



The Rainforest as a Habitat

TASK

Read through the information.
You might need to ask a family
member to help you.

What are Rainforests?

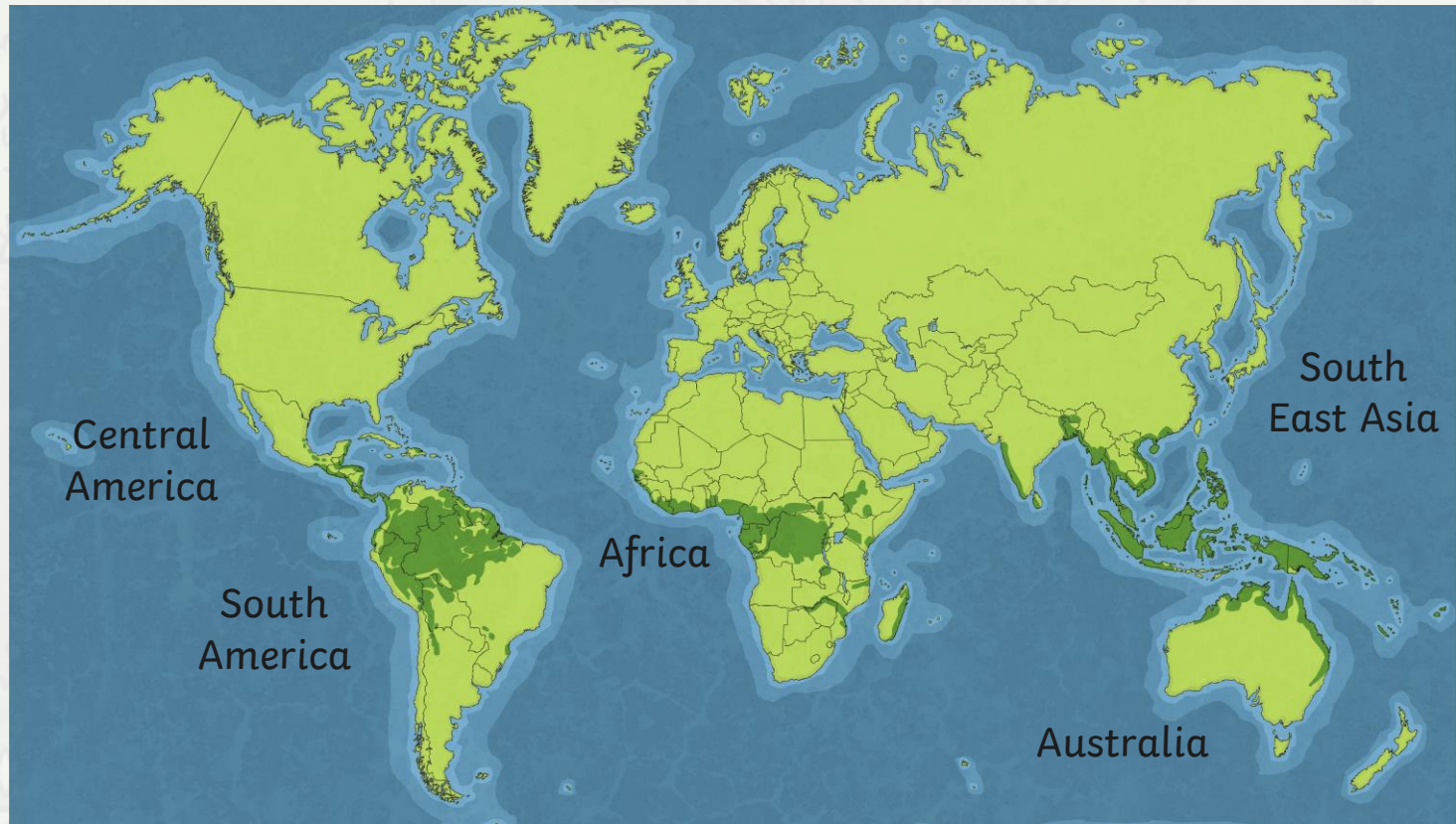


- Rainforests are very dense, warm, wet forests.
- They are habitats for millions of plants and animals.
- Rainforests are very important in the ecology of the earth. The plants of the rainforest produce most of the earth's oxygen.

Where are the Rainforests?

Tropical rainforests are found in a belt around the Equator of the Earth.

There are tropical rainforests in:



Layers of the Rainforests

Emergent Layer – these are the tallest trees in the rainforest and can reach 70 metres tall. They have huge leafy crowns that spread out to catch as much sunlight as possible.



Canopy – This is the dense leafy layer with trees about 40 metres tall. They spread their branches out to catch most of the sunlight and rain. This is the most popular place to live in the jungle.



The Understorey – Leafy bushes and small trees entwined with vines make up this layer. It is dark and hot here. Many animals cross between this layer and the canopy above and many are nocturnal.



Forest Floor – A carpet of dead leaves forms the base of this dim and shady layer. The lack of sunlight means fewer plants grow here.



Animals in the Rainforests

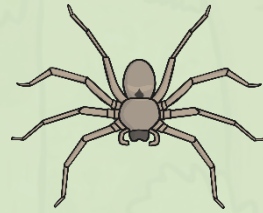
Rainforests are home to a variety of different animal species

Insects



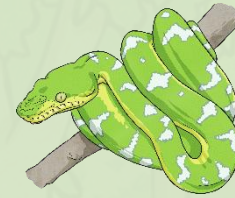
Butterflies and Beetles

Arachnids



Spiders and Ticks

Reptiles



Snakes and Lizards

Amphibians



Toads and Frogs

Birds



Parrots and Toucans

Mammals



Apes and Jaguars

Different animals live in different layers of the rainforest



Meaning of **Arboreal**
– living in trees



Birds live in the canopy layer and the emergent layer.



Insects are found almost everywhere. The Morpho butterfly lives in the canopy and has a wing span of 18cm.



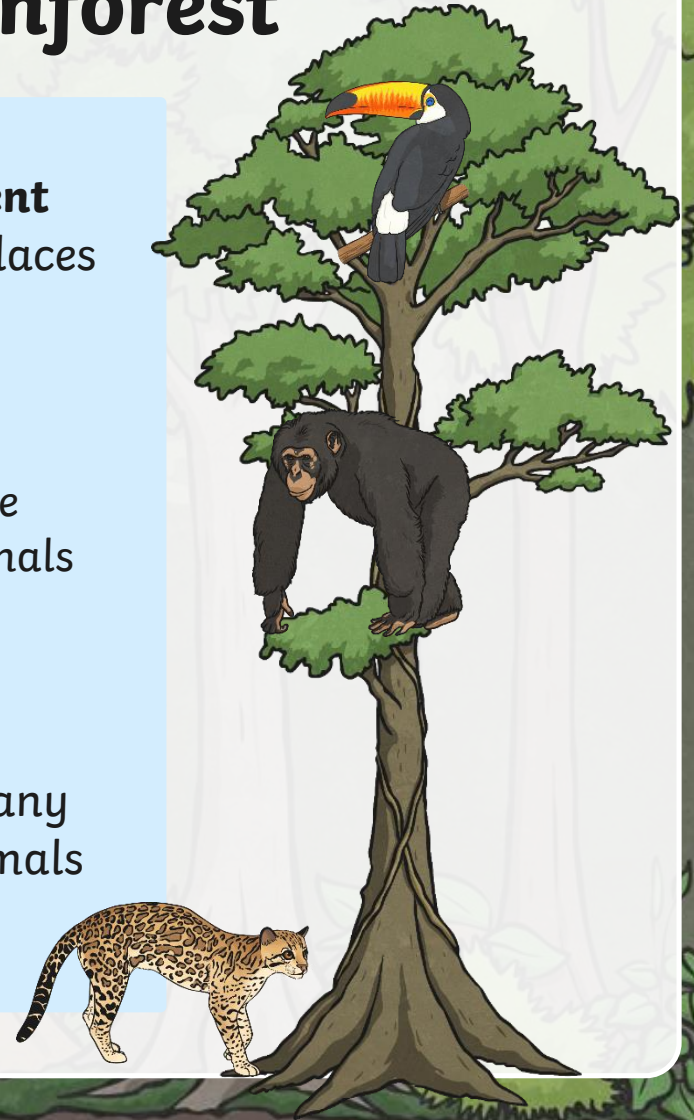
Large animals like jaguars generally live on the forest floor, but others like monkeys and sloths are more arboreal.

Different animals live in different layers of the rainforest

Many birds live in the **emergent layer**. They look for nesting places and are away from predators.

The **understorey layer** gets little light and is home to many animals like frogs, bats, apes and owls.

The **forest floor** is home to many insects, spiders and large animals like jaguars and ocelots.



Animals of the Rainforest

Rainforest Calling



Contents

The animals featured here are all typically found in the rainforests of South America.

Potoo

Red-Eyed Tree Frog

Sloth

Scarlet Macaw

Emerald Tree Boa

Jaguar

Potoo

Potoos are a noisy, strange-looking bird, which can often be found in the canopy of the Amazon rainforest.

Appearance

- They have huge, gaping mouths.
- Potoos have large, sometimes yellow, eyes.
- Their feathers are grey, brown and black, and are perfect as camouflage against tree trunks.

Diet

- The potoo mostly eats bugs and insects, including grasshoppers, moths and beetles.

Habitat

- Potoos can be found in humid forests in Central and South America.
- They live in the high branches of trees, camouflaged among the tree bark.



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Sloth

Sloths are nocturnal mammals and are known for being particularly slow-moving creatures.

Appearance

- Species of sloths are divided into two families: two-toed and three-toed sloths.
- They have thick fur, rounded heads, flat snouts and stumpy tails.
- They commonly have algae growing on their fur.

Diet

- Some sloth species only eat leaves.
- Other types of sloth also eat fruit, insects and even small lizards.

Habitat

- Sloths are mostly found in Central and South American rainforests.
- They mainly live among the branches of trees.



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Emerald Tree Boa

The emerald tree boa is a non-venomous snake, which is often found in the Amazon rainforest.

Appearance

- Emerald tree boas are bright green with a yellow underside.
- They have an irregular, zigzag pattern along their back.
- Adult emerald tree boas can grow to reach up to 2 metres.
- They have a pair of long, sharp teeth, pointed backwards.
- Their heads are relatively large and flat.

Diet

- They feed mostly on small mammals such as rats, bats and possums.



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Habitat

- Emerald tree boas live in the trees of the Amazon rainforest.
- They can also often be found near rivers or swamps but are not dependent on open water.

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Red-Eyed Tree Frog

The red-eyed tree frog is just one of many species of frog that lives in the rainforest.

Appearance

- They are known for having huge, bright red eyes.
- The rest of their body is neon green with blue and yellow at the sides.
- They have specially adapted suction-cup toes which help them to cling on to tree branches and leaves.



"Red Eyed Tree Frog" by Douglas Tofoli is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

Diet

- The red-eyed tree frogs' prey includes moths, crickets, flies and grasshoppers.

Habitat

- They are commonly found in the tropical lowland rainforests or surrounding hills.
- They commonly inhabit areas close to rivers or ponds.

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Scarlet Macaw

The scarlet macaw is one of at least 17 known species of macaws. Most are intelligent, social birds.

Appearance

- Despite their name, scarlet macaws are multicoloured: red, yellow and blue.
- They have large, powerful beaks.
- Their bodies are between 80cm to 90cm long.

Diet

- They mostly eat fruit and seeds or nuts, but can also eat insects.

Habitat

- They thrive in the tropical, humid atmosphere of the rainforest.
- They are usually found in the emergent or canopy layers of the forest.



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Jaguar

The jaguar is a member of the wild cat family that can be found in the rainforest regions.

Appearance

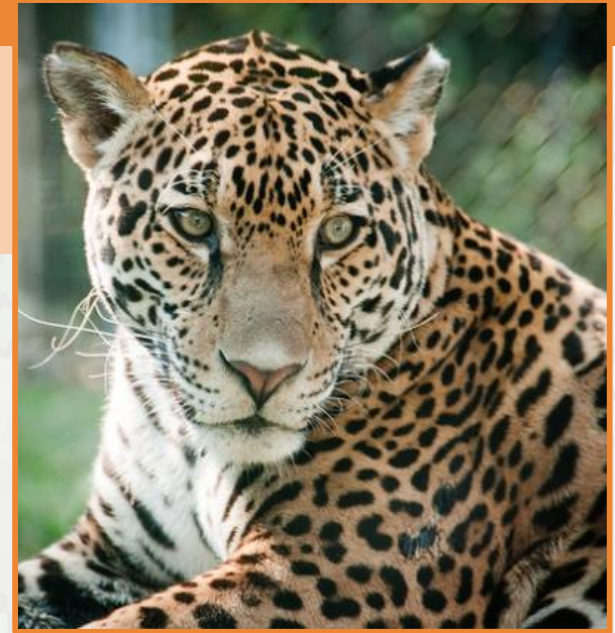
- They are famous for their beautiful, spotted coats.
- They can reach up to six feet in length, from their nose to the tip of their tail.
- They have powerful jaws and sharp teeth.

Diet

- Jaguars are carnivores with an extensive list of possible meals including squirrels, deer and monkeys.

Habitat

- Jaguars are found in rainforests as well as grasslands and woodlands.
- They spend much of their time on the ground or the forest floor, using their soft padded paws to stalk quietly through the undergrowth.



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If you want an extra challenge... You can invent a rainforest creature of your own

Think what layers of the rainforest it would live in.

Which animals do you think have good qualities for living in the rainforest? Think about a butterfly's wings, a monkey's long arms and a beetle's hard shell.

You could draw a picture of what it would look like and write where it would live and why you have chosen those parts of the animals.





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