



DARWIN DAY

Darwin Day is a day to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin on 12 February 1809. On this day people talk about Darwin's contribution to science. The day's events are used to educate people about evolutionary biology and to promote science in general.



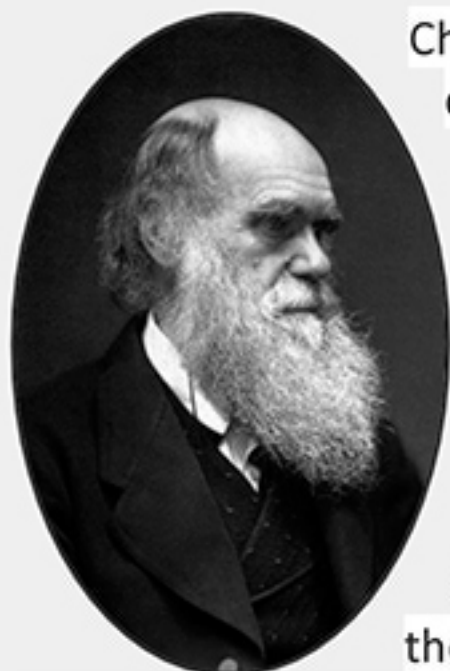
1. Ask and answer these questions with a partner:

- What do you know about Charles Darwin?
- Why is he considered a genius?

2. Match the words with their synonyms.

1	Transform (v)	a)	gorilla, chimpanzee
2	offspring (n)	b)	gather, collect
3	ape (n)	c)	see
4	witness (v)	d)	change
5	assemble (v)	e)	children

3. Look up the words in bold in a dictionary. Read the text to check if your answers in ex. 1 were correct.



Charles Darwin (1809 – 1882) developed a revolutionary **theory of evolution** that transformed the way we understand the world and we see ourselves. In *On the Origin of Species*, published in 1859, Darwin described the process of **natural selection**. The “fittest” animals or plants – those with the characteristics best suited (1)_____ their environment – are more likely to

survive and **reproduce**. They then **pass on** these desirable characteristics to their offspring. Slowly those features become more (2)_____, and that is why species change over time. If the changes are big enough, they can produce an absolutely new species. *The Descent of Man*, published in 1871, suggested that humans **descended** from apes.

DID YOU KNOW?

- When Darwin studied medicine, he witnessed an operation performed on a child without **anaesthetic**. That made him give (3)_____ medical studies. He then studied **theology** but, instead of becoming a priest, in 1831 he **set off** on a five-year scientific expedition around the world. There he collected evidence for his future theory.
- One of the key arguments (4)_____ natural selection came from the birds that Darwin collected from the Galapagos Islands. The birds were clearly the same species but some had large strong **beaks** for eating nuts while others had long thin beaks for finding worms in the ground. Darwin realised that all came from a single

ancestor but, as they spread to different islands, they (5)_____ to eat the different foods available.

- Darwin developed the theory of evolution in (6)_____ but he didn't talk about it then. He knew his ideas were radical so he **delayed** (7)_____ his theory for about twenty years while he assembled more evidence.

4. ZNO task: USE OF ENGLISH

Read the text. For questions (1-7) choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

1	A to	B for	C with	D at
2	A popular	B famous	C everywhere	D common
3	A off	B in	C up	D to
4	A against	B for	C about	D on
5	A were adapting	B has adapted	C adapted	D had adapted
6	A 1830s	B the 1830s	C 1830th	D the 1830th
7	A publication	B to publish	C publishment	D publishing

5. ZNO task: READING

Read the text. For questions (1-3) choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

- Which of the following is **TRUE** about Charles Darwin?
A He performed an operation on a child.
B He worked in a church.
C He studied apes.
D He got his theory from birds.
- What does the word "they" in the highlighted line (line 14 from the top) stand for?
A characteristics
B animals and plants
C offspring
D features
- According to the text, all of the following statements are true **EXCEPT**:
A Many people thought that Darwin's ideas were radical.
B Darwin understood that as the birds travelled to different places, their appearance changed.
C By studying birds, Darwin invented his theory of evolution.
D Darwin travelled to distant places.

