Taking Scholarship into Schools
The Darwin Correspondence Project

Who’s Looking at You?
The Darwin Correspondence Project researches and publishes all letters written by or to Charles Darwin. Scholars are our primary user group, but creating an open access internet resource alters both how we reach our audience and our perception of what that audience is.

Available v Accessible
Making material available is not the same as making it accessible: we can no longer assume users have the tools and background knowledge to make sense of what they find. Far from reducing the need to provide context, open access makes it both possible and necessary to provide far more.

The Scholars
18 of 30 volumes published
15,000 manuscript letters
200 repositories
20 countries

Research Resource
A working database holds 15,000 complete xml letter transcriptions.

Web Interface
Letter texts and metadata are fully searchable, but letter texts are still being researched can be accessed only by Project editors.

The Layered Access Model
The model mimicks classic museum layout where basic stories are told through engaging wall panels with reference collections in drawers and cabinets below. On a single website, a rich interpretive layer gives teachers and students context, and incorporates direct access to the same scholarly material used by researchers.

Good for Schools & Good for Scholarship
Authoritative resources allow students to drill down into more challenging material. Scholarship is promoted through better understanding of the links between the stories being told and the research on which they are based.

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