

Our Place in Evolution

Key Stage 4



Why was Darwin such a famous and controversial figure? Museum specimens are used to tell Darwin's story and explain the strength of his ideas. Students handle replica skulls of early human ancestors and figure out how we use different types of scientific evidence to fill in the gaps of our own evolution story.



Length of Session:

90 minutes

Maximum group size:

Each workshop has a maximum capacity of 30 students accompanied by 2 members of staff

This session is based on the following curriculum themes:

- Students should be taught that organisms are interdependent and adapted to their environment and that variation within a species can lead to evolutionary change.
- Students should be taught how scientific ideas change over time and the role of the scientific community in validating these changes.

Session outline

Part 1: An interactive talk about Darwin's scientific ideas. Museum specimens are used to describe how natural selection enables living things to adapt to changing environments and diversify.

Part 2: Students use evidence from a range of primary and secondary sources including replica skulls, fossilised skeletons and tools to build up a picture of human evolution.

Part 3: Gallery trail looking at examples of selection, adaptation and speciation in the collection.

Part 4: Plenary and Evaluation.



Museum of
**Natural
History**



Learning outcomes

- Students are able to describe an example of an organism that has adapted to a changing environment and explain the way in which natural selection drives this process.
- Students understand how scientific ideas change over time as more evidence is discovered and studied in different ways.
- Students take a more active interest in the natural world through close access to museum specimens

Suggested pre- and post-visit work



Explore the interactive activities in this link:

<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/life/human-origins/interactives/index.html>

Research human evolution stories in the news and prepare short presentations about the most interesting:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/search/news/?q=human evolution](http://www.bbc.co.uk/search/news/?q=human%20evolution)

For more information...

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