



THE VOYAGE OF THE H.M.S. BEAGLE

Objectives:

- Students will plot the voyage of the H.M.S. Beagle during its trip mapping the coast of South America.
- Students will read excerpts from Charles Darwin's log of his discoveries.
- Students will collect postcards from Post Office Bay in the Galápagos and deliver them to the correct locations on the South American continent.

Recommended Grades: 5-8

Materials (all included in the trunk):

- *Voyage of the H.M.S. Beagle cards (17)*
- *Post Office Bay postcards (10)*
- *Colored cones—17 of any color(s)*
- *Plastic chain (yellow)*
- *Mail barrel*

Preparation:

- Place the Galápagos map in the correct location off the coast of Ecuador.
- Place the postcards in the mail barrel and place the barrel on the north side of Isla Santa María on the Galápagos map.
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Rules:



Shoes are not allowed on the map. Please have students remove shoes before walking on the map.



No writing utensils on the map.

OVERVIEW

Using Voyage of the H.M.S. Beagle cards, students will locate some of the places the ship stopped on its voyage mapping the South American coastline and will read descriptions from the log of Charles Darwin. When the students reach the Galápagos Islands, they will pick up a postcard from the barrel in Post Office Bay and deliver it to the proper location on the South American continent, checking their understanding of the H.M.S. Beagle's voyage and the geography of South America.

PART 1: WHERE DID THE H.M.S. BEAGLE SAIL? WHAT WAS DISCOVERED?

The H.M.S. Beagle was a British navy vessel. It was considered a small, fast sailing ship. It set sail from Plymouth, England, on December 27, 1831, and spent five years (not the two years originally planned) traveling to map and survey the South American coast. Charles Darwin, 22 years old, was the naturalist on board to collect and describe as many organisms as possible. The vast assemblage of specimens he shipped back to London for study included many plants and animals, including 5,436 skins, bones, and carcasses. He was exhaustive as possible, collecting 27 species of mice on this voyage, including *Mus darwini*.

Have a student pick a card and find the coordinates (latitude and longitude) on the giant map. The student needs to place a cone on the location. While standing there, have the student turn the card over and read the description of this location taken from Charles Darwin's Voyage of the Beagle. As the descriptions are read, students will mark the sailing path of the H.M.S. Beagle by placing the plastic chain between the cones. Remind the class to listen carefully to the descriptions. When the Galápagos Islands are reached, they will need to know where to deliver a set of postcards that awaits them.

PART 2: HOW DID THE POST OFFICE BAY MAIL SYSTEM WORK?

The Galápagos Islands were visited by sailors numerous times in history. Many ships came to the Galápagos Islands to hunt whales and collect tortoises, which were used for food on board whaling ships. On Floreana Island (Isla Santa María/Charles) a post office barrel was established where sailors could leave mail to be collected by ships that were traveling home.

In the Post Office Bay barrel, find a number of postcards that need to be delivered back to the South American continent. Observe the organism and description on the front of the postcard. The backside of the postcard has the address description of where the postcard should be delivered.

Sources

Voyage of the Beagle by Charles Darwin

First published by Henry Colburn 1839; current copyright 1989

"Darwin's First Clues"

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/02/darwin/darwin-photography>

<http://www.ngcGalapagos.com>

<http://www.aboutdarwin.com>

