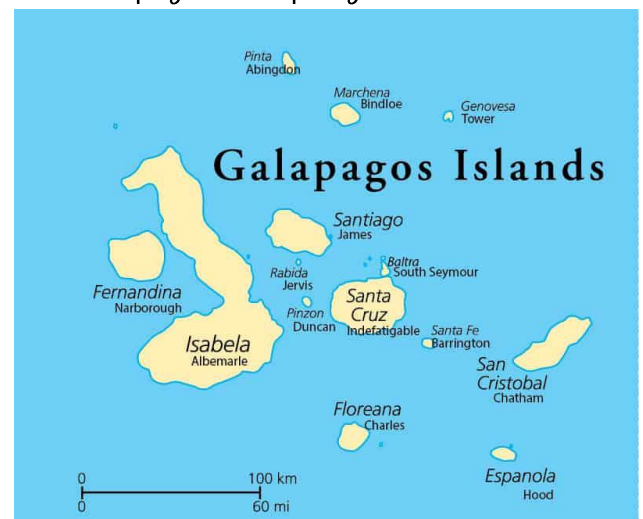
What is the importance of the Galapagos Islands when studying evolution?

How does adaptation lead to evolution?

How do we know about living things that inhabited the Earth millions of years ago?

Who was Charles Darwin and why was he significant in the study of evolution?

The Galapagos Archipelago



Key vocabulary	
adaptation	The process of changing to suit a particular environment
adaptive traits	Genetic features that help a thing to survive.
archipelago	A group of islands.
biome	A large community of flora and fauna.
characteristics	Special qualities or appearances that make an individual or group of things different to others.
environment	An environment contains many habitats and includes areas where there are both living and non-living things.
evolution	Adaptation over a very long time.
fauna	Animals of a particular region or habitat.
flora	Plants of a particular region or habitat.
fossil	The remains or imprint of a prehistoric plant or animal, embedded in rock and preserved.
habitat	Refers to a specific area or place in which particular animals and plants can live.
inheritance	This is when characteristics are passed on to offspring from their parents.
inherited traits	These are traits you get from your parents. Within a family you will often see similar traits e.g. curly hair.
natural selection	The process where organisms that are better adapted to their environment tend to survive and produce more offspring.
offspring	The young animal or plant that is produced by the reproduction of that species.
selective breeding	When humans choose individuals with particular characteristics to breed together.
species	A group of animals that can reproduce to produce fertile offspring.
variation	The difference between individuals within a species.

Charles Darwin

Charles Darwin, an evolutionary scientist, studied different animal and plant species, which allowed him to see how adaptations could come about. His work on the finches was some of his most famous.

