



# TeachersFirst READING TREKS

## Charles Darwin's Around-the-World Adventure

### Teacher Guide

Access Reading  
Trek Map

### Grade Level & Content Areas

**Ages:** 5–7

**Grades:** K–2 (read-aloud)

**Reading Level:** 5th grade

**Lexile Measure:** AD840L

**Guided Reading Level:** U

**Developmental Reading**

**Assessment (DRA):** 44

**Content Areas:** English/language arts, reading, literature, and social studies (including geography and history) and biology (including ecosystems and evolution).

### Synopsis of Book

Author and artist Jennifer Thermes tells the story of Charles Darwin in this picture book that includes maps embedded into the illustrations. After a bit of background information about his childhood, the story follows Charles Darwin's five-year voyage aboard the HMS *Beagle*, a British tall ship that set sail from England in 1831 and didn't return to its mother country until 1836. Over those five years, Darwin travels aboard the HMS *Beagle* as the ship's crew explores and charts the lands and seas of Europe, South America, Australia, and Africa. Along the way, Darwin studies land formations and how they've changed over time and collects plant and animal specimens to send back to England, many of which are featured in the illustrations.

### Standards

#### Common Core State Standards for K–5

##### Reading: Literature

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

##### Writing

- Text Types and Purposes
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge

#### National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

- Theme 1: CULTURE
- Theme 2: TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE
- Theme 3: PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS

## National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts

- CREATING
- RESPONDING

## Next Generation Science Standards

- Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

## Social Justice Standards

- Identity
- Diversity

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## Using a TeachersFirst® Reading Trek to Explore This Book

TeachersFirst Reading Treks create a virtual field trip of resources about a piece of literature or a text using the My Maps feature of Google Maps. To motivate and enrich student reading, teachers and students can reference this visual collection of web resources and images as they relate to the contents of a book.

TeachersFirst has done the hard work for you! Use the activities in this teacher guide and the accompanying [Reading Trek map](#) as you and your students explore this book. And, if you feel inspired, you (or your students) can create your own Reading Trek about this or another book!

## Using This Reading Trek in Class

Below is a list of ideas for how to use this Reading Trek in your educational setting.

### Working with the Map:

1. Introduce the book to the class on an interactive whiteboard using the [Reading Trek map](#) and highlighting its various layers.
2. Identify the biomes Darwin visits, considering distinct characteristics like climate, location by continent, and examples of flora and fauna found there. Students can work in pairs or small groups to research and create a slide for the specific location they chose. Encourage students to use Stickies.io ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to share information within their group. Completed slides can be uploaded to create a presentation. Find world and regional maps to use as backgrounds on Printable World Maps ([TeachersFirst review](#)).
3. Discuss social equality onboard a tall ship during the early 1800s. Create a mind map of the various chores and responsibilities for each of the crew members using Popplet ([TeachersFirst review](#)), putting the crew member in the center. Suggested crew members include the captain, quartermaster, sailing master, pilot, engineer, first mate, boatswain, gunner, carpenter, deckhand, powder monkey, cook, steward, and cabin boy. The HMS *Beagle*'s designated crew, as part of the British Navy, included 10 officers and 4

midshipmen, 38 seamen and boys, and 8 marines; another 8 individuals including Darwin, also set sail on this excursion as supernumeraries.

4. View videos about wildlife from the Galapagos Islands, such as “[Greatest Animals of the Galapagos | Awesome 8](#)”, “[Galapagos Islands National Geographic Expeditions \(Ecuador\)](#)”, and “[World Wildlife Fund: The Galapagos](#)”.

## Extension Activities:

1. Explore watercolor paints and watercolor pencils on both standard paper and watercolor paper. Jennifer Thermes encourages children to enjoy the process of making art without worrying about the finished product. This activity may be a team activity with the art educator.
2. Match animals to the many habitats visited in the story while playing the *Habitats* game ([TeachersFirst review](#)).
3. Sketch a collection of plants growing naturally in an open area. Use the Google Lens app ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to identify a plant using an uploaded photo. After verifying that the

Students can create trading cards featuring animals that live there using Trading Card Creator ([TeachersFirst review](#)).

5. Discuss adaptations for survival as compared to variations. Students can sort traits into the two categories either physically using pictures on paper or digitally using the Manipulatives Template on Flippity ([TeachersFirst review](#)).

plant is not dangerous if touched, collect a leaf specimen, press it to preserve it, and dry it. Research the plant for its previous and current uses, various habitats, and color variations.

4. Have students brainstorm variations between them, their siblings, and their parents. Students can create a Venn diagram using Vizzlo ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to show their specific traits, such as hair and eye color and handedness, as compared to a particular sibling or parent; if a blood relative is unknown or unavailable, the student might choose a famous individual and their relative.

## Helpful Resources

### From TeachersFirst:

- [TeachersFirst CurriConnects Book List - Maps](#)
- [TeachersFirst Review of Google My Maps](#)
- [OK2Ask: Engage & Inspire with Reading Treks](#)

### Other Resources:

- [Jennifer Thermes](#)
- [Meet Jennifer Thermes](#)
- [American Museum of Natural History | Darwin Exhibition](#)
- [The Voyage of the Beagle](#)
- [A to Z Animals](#)
- [Understanding Evolution](#)
- [Charles Darwin and the \*Beagle\*: how the voyage transformed our understanding of the world](#)
- [Life Has a History](#)
- [Darwin in Patagonia](#)
- [Variation of Traits](#)
- [Evidence of Common Ancestry and Diversity](#)
- [Natural Selection](#)
- [Timeline of Evolutionary Thought](#)
- [Galapagos Island Animals: Where, When, and How to Spot Them](#)
- [Puffin Resource Pack on \*Origin of the Species\*](#)
- [Darwin's Fantastical Voyage Correspondence Pack](#)