

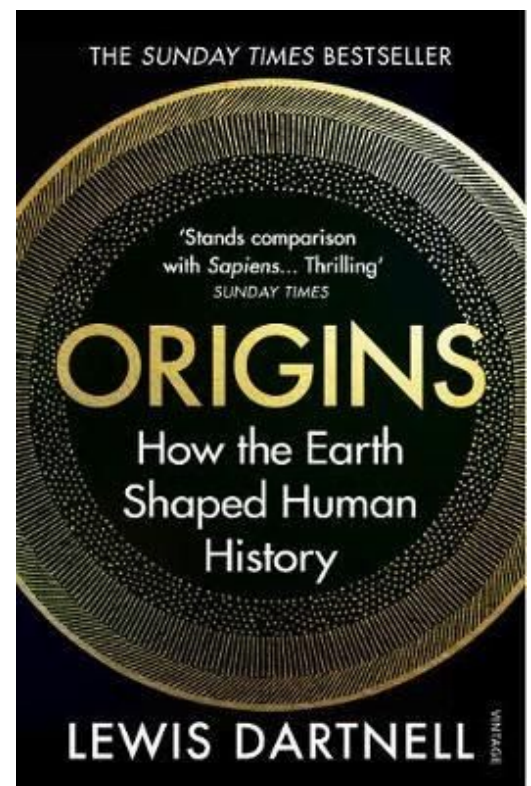
Book of the Month



Origins: How Earth's History Shaped Human History – Lewis Dartnell

About the Book

Written by Lewis Dartnell, *Origins: How the Earth is Shaped by Human History* is a great read for any geographer that seeks to explore the inter-play in the relationship between physical geography and human geography. In a current world that often tends to focus on the effects that we, the human race, is having on the earth as we “try to replace nature as the dominant environmental force on earth”, Lewis Dartnell flips the coin on this way of thinking. Instead, Dartnell puts mother nature back in the driving seat, exploring how the formation, happenings and the earth’s natural phenomena have affected the birthing of civilisation that we know today. Exploring from billions of years, to millions of years, to hundred-thousands, ten-thousands and most recent millenia, Dartnell showcases how every ounce of life we have today has been formed, moulded and influenced by Planet Earth.



“Each of us is literally made of the Earth, as is all life on the planet. The water in your body once flowed down the Nile, fell as monsoon rain onto India, and swirled around the Pacific. The carbon in the organic molecules of your cells was mined from the atmosphere by the plants that we eat. The salt in your sweat and tears, the calcium of your bones, and the iron in your blood all eroded out of the rocks of Earth’s crust; and the sulphur of the protein molecules in your hair and muscles was spewed out by volcanoes.”

Possible Ways to Incorporate the Book into your Practice

A Potential Curriculum link(s) with History?

Origins covers a vast majority of Physical Geography – upon reading the book, you can brush up on how these physical processes work but more importantly apply that knowledge to how it formed the world we know today.

Global Atmospheric Circulation Currents – A potential curriculum link with History?

A ship can only sail the way the wind blows behind it. *Origins* explores how the earth's global atmospheric circulation gave certain countries a head start in advancement. The way nature transports its winds around the planet would lead to what countries could explore which regions, what trade routes formed on behalf of these trade winds and how this would eventually lead to a 'cog of profits' as naval ships would slave-trade, then trade materials and how these winds would effectively become a highly profitable for countries such as the UK, Spain and the USA's west coast.

Milankovitch Cycles/Ice Ages

Exploring how the earth's past climates have affected the biomes, ecosystems and planetary life inhabiting it at the time. Over the last 2.6 billion years, the average conditions have been icy. However, the Quaternary period is an exceptionally unstable time for the planet's climate. At present, we're currently living through an interglacial period with relatively warm conditions, shrunken ice caps and consequently high sea levels. Learn how the Milankovitch Cycles has thrown the earth in and out of these glacial (cold) and interglacial (warm) periods. What effect has this had on the spread of mammals and plant species? How was this affected the habitable and inhabitable land available at the time? The complete birthing and demise of certain ecosystems.

Tectonics

As Dartnell explores how the planet's tectonic plates interact around the world, he applies how the earth's tectonic activity birth the ideal conditions for us, as a species, to thrive. To the very kick start of our evolution, caused by the land masses swelling and bursting out "like a huge" in the eastern regions of Africa, providing humans with the newly adapted land to flourish. Furthermore, how tectonics also births the fertile soil that allowed the coining of agriculture to start.

Useful Resources and Other Links

Here: [Lewis Dartnell gives an hour-long overview of his book](#)

Here: [Dan Snow discusses 'How the History of the Planet Earth shaped Human Life?' with Lewis Dartnell](#)

Here: [Lewis Dartnell discusses his book at a Google Talks](#)

Twitter: https://twitter.com/lewis_dartnell

Origins Website:

<http://lewisdartnell.com/en-gb/2019/01/origins-earth-made-us/>

