

Overview

Rainforests are forest habitats with LOTS of rainfall, a tall tree canopy and many of different animals! But where in the forest would we find all the different kinds of animals?

Objectives

- Where does this animal live?
- What does this animal need to grow?
- How do they find those needs?
- What does this animal eat?

Background Information

Forest Floor – This layer is very dark, as much of the light is absorbed in the canopy above. Few plants can grow in these conditions, but many animals may live here!

(Worms, Anteaters, Tapir, Insects)

Understory Layer – Only a little sunshine reaches this layer, so plants here grow large leaves to help them absorb any that is available and seldom grow more than 12 feet.

(Jaguars, Poison Dart Frogs, Leopards)

Canopy Layer – This is the primary layer of life and activity in the rainforest. The canopy forms a 'roof' to the layers below. Lots of leaves, branches, and fruit grow here.

(Snakes, Toucans, Sloths and Monkeys)

Emergent Layer – The tallest trees make up the emergent layer, as they stand alone above the canopy. Sunlight is plentiful at this height of around 200 ft.

(Eagles, Bats, and Butterflies)

Rainforest Activity

- 1.) Take 4 boxes or containers that can nicely stack on top of each other. Alternatively, you can use 3 boxes and a paper towel tube at the top.
- 2.) Label each one starting at the top and going down: Emergent Layer, Canopy Layer, Understory, and Forest Floor. Learn more about these layers by watching [this video](#)
- 3.) Starting with the forest floor, decorate the box to match what it might look like. Does a lot of light reach the bottom of the rainforest? Do many plants grow there?
- 4.) Continue this for each level. Decorating the box to match that layer.
- 5.) Once this has been done, consider what animals might be found in each layer.
- 6.) Cut out picture of animals from magazines or from coloring sheets you can find online like [these](#).
- 7.) Color them (if needed) and place them in the layer you would find them

Post Activity

- 8.) Wrap with going back over the layers, and how the system works together to meet all the plant's and animal's needs
- 9.) As an added challenge you can try to build a blanket and pillow fort that mimics the structure of the Rainforest!

Materials

- Empty Tupperware containers or boxes
- Nature Magazines or access to a Printer
- Colored paper and scissors

Science Practices

- Analyzing and Interpreting Data
- Developing and using models

Crosscutting Concepts

- Patterns
- Systems and System Models

