

The Rainforest – Year 3/4 Geography

Key Vocabulary

Adaptation - The process of change by which an organism or species becomes better suited to its environment.

Biome - A community of plants and animals that have common characteristics for the environment they exist in

Camouflage - The natural colouring or form of an animal which enables it to blend in with its surroundings.

Canopy - A dense layer of flora, where trees seem to merge or overlap at about 30-45 metres.

Climate - The weather and temperature usually found in an area over a long period of time.

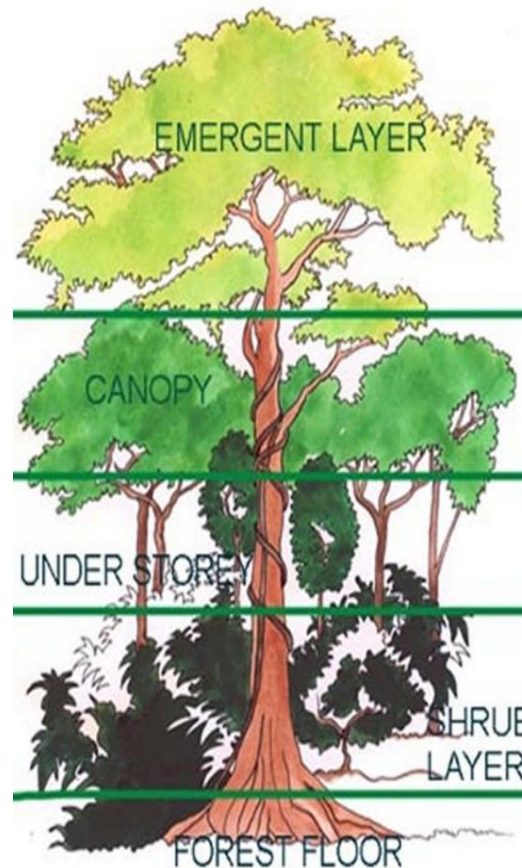
Deforestation - The destruction of trees over a large area.

Emergent - The highest layer where trees are usually over 50 metres tall.

Equator - A line notionally drawn on the earth equidistant from the poles, dividing the earth into northern and southern hemispheres and constituting the parallel of latitude 0°.

Flora and Fauna - The plants/animals of a particular region, habitat, or geological period.

Forest Floor - A layer made up of young trees, shrubs and soft-stemmed plants where it is very hot and humid.



EMERGENT LAYER

The tallest trees are the emergents, towering as much as 200 feet above the forest floor with trunks that measure up to 16 feet around. Most of these trees are broad-leaved, hardwood evergreens. Sunlight is plentiful up here. Animals found are eagles, monkeys, bats and butterflies.

CANOPY LAYER

This is the primary layer of the forest and forms a roof over the two remaining layers. Most canopy trees have smooth, oval leaves that come to a point. It's a maze of leaves and branches. Many animals live in this area since food is abundant. Those animals include: snakes, toucans and treefrogs.

UNDERSTORY LAYER

Little sunshine reaches this area so the plants have to grow larger leaves to reach the sunlight. The plants in this area seldom grow to 12 feet. Many animals live here including jaguars, red-eyed tree frogs and leopards. There is a large concentration of insects here.

FOREST FLOOR

It's very dark down here. Almost no plants grow in this area, as a result. Since hardly any sun reaches the forest floor things begin to decay quickly. A leaf that might take one year to decompose in a regular climate will disappear in 6 weeks. Giant anteaters live in this layer.

Habitat - The natural home or environment of an animal, plant or organism.

Humid - Having a high level of moisture in the air.

Sustainability - The ability to exist constantly

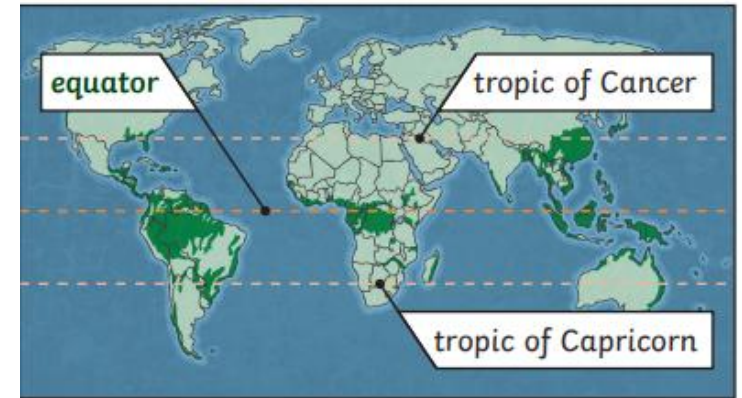
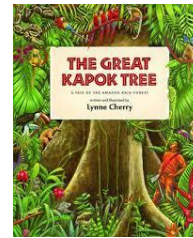
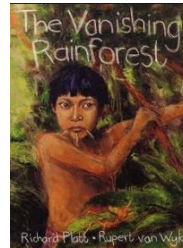
Vegetation - Plants considered collectively, especially those found in a particular area or habitat.

Tropic of Cancer - Is the most northerly circle of latitude on Earth at which the Sun can be directly overhead.

Tropic of Capricorn - Is the most southerly circle of latitude on Earth at which the Sun can be directly overhead.

Understory - Is made up of young trees, shrubs and soft-stemmed plants where it is very hot, humid and damp.

Books linked to this topic:



We will be investigating:

- 1) Where in the world are tropical rainforests?
 - To describe and give examples of a biome and find the location and some features of the Amazon rainforest.
- 2) What is the Amazon rainforest like?
 - To describe the characteristics of each layer of a tropical rainforest.
- 3) Who lives in the rainforest?
 - To understand the lives of indigenous peoples living in the Amazon rainforest.
 - The impact of deforestation.
- 4) How are rainforests changing?
 - To describe why tropical rainforests are important and understand the threats to the Amazon.
- 5) How is our local woodland used?
 - Data collection
- 6) How is our local woodland used?
 - Findings

Deforestation

Trees are cut down:

- to create fields for farming cattle and growing crops,
- to produce timber and wood pulp to make furniture and paper,
- to create space for housing.

Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jobs are created in logging and transporting timber and manufacturing products.• Selling land raises money for local people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People's homes are destroyed.• Animals and plants may become extinct through habitat loss.• Plants that may have been useful could be lost.