VISITOR

VIRTUAL MUSEUMS IN THE COVID ERA

Activities

# Darwin's Finches

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| **Project Title** | VISITOR (VIrtual muSeums In The cOvid eRa) |
| **Project reference No.** | 2020-1-FR01-KA226-SCH-095600 |

# PARTNERS

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Interactive 4D
Serious Games Labs

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| Name of Activity | Darwin's Finches |
| Age Range | 10-11 years |
| Curriculum Subject Areas | Science |
| Curriculum Links (Nation) | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study#year-6-programme-of-study<br>(England)<br><br>Year 6 Pupils should be taught to:<br>● recognise that living things have changed over time and that fossils provide information about living things that inhabited the Earth millions of years ago<br>● recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents<br>● identify how animals and plants are adapted to suit their environment in different ways and that adaptation may lead to evolution |
| Resources Needed | Laminated pictures of finches from Natural History Museum, London.<br>Interactive whiteboard or projection equipment for video. |
| Links to Museum | https://www.nhm.ac.uk/schools/teaching-resources/galapagos-finches-show-beak-differences.html<br><br>Natural History Museum, London, UK. |
| Time Allocation | 30 minutes. |

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| Description of Activity | Watch Youtube video (1:21 minutes).<br><br>From the Natural History Museum website :<br><br>The video above shows six different species of finch found by Darwin and his colleagues on the Galápagos Islands. Overall, there are about 15 closely related species of Darwin's finches.<br>The video could be used as a starter on a lesson on evolution, adaptation and natural selection, or as a part of a discussion on the evidence gathered by Darwin for his theory of evolution.<br>The video asks: 'Can you spot the differences between these finches?'<br>The birds differ in plumage and body size but the most obvious differences between the birds are the size and shape of their beaks, which are dependent on their food preferences and specialisations. The thinnest beak belongs to the green warbler finch which uses it to probe for insects. The massive, stout beak of the large ground finch enables it to crush big hard seeds. The long pointed beak of the common cactus finch helps it extract seeds from cactus fruit.<br>Other questions you could raise with your class after they have seen the video:<br>● Why do you think the different species have different shaped beaks?<br>● Molecular evidence indicates that the single ancestor species of the finches arrived in the Galápagos Islands between 2-3 million years ago. Since that time, these volcanic islands have undergone many changes in sea level, elevation and climate. What selection pressures might the finches have faced?<br>● The HMS Beagle team collected thousands of specimens of plants and animals during their expedition. Why did they do this?<br><br>Download the finch images, print and laminate. Use these as a discussion activity to observe differences. |

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