



## **Darwin, the man who dared ! Science and history project**

Laurence Durand (1) and Aline Desmorat (2)

(1) Lycee Camille Saint Saens, Rouen, France (laurence.durand@free.fr), (2) Lycee Camille Saint Saens, Rouen, France (aline.desmorat@ac-rouen.fr)

With 35, 15 year old pupils, we have worked on a multidisciplinary project including history and biology. There are two aspects of Darwin's theory: the scientific aspect, and the historical aspect.

In the historical part pupils worked on the different subjects such as, Darwin's life, the economy of the XIXth century, the religion, Darwin's bibliography, and of course his theory of evolution. Then they worked on how the theory of evolution was accepted by the people during Darwin's time until now (i.e. creationism...). The purpose of this part is to show how difficult it was for Darwin to persuade people who lived during the XIXth century.

In the scientific part, pupils worked on

- what was known at Darwin's time: Nested hierarchies (Linnaeus), Lamarck's theory of evolution, extinction (Cuvier)...
- Darwin's theory of evolution using his publications,
- how further scientific discoveries have supported Darwin's theory of evolution: transmission of a hereditary character (Mendel), early evo-devo (Haeckel), plate tectonics (Wegener), discovery of chromosomes (Morgan), DNA (Crick and Watson), endosymbiosis (Margulis) ...

Most of the document used to build their knowledge was the original version.

Pupils have created an exhibition including these 2 aspects (history and scientific). We invited all the classes of the school and the pupils were their guide.