



Family Unit Study: *Rainforest*

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FAMILY UNIT STUDY: RAINFOREST

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FAMILY UNIT STUDIES

Welcome Home!

Thank you so much for choosing a How Wee Learn Family Unit Study. This unit study has been created with care by me, a homeschooling Mom and former teacher. These unit studies have worked so beautifully with my own family, I knew they must be shared. My time in the classroom, certification as a Reading Specialist, and 18 years as a mom has given me a unique perspective on what children truly 'need to know'.

What is a unit study?

A unit study focuses on critical thinking and problem solving, allowing children to dive deep into fascinating topics and engage in meaningful learning.

When a child is engaged in what he or she is learning, that learning sticks. And when a child is engaged *and fascinated* in what he or she is learning, learning is amazingly fun for the whole family! Say goodbye to those power struggles.

Each unit study is broken down into ten topics with manageable, bite-sized amounts of incredible information. Each of these ten topics includes a hands on activity, a math or literacy enrichment activity, a curated YouTube video, book suggestion, interesting fact and discussion question.

What are the components of a unit study?

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Each of the ten topics includes a hands on activity that brings the information shared and discussed to life! This allows children to really engage in and solidify their learning. The hands on activities use items you likely have already. If you do not have an item, think creatively about what you do have and adapt. No buttons? I bet beads could work. No pipecleaners? Maybe you have some yarn!

MATH ENRICHMENT WORD PROBLEM

Each unit study includes five math word problems modified to three levels so they are fitting for the whole family. They cover five math strands: Number Sense, Geometry, Measurement, Patterning and Data Management/Probability. The word problem introduces your child to each of these areas with

the belief of quality over quantity. This is not a full math curriculum of course, but an enrichment opportunity and chance to be exposed to some real world math.

As you go through a question, consider how you might change it slightly to ask a follow up question. Perhaps you could ask, "What would happen if there were 6 birds instead of 5?" Or you might get out some manipulatives and help your child dive into deeper learning about the geometry topic introduced.

LITERACY ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

When a child is learning about a fascinating topic, there are so many natural opportunities to tie in literacy development. Reading, researching, recording information, labeling, and note taking will all happen naturally.

On top of this, each unit study includes five literacy enrichment activities modified to three levels so they are fitting for the whole family. Creating poems, public speaking, practicing letter formation, and literacy scavenger hunts are all fun ways literacy learning is brought to life with these unit studies.

CURATED YOUTUBE VIDEO

Each of the ten topics includes a carefully curated YouTube video. Dive into some fun and easy learning with experts in the field, entertaining stories, and inspiring tales, all selected to highlight key learning concepts. Enjoy some time snuggled on the couch learning with popcorn and a movie!

BOOK SUGGESTION

The book suggestions for each topic are just that—suggestions. Any books at all on the unit study



theme are strongly encouraged. Immersing our children in a literacy-rich environment and offering plenty of time to dive into research, pictures, and stories is key for child-led learning.

INTERESTING FACT

Did you know that elephants suck their trunks much like babies suck their thumbs? Or that a human has the same number of neck bones as a giraffe? Interesting facts are a wonderful way to spark a child's interest and imagination, which is why every topic includes an interesting fact.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Asking the right questions and having meaningful discussions is a wonderful way to meet your child at his or her current level of understanding and to help your child grow his or her learning and thinking about topics. So much can be learned through one meaningful discussion!

How do I use a unit study?

These unit studies are completely flexible and can be used however you wish. For those who would like a few suggestions, I will outline two possible ways you might choose to use these unit studies.

OPTION 1: FOCUSED UNIT STUDY

Your family might choose to focus on one unit study over a two day period.

Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the topic with the curated YouTube video Have an amazing discussion using the discussion question as a prompt Research more about the topic with the suggested book or a book of your choice Read the interesting fact together
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dive into the hands on activity for some deep learning Complete the math or literacy enrichment question
Day 3+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core skill work in reading, writing and math at your child's individual level Family outings Extracurricular activities Start another topic!

OPTION 2: BLENDED UNIT STUDY

Alternatively, your family might choose to blend the unit study with your core skill learning over a three day period.

Day 1	<p>Morning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core skill work in reading, writing and math at your child's individual level <p>Afternoon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the topic with the curated YouTube video Have an amazing discussion using the discussion question as a prompt
Day 2	<p>Morning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core skill work in reading, writing and math at your child's individual level <p>Afternoon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research more about the topic with the suggested book or a book of your choice Read the interesting fact together Complete the math or literacy enrichment question
Day 3	<p>Morning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core skill work in reading, writing and math at your child's individual level <p>Afternoon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dive into the hands on activity for some deep learning
Day 4+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core skill work in reading, writing and math at your child's individual level Family outings Extracurricular activities Start another topic!

There is no right or wrong way to dive into this unit study. When learning is this exciting, you simply cannot go wrong!

I hope you and your family love this unit study! If you have any questions at all, wish to purchase more unit studies, or if I can be of assistance, please visit www.howweelearn.com/family-homeschooling-unit-studies or email me at sarah@howweelearn.com.

xo
Sarah



TOPIC 1

What is a Rainforest?

A rainforest is a unique ecosystem different than other forests because of the high amount of rainfall it gets each year. It must receive 60 inches of rainfall per year to be classified as a rainforest. A rainforest is a very tall and very dense jungle with a hot and humid climate. Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity



Did you know? Rainforests cover around 6% of the Earth's surface but are home to about half of the world's wildlife.



I wonder why rainforests are so important to all life on Earth? Can we add to this list as we learn more about rainforests?

Resource Suggestions



Explore the Rainforest! Ecology for Kids
SciShow Kids

Introducing the rainforest biome.



National Geographic Little Kids First Big Book of the Rain Forest
Moir Rose Donohue

Colourful birds! Jaguars! Tree frogs! National Geographic presents a delightful, age-appropriate introduction to tropical rain forest creatures big and small in this new title in the popular Little Kids First Big Book series

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "Rainforest Diorama: Getting Started" on page 7

Math Enrichment Word Problem



"Making 10" on page 26

Have blocks, stones, or other manipulatives available for these math problems. Be flexible and change up the numbers to make these problems the right challenge for your children. Extend on the problems and ask follow up questions if your child is enjoying these challenges!

- ★ There are 3 layers to the rainforest. How many more layers would be needed for there to be 10 layers? Show this with beads on the Making 10 printable.
- ★★ There are thousands of animals that live in the rainforest, but let's pretend there are 10 animals that live in the canopy, 13 animals that live in the understory, and 8 animals that live on the forest floor. How many animals are there in total?
- ★★★ Let's pretend there are 10 animals that live on the forest floor, double that number that live in the understory, and double THAT number that live in the canopy. How many animals are there in total?



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Rainforest Diorama: Getting Started

Types of Learning: Art, Building, Fine Motor, Hand Dexterity, Following Instructions

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

A rainforest is divided into three layers: the canopy at the top, the understory in the middle, and the forest floor at the bottom.

Materials

- Three small boxes (shoe boxes are perfect!)
- Brown construction paper
- Green paint
- Hot glue or tape

Directions

Today we will prepare our rainforest diorama, which we will add to throughout this unit study.

1. Paint your boxes green and allow them to dry.
2. Once dry, stack them on top of one another with the box openings facing the front (like in the image to the left). Hot glue or tape the boxes together.
3. Now roll some tree trunks using your brown construction paper. You want at least two trees, one going all the way up to the top box, so use tape to attach a few pieces of paper together to make a very long roll of paper.
4. Cut holes through the boxes so these tree trunks can go inside your boxes. Label your bottom box "Forest Floor", your middle box "Understory", and your top box "Canopy".

Modification: If you prefer, you can make a 2D version of this activity by taping three pieces of paper together, drawing the tree trunks and labeling the three pieces of paper accordingly.





TOPIC 2

Tropical vs. Temperate

There are two main classifications of rainforests: temperate rainforests and tropical rainforests. The main difference is where they are located in the world. Tropical rainforests are located very close to the equator, so they are hot. Temperate rainforests are located further north or south of the equator. Temperate rain forests have different types of trees, plants, and animals than tropical rainforests. Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity



Did you know? Animals in temperate rainforests have to adapt to a range of temperatures so they can survive cold winters and hot summers.



I wonder what kinds of bodies of water are found in and near temperate rainforests? How are they different from those in tropical rainforests?

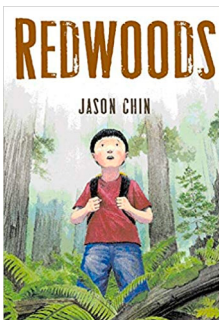
Resource Suggestions



Rainforests 101

National Geographic

An introduction to the two types of rainforests, with beautiful images and a range of facts.



Redwoods

Jason Chin

Jason Chin's Redwoods tells the story of a boy who discovers a book about redwoods and finds himself in their midst as he turns the pages.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "Comparing Rainforest Types" on page 9

Literacy Enrichment Activity

Label a room in your house with the cardinal directions North, South, East and West.

- ★ Have your child walk to each location and write down the words.
- ★★ Have your child describe one item that is found in one area of your home. Perhaps she will describe a stuffed cat located in the North area of your room. Help her write this description down (a great opportunity for copy work) and then guess the object she is describing using the location as a clue.
- ★★★ Have your child write a description of one area of your house using descriptive language. Now guess if she is describing the North, South, East or West area of the room.



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

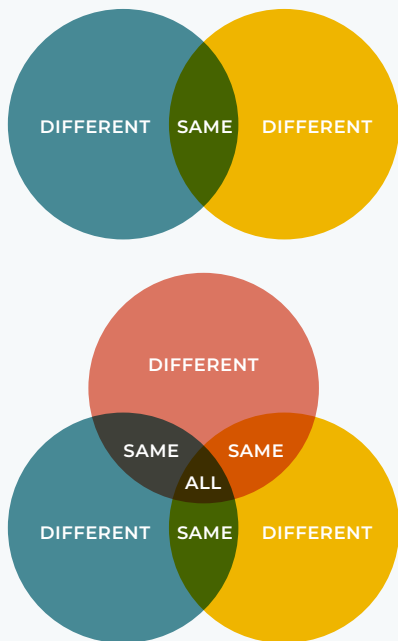
Comparing Rainforest Types

Types of Learning: Geography, Reading a Map, Research, Gathering and Recording Information, Sorting

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

A **Venn diagram** (named after mathematician John Venn in 1880) is a method used to sort items into groups.

These diagrams are usually presented as two or three circles overlapping, with the overlapping sections containing items that fit into both groups (or all groups, if three circles overlap). Items which don't belong to either/any group are placed on the outside of the circles.



Adapted from Third Space Learning.

[Check it out here for more interesting facts about Venn Diagrams.](#)

Materials

- Markers or crayons
- Pencil

Directions



"Venn Diagram" on page 27

1. Watch the YouTube video about the two types of rainforests
2. Complete the Venn Diagram comparing the two types of rainforests. Young children can draw their findings.

Note: For the rest of this unit study, we will be focusing on tropical rainforests.



TOPIC 3

Top Layer: Canopy

The canopy is the top layer of the rainforest. Sometimes this layer is split into two, classifying the very top of this layer as the emergent layer. For this unit study, we will classify both together as the canopy layer. Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity

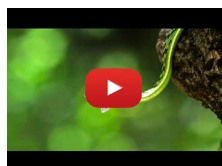


Did you know? Some plants climb trees to reach the sunlight of the canopy. Others, called epiphytes, grow directly on the tree branches.



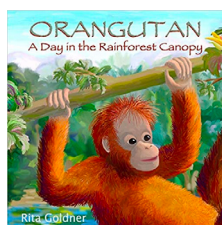
I wonder how different animals have adapted for life high up in the canopy layer?

Resource Suggestions



Secrets of the Rainforest's Canopy
Discovery #MINDBLOWN

Learn about a few animals of the rainforest canopy.



Orangutan: A Day in the Rainforest Canopy
Rita Goldner

A young orangutan in Borneo has a wild adventure which starts by waking up in a nest with his mother. Follow his journey through the day, exploring and learning life skills from his mother.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "Rainforest Diorama: Canopy" on page 11

Math Enrichment Word Problem

Have blocks, stones, or other manipulatives available for these math problems. Be flexible and change up the numbers to make these problems the right challenge for your children. Extend on the problems and ask follow up questions if your child is enjoying these challenges!

- ★ In the canopy layer, there are lots of birds and bats. If one tree branch could hold 5 bats hanging upside down side-by-side, and a second tree branch could hold 8 bats hanging upside down, side by side, how much longer is the second branch? Use beads or blocks to figure this out.
- ☆☆ In the canopy layer, there is a flock of birds sitting side-by-side on a branch. 13 birds can fit along this branch. A second tree has the same kind of birds sitting on a branch and 25 birds can fit along this branch. How much longer is the second branch?
- ☆☆☆ There are 5 branches on a tree, each one is filled entirely with sitting birds. The first branch has 8 birds, the second has 12 birds, the third has 5 birds, the fourth has 40 birds, and the fifth has 30 birds. If each bird is 10 cm long, how long are each of the branches?



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Rainforest Diorama: Canopy

Types of Learning: Research, Creating and Building, Problem Solving, Fine Motor Skills, Art

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

At the top of the rainforest, the trees are stretched up very tall and the leaves are all at the top of the trees reaching for the sunshine. The canopy can be 6 meters thick and is very dense with leaves and branches. This layer blocks out much of the sunlight, rain, and wind from the bottom two layers.

The canopy is home to many birds and bats. The trees are full of fruit making it very appealing for animals. This layer is where most of the animals of the rainforest live! Scarlet macaws, toucans, monkeys, and sloths all reside in the canopy layer.

Adapted from National Geographic.

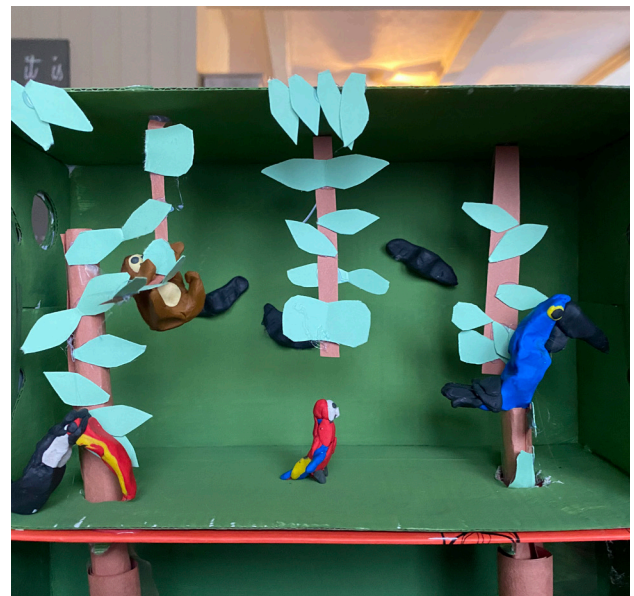
Check it out here for more interesting facts about the layers of a rainforest.

Materials

- Construction paper
- Assortment of craft supplies
- Tape or glue

Directions

Now that you know so much about the canopy, add these details to your rainforest diorama in the top box. Be sure to add lots of leaves (you can cut these out of green construction paper), fruit in the trees, and create the animals as well. Maybe you will make the animals out of pipecleaners, draw them on paper and cut them out, print them off of the computer, or form them out of clay.





TOPIC 4

Middle Layer: Understory

The understory layer of the rainforest is very dark and humid, as the canopy layer blocks out much of the sunlight. Trees and plants that live in the understory need big, broad leaves to catch the little bits of sun that make it through the canopy layer. They also tend to have very large and very fragrant flowers to attract pollinators. Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity



Did you know? You can thank the rainforest for chocolate! Cocoa trees are found in the understory.



I wonder what other foods we enjoy are originally from the rainforest?

Resource Suggestions



Gorillas are HIGHLY Intelligent! | Wild Bites
BBC Earth Kids

Learn all about gorillas, one of animals that live in the understory layer.



Over and Under the Rainforest
Kate Messner

Award-winning duo Kate Messner and Christopher Silas Neal take readers on a thrilling tour of one of the most diverse ecosystems on planet earth: the rainforests of Central America.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "Rainforest Diorama: Understory" on page 13

Literacy Enrichment Activity

- ☆ Have your child try to think of an animal that begins with each letter of his name. He can draw these animals or print the words.
- ☆☆ Have your child choose her favourite rainforest animal. Have her write this out and describe the animal—its diet, its habitat, or anything relating to this animal—in an acrostic poem.
- ☆☆☆ Have your child go through the whole alphabet and write one rainforest animal for each letter of the alphabet. She will need to research as she goes!



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Rainforest Diorama: Understory

Types of Learning: Research, Creating and Building, Problem Solving, Fine Motor Skills, Art

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The understory is home to many different animals. Many animals that require camouflage for hunting, such as jaguars and snakes, like this layer's low light. Amphibians love how humid this layer is, so it is speckled with brightly coloured tree frogs as well. Gorillas also like to hang around in this layer!

Adapted from National Geographic.

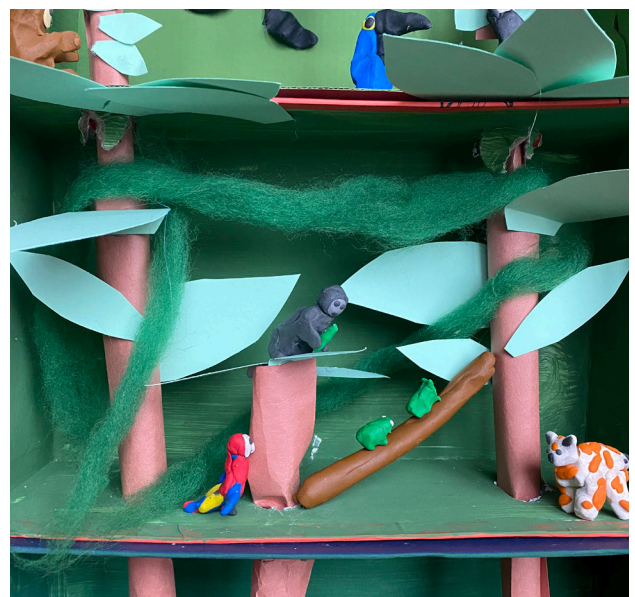
[Check it out here for more interesting facts about the layers of a rainforest.](#)

Materials

- Construction paper
- Assortment of craft supplies
- Tape or glue

Directions

Now that you know so much about the understory, add these details to this layer in your diorama. You will want to add some sparse, big broad leaves, big colourful flowers, snakes, gorillas, jaguars, and even forest elephants!





TOPIC 5

Bottom Layer: Forest Floor

When we talk about the forest floor, we are referring to the actual dirt ground. This is why elephants and jaguars are classified as living in the understory layer – there are no flying elephants and jaguars in the rainforest! The forest floor is extremely dark, which makes it very hard for any plants to grow. Instead, the forest floor is covered in decomposing leaves and fungi. Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity



Did you know? Huge root systems from the trees stretch out along the rainforest floor, providing hiding places for rodents and other small prey animals.



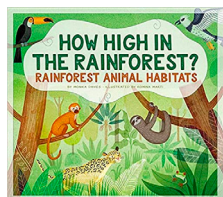
I wonder how the forest floor might be different along the banks of the rivers running through it.

Resource Suggestions



The Forest Floor - BBC Motion Gallery
Getty Images

Watch time lapse and slow motion video of some flora and fauna on the forest floor.



How High in the Rainforest? Rainforest Animal Habitats
Monika Davies

Explore the layers of the rainforest biome and the animals that live there, from the dark forest floor through the understory, canopy, up to the emergent layer.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "Rainforest Diorama: Forest Floor" on page 15

Math Enrichment Word Problem

Have blocks, stones, or other manipulatives available for these math problems. Be flexible and change up the numbers to make these problems the right challenge for your children. Extend on the problems and ask follow up questions if your child is enjoying these challenges!

- ☆ The decomposing leaves on the forest floor form a very heavy layer. Rip up some brown paper to look like these decomposing leaves and form as many shapes as you can using the ripped paper as loose parts. Can you make a circle, square, triangle, rectangle, and oval?
- ☆☆ As a wild pig roots around in the decomposing leaves, it leaves a track. One particularly mathematical (and imaginary) wild pig leaves shapes as he goes! Draw as many shapes as you know and count how many sides and vertices each one has.
- ☆☆☆ An even more mathematical (and imaginary) wild pig roots these decomposing leaves and builds three dimensional shapes! It builds a triangular based pyramid, a cone, and a square based pyramid. Try to draw these 3D shapes and count the sides, vertices, and faces.



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Rainforest Diorama: Forest Floor

Types of Learning: Research, Creating and Building, Problem Solving, Fine Motor Skills, Art

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Termites and worms love the forest floor and play an important role helping to break down all of the leaves and foliage. These nutrients then go straight to the trees that are all the way up in the canopy layer through their roots.

Armadillos and wild pigs root through the compost for food on the forest floor, and small rats and rodents also make the forest floor their home.

There are also some rivers that run through the forest floor, making homes for some amazing animals like the pink river dolphin in the Amazon River!

Adapted from National Geographic.

[Check it out here for more interesting facts about the layers of a rainforest.](#)

Materials

- Construction paper
- Assortment of craft supplies
- Tape or glue

Directions

Now that you know so much about the forest floor, add these details to the bottom layer of your diorama. This layer will be pretty brown. You might rip up some brown construction paper to put all along the ground. You might also choose to have a river running through your forest floor. Animals such as armadillos, wild pigs, termites, worms, and even a pink river dolphin might be in your diorama!





TOPIC 6

Biodiversity

Biodiversity refers to the variety of plants, animals, and any living things in one area. Rainforests are the most biodiverse ecosystems in the world with millions of species calling rainforests home. Specifically, the rainforests in the Amazon are the most biodiverse areas in the world! Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity

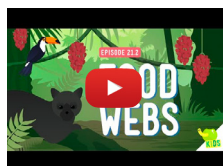


Did you know? There are more species of fish in the Amazon than in the entire Atlantic Ocean.



I wonder if a plant or animal disappearing in one layer of the rainforest affects life in the other layers?

Resource Suggestions



Food Webs: Crash Course Kids

Crash Course Kids

A crash course in food webs and how a change in one part affects the rest.



A Rainforest Food Web

Cari Meister

Take an illustrated narrative nonfiction journey to South America and discover how animals and plants in the Amazon Rainforest survive in an interconnected food web.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "A Biodiverse Rainforest" on page 17
- "Biodiverse Rainforest Pyramid" on pages 28 and 29

Literacy Enrichment Activity

- ☆ Print the name of one rainforest animal. Have your child print the name of one thing that animal eats and one thing that might eat that animal.
- ☆☆ Print the name of one rainforest animal. Have your child brainstorm as many things about what that animal eats and what might eat that animal, writing them down as she goes.
- ☆☆☆ Have your child choose an animal and write a food chain involving that animal as long as he can.



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

A Biodiverse Rainforest

Types of Learning: Research, Scissor Skills, Hand Dexterity, Classifying Animals

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Rainforests have a vast variety of plants, animals, insects, and fungi all living and thriving together.

We can think of the plants and animals in the rainforest in a pyramid. At the bottom of the pyramid are the producers (plants, mosses, and fungi), next are the herbivores (plant eaters), and at the very top are the top carnivores (meat eaters).

If one of plant or animal disappeared, it would affect many other plants and animals.

Materials

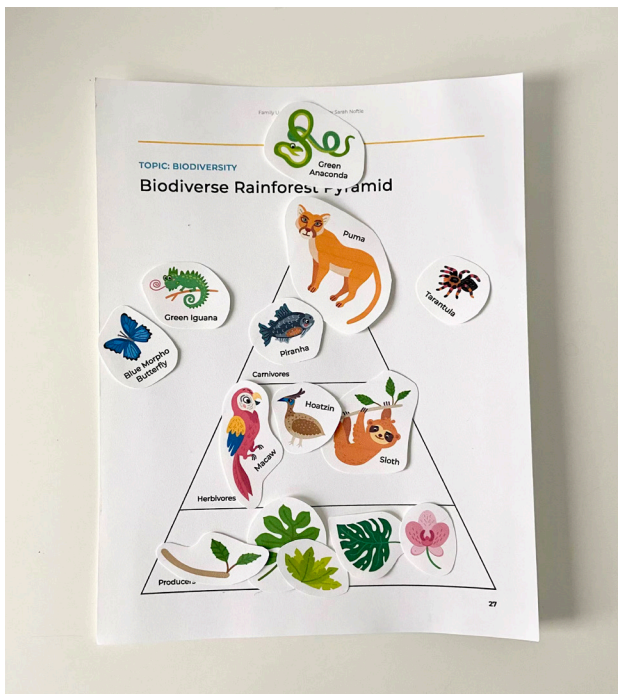
- Scissors
- Tape or glue

Directions



"Biodiverse Rainforest Pyramid" on pages 28 and 29

1. Print the Biodiverse Rainforest Pyramid printable and cut out all of the plants and animals.
2. Tape or glue all of the producers in the bottom section of the pyramid, the herbivores in the middle of the pyramid, and the carnivores at the top of the pyramid.
3. Choose one of the animals and discuss what other plants and animals in the pyramid would be affected if that animal disappeared from the rainforest.





TOPIC 7

Amazon Rainforest

The biggest and most biodiverse rainforest in the world is the Amazon rainforest in South America. The Amazon river—the largest river system in the world—runs through this rainforest. There are so many unique animals that live in this rainforest! Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity

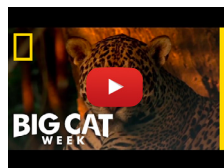


Did you know? 10% of all known species of plants and animals can be found in the Amazon.



I wonder what the bright colors of the poison dart frog and the “eyes” on the wings of the owl butterfly have in common? Can we think of other animals that are defended by their appearance?

Resource Suggestions



Learn About the Jaguar | Big Cat Week
Nat Geo WILD

Find out all about jaguars and how scientists are working to help their future.



The Amazon
DK

Cruise along the largest river in the world and explore the vibrant tropical rainforest that it cuts across with this amazing book packed with facts.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- “Jaguar Poster” on page 19

Math Enrichment Word Problem

Have blocks, stones, or other manipulatives available for these math problems. Be flexible and change up the numbers to make these problems the right challenge for your children. Extend on the problems and ask follow up questions if your child is enjoying these challenges!

- ☆ One cute little baby jaguar was born with spots that went in a pattern right down her back. The pattern goes: big spot, medium spot, small spot, big spot, medium spot, small spot. Continue drawing this pattern.
- ☆☆ One particular (and imaginary) female jaguar has a unique pattern of spots on her side. The pattern goes: little spot, big spot, two little spots, big spot, three little spots, big spot. Continue drawing this pattern to figure out if the 30th spot would be big or little.
- ☆☆☆ One particular (and imaginary) male jaguar has a unique pattern of spots on his tail. The pattern decreases by one big spot, and increases by one little spot each time. The pattern begins with 10 big spots then ten little spots. Extend this pattern. Would the 40th spot be big or little?



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Jaguar Poster

Types of Learning: Research Skills, Writing Persuasively, Art Skills

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

One of the amazing animals that lives in the Amazon rainforest is the jaguar. The jaguar is in the cat family and can run as fast as 80 km/hour! Unfortunately, due to hunting and loss of land, the jaguar population is decreasing and they are becoming a threatened species.



Materials

- Large piece of paper
- Research materials
- Assortment of craft supplies

Directions

Make a poster all about jaguars!

1. Watch the YouTube video and do a little research on jaguars.
2. Then [watch this video on how to draw a jaguar](#).



Learn How to Draw a Jaguar

Articco Drawing

How to Draw a Jaguar Step by Step for Kids

3. Draw your own jaguar on a large piece of paper and then add some jaguar facts to your poster.



TOPIC 8

Indigenous People

The Amazon Rainforest is not only home to plants and animals – people live there too! Nowadays, most of these people live similarly to how you and I live. An indigenous group known as the Yanomamo have been in the Amazon for thousands and thousands of years. Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity



Did you know? There are hundreds of indigenous people groups living in the Amazon. Each one has accumulated thousands of years of experience and knowledge of the rainforest, passed on through generations.



I wonder what life as a kid is like living in a rainforest?

Resource Suggestions



Chopping firewood in the Amazon jungle and the Pennsylvania winter forest
David Good

A Yanomami-American man compares his life in Pennsylvania to that of his mother's family in the rainforest. **Grownups:** This video includes images of topless women.



Along the Tapajós
Fernando Vilela

This picture book, first published in Brazil, offers kids a unique look into the lives of children who live along Brazil's beautiful Tapajós River.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "Make a Shabono" on page 21

Literacy Enrichment Activity

Yanomaman is the language spoken by the Yanomami people. This language does not have a native written system. Create your own simple secret language by creating one symbol for each letter of the alphabet.

- ★ Have your child write his name and the names of family members using the secret code
- ☆☆ Have your child write you a secret message using the code and you write one back in return.
- ☆☆☆ Have your child create a secret message using the code and you write one back as well (this is a great activity for all ages!).



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Make a Shabono

Types of Learning: STEM Challenge, Building and Constructing, History, Research, Fine Motor Skills

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The Yanomamo group live in villages throughout the Amazon rainforest. They live in a very interesting structure called a Shabono. The entire village lives in this building. It has a common roof, and is oval in shape forming the perimeter of the village.

Grown ups: Explore the history of the Yanomamo on your own, and depending on the maturity level of your children, continue discussing how slavery and the Western World impacted this group many years ago.

Materials

- Playdough or hot glue
- Cardboard
- Popsicle sticks
- Construction paper

Directions

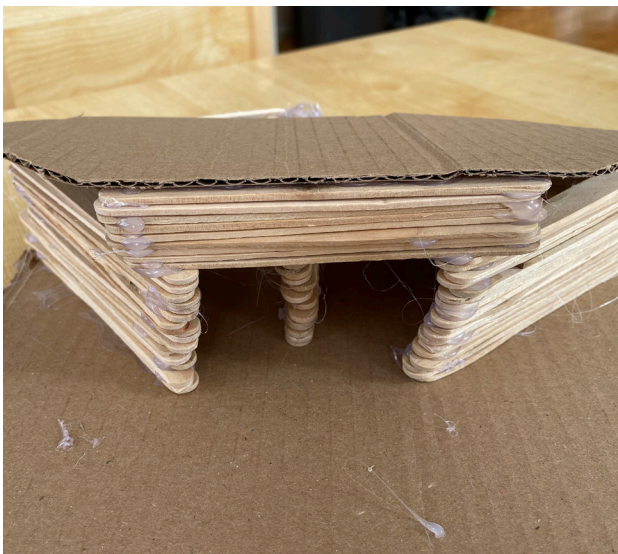
Let's make our own Shabono!

1. Whip up a batch of playdough using the recipe below.
2. To create your Shabono, use popsicle sticks as the supports, and cardboard or construction paper to shape the sides and roof. Use small balls of playdough or hot glue to hold things together.

Playdough Recipe

This is the best playdough recipe, as even very little ones can help in almost the whole recipe. PLUS you can't mess it up – if it is too sticky – add more flour, too clumpy, add more boiled water.

1. Mix **1.5 cups flour**, **1/2 cup salt**, and **2 tsp cream of tartar** in a bowl. The order of ingredients doesn't matter – just pop it all in and stir!
2. Add in **1 cup boiling water** and stir. You can add **food colouring** directly to the boiling water if you prefer for nice, easy colour mixing. Or if you want different colours, you can add the food colouring at the end into divided batches.
3. Knead a few times and it will become perfectly smooth. You can mix in some **essential oils** if you have any, or **vanilla**, or **cinnamon**.





TOPIC 9

Congo Rainforest

The second largest rainforest in the world is the Congo Rainforest in Africa. It is a tropical rainforest similar in many ways to the Amazon rainforest. The Congo Rainforest is home to many unique animals. Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity



Did you know? The Congo Rainforest is home to the okapi, the only living relative of the giraffe.



I wonder what new animals might live in the acres of unexplored land in the Congo Rainforest?

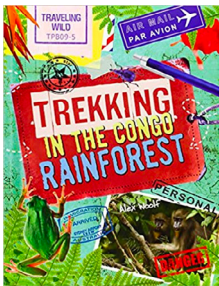
Resource Suggestions



Facts about the Congo Rainforest for Kids

Classic Children's Stories

Fun facts about the Congo Rainforest.



Trekking in the Congo Rainforest

Professor Alex Woolf

Follow a traveller's journey through the African rainforest and learn about the unusual animals and plants, peoples, landscape, climate and industry.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "Elephant Craft" on page 23

Math Enrichment Word Problem



"Graph" on page 30



A child decides to do a survey in her community to find out what Congo Rainforest animal is the favourite in her city. She asks 10 people and finds out that 3 people like elephants, 3 like gorillas, and 4 like aardvarks. Draw these findings on the attached graph.



A child decides to do a survey in her community to find out what Congo Rainforest animal is the favourite in her city. She asks 100 people and finds that 30 people like elephants, 16 people like gorillas, and 54 people like aardvarks. Decide on a scale for this graph and draw these findings on the graph printable.



A child decides to do a survey in her community to find out what Congo Rainforest animal is the favourite in her city. She asks 1000 people and finds that 300 people like elephants, 160 people like gorillas, and 54 people like aardvarks. Decide on a scale for this graph and draw these findings on the graph printable.



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Elephant Craft

Types of Learning: Fine Motor Skills, Creativity, Art, Research Skills, Literacy

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

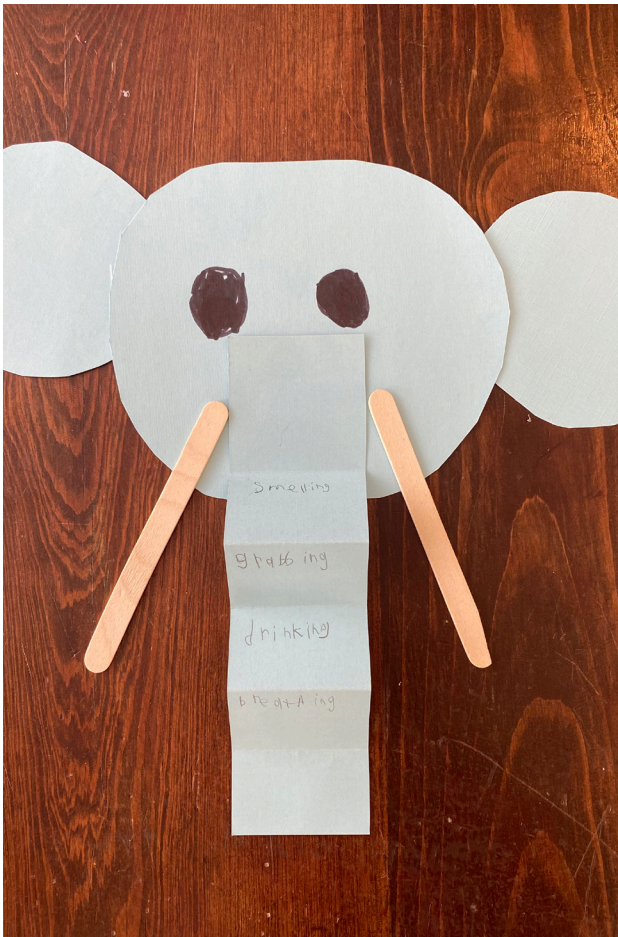
One endangered animal that lives in the Congo Rainforest is the African forest elephant. Can you imagine walking through the rainforest and meeting a wild elephant?

Materials

- Construction paper
- Toothpicks or popsicles
- Scissors
- Marker or crayons
- Tape or glue

Directions

1. Make an elephant craft by cutting out a big circle for the elephant's head and two slightly smaller circles for the ears.
2. Accordion fold a strip of paper and glue this on for the elephant's trunk.
3. Add some eyes, toothpick or popsicle tusks, and details with markers.
4. Older children can write down a use for the elephant's trunk in each of the accordion folds.





TOPIC 10

Daintree Rainforest

Australia is a very unique continent with some very unique animals! So it makes sense that the Daintree Rainforest in Australia is full of amazing plants and animals. This rainforest is also the oldest rainforest in the world! Let's explore...

Spark Curiosity



Did you know? The Daintree Rainforest is 180 million years old. The Jurassic period was 145 million years ago. There are many primitive species at Daintree which may closely resemble what they were like at the time of dinosaurs.



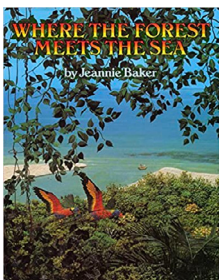
The cassowary bird can't fly. Can you think of other birds that can't fly? Which ones might be related to cassowaries? Do any live nearby or in similar biomes?

Resource Suggestions



Giant Cassowaries are Modern-day Dinosaurs | Seven Worlds, One Planet
BBC Earth

Watch the beautiful cassowary forage and avoid predators.



Where the Forest Meets the Sea
Jeannie Baker

A fictional story about a real place and a boy who dreams about the past and wonders about the future.

HANDS ON ACTIVITY

- "All About the Cassowary Bird" on page 25
- "The Cassowary Bird" on page 31
- "The Cassowary Bird Fact Sheet" on page 32

Literacy Enrichment Activity

It is so much fun to write fictional stories. Many fictional stories incorporate factual information. Write a fictional story using this story starter, and incorporate some factual information about cassowaries: Cassie the cassowary is the fastest runner in the rainforest! She was excited about this years race until she sprained her ankle!

- ☆ Have your child tell his story aloud, helping him to come up with a middle and ending to this story. You can write this story for him and have him illustrate.
- ☆☆ Have your child share his story aloud, helping him to brainstorm the middle and end of the story. You can help your child write this story, or write it for him to do copy work.
- ☆☆☆ Discuss with your child how this story might flow and then have him write it down!



HANDS ON ACTIVITY

All About the Cassowary Bird

Types of Learning: Fine Motor Skills, Research, Critical Thinking, Documenting Findings

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The Daintree Rainforest has a section classified as an Important Bird Area as it is home to many endangered and at-risk birds. One endangered bird that lives in this rainforest is the Cassowary. This giant bird can run up to 50 km/hour and can jump 5 feet!

Materials

- Markers or crayons
- Research materials
- Pencil

Directions



"The Cassowary Bird" on page 31

"The Cassowary Bird Fact Sheet" on page 32

1. Colour the picture of a cassowary on The Cassowary Bird printable.
2. Write or draw information explaining what a cassowary needs for survival on The Cassowary Bird Fact Sheet (what it eats, where it lives, how it stays safe from predators, etc). You can use the YouTube video to gather information.





TOPIC: WHAT IS A RAINFOREST?

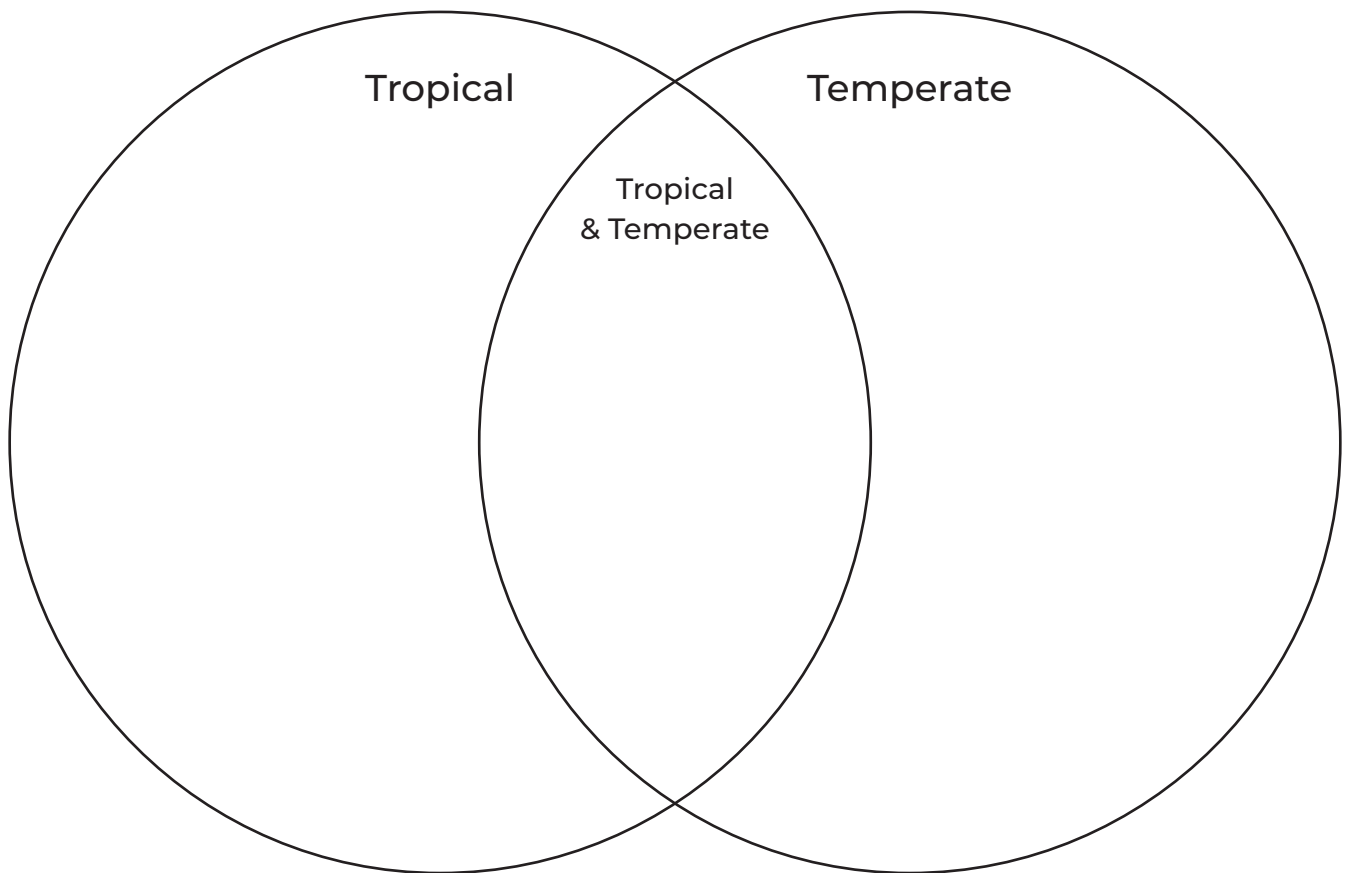
Making 10



TOPIC: TROPICAL VS. TEMPERATE

Venn Diagram

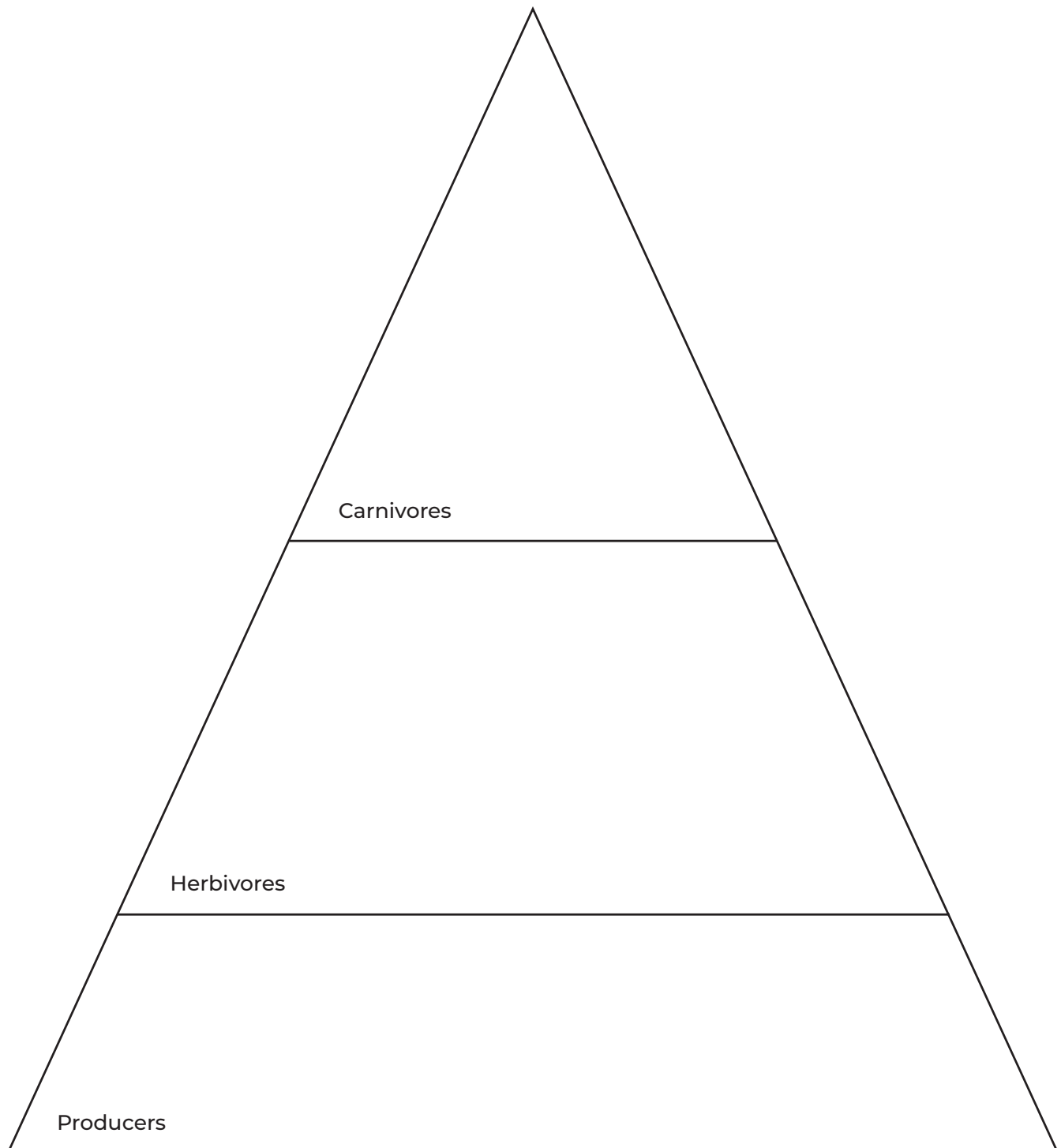
Watch the YouTube videos about the two types of rainforests and complete the Venn Diagram below, comparing the two types of rainforests. Young children can draw their findings.





TOPIC: BIODIVERSITY

Biodiverse Rainforest Pyramid

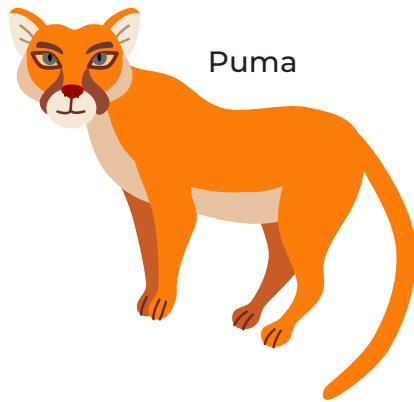




TOPIC: BIODIVERSITY

Biodiverse Rainforest Pyramid

Cut out all of the producers, herbivores and carnivores below and glue them to the appropriate section of the rainforest pyramid on the previous page.



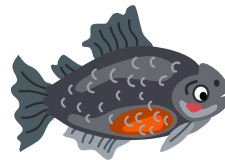
Puma



Tarantula



Green Anaconda



Piranha



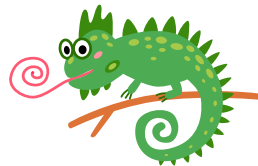
Sloth



Hoatzin



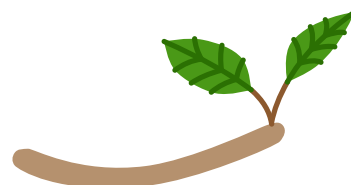
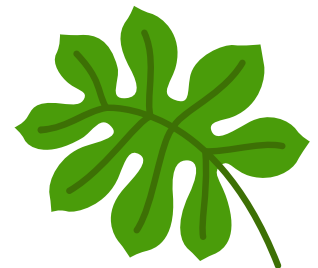
Macaw



Green Iguana



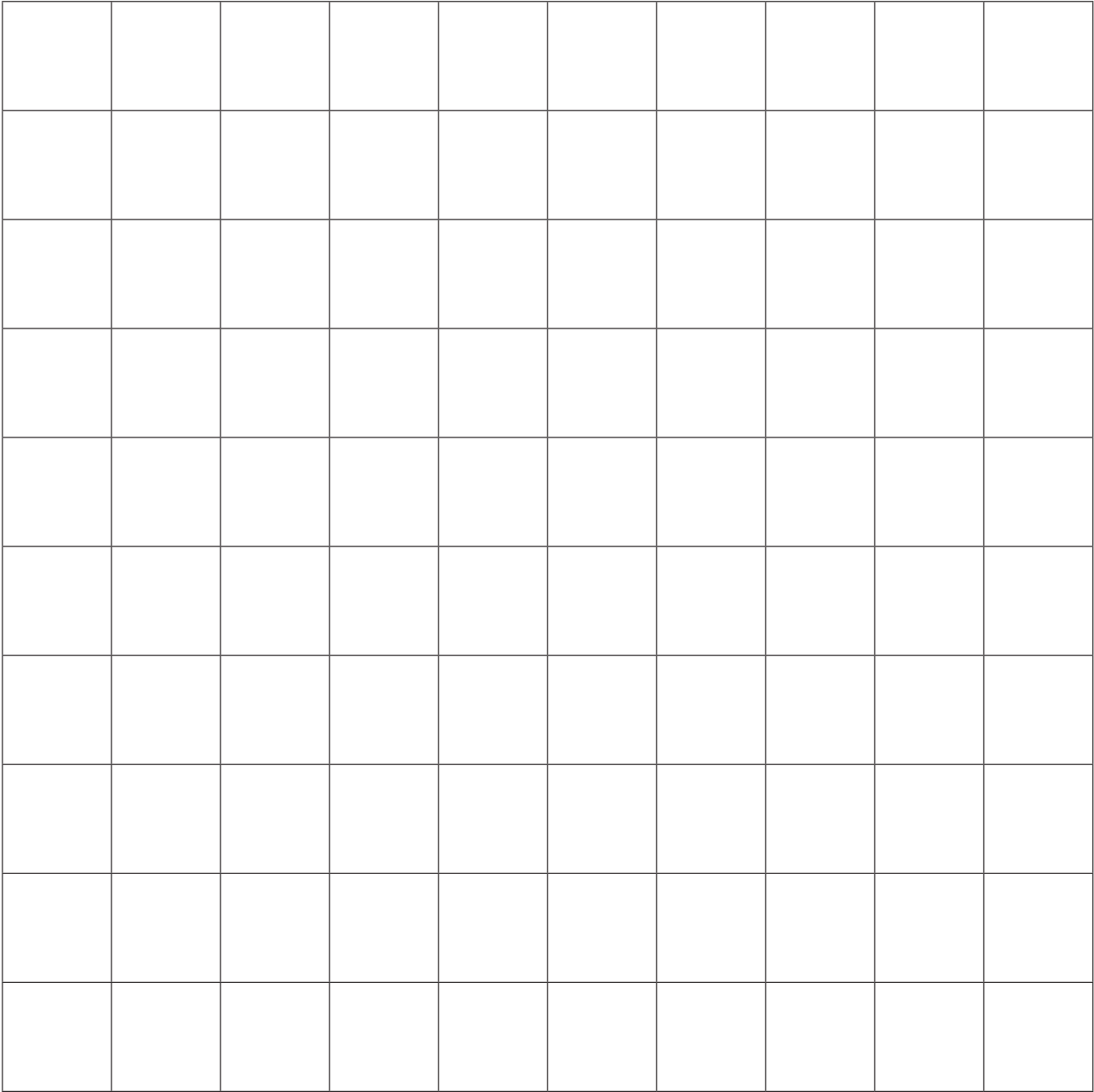
Blue Morpho Butterfly





TOPIC: CONGO RAINFOREST

Graph





TOPIC: DAINTREE RAINFOREST

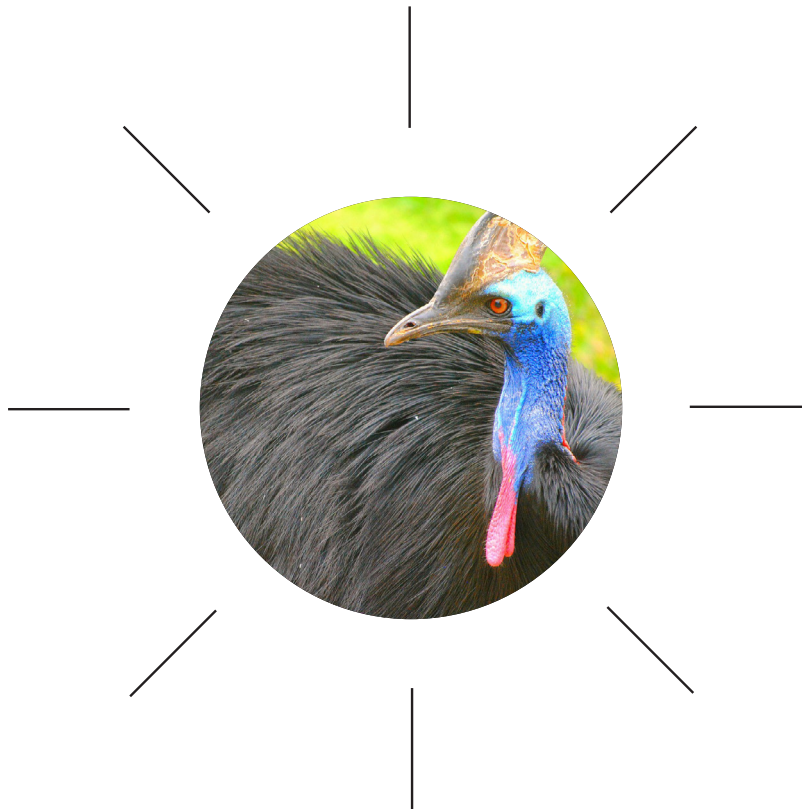
The Cassowary Bird





TOPIC: DAINTREE RAINFOREST

The Cassowary Bird Fact Sheet





My Unit Study Notes on Rainforests

TOPIC 1: WHAT IS A RAINFOREST?

TOPIC 2: TROPICAL VS. TEMPERATE



My Unit Study Notes on Rainforests

TOPIC 3: TOP LAYER: CANOPY

TOPIC 4: MIDDLE LAYER: UNDERSTORY



My Unit Study Notes on Rainforests

TOPIC 5: BOTTOM LAYER: FOREST FLOOR

TOPIC 6: BIODIVERSITY



My Unit Study Notes on Rainforests

TOPIC 7: AMAZON RAINFOREST

TOPIC 8: INDIGENOUS PEOPLE



My Unit Study Notes on Rainforests

TOPIC 9: CONGO RAINFOREST

TOPIC 10: DAINTREE RAINFOREST