

A lush green rainforest scene with tall trees and dense foliage. The image is slightly faded to allow text to be overlaid.

# The Rainforest

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# Literature Selection

\*\* - Books are referred to directly within the unit

- *The Umbrella* by Jan Brett
- *Rain Forests* by Nancy Smiler Levinson
- *At Home in the Rain Forest* by Diane Willow
- *The Rain forest Grew All Around* by Susan K. Mitchell
- *Rain Forest Gardens of Greens* by Laura Purdie Salas
- \*\**Who Eats Who in the Rainforest?* by Robert Snedden
- \*\**Saving the Rainforests* by Sally Morgan
- *The Great Kapok Tree* by Lynne Cherry
- *A Walk in the Rainforest* by Kristin Joy Pratt
- \*\**Rainforest Animals* by Paul Hess
- *Over in the Jungle: A Rainforest Rhyme* by Marianne Berkes

## **\*\*Novels-**

- *Andrew Lost in the Jungle* by J.C. Greenburg
- *The Jungle Book* by Lisa Church, retold from the Rudyard Kipling original
- *One Day in the Tropical Rain Forest* by Jean Craighead George



# Literature Selection (cont.)

- *Wild Amazon* by Lisa Ryan-Herndon
- *Rainforests* by Helen Cowcher
- *Discover the Rainforest* by Lynne Baptista
- *\*\*Fading Forests: The Destruction of our Forests* by August Greeley
- *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World: Exploring the Rainforest Canopy* by Kathryn Lasky and Christopher Knight
- *Amazing Animals of the Rainforest* by Tracey West
- *Breakfast in the Rainforest: A Visit with Mountain Gorillas* by Richard School
- *Eyewitness Jungle* by Theresa Greenaway- includes Clip-Art CD
- *Journey into the Rainforest* by Time Knight
- *Rain Forest Nature Search- A hands-on guide for nature sleuths* by Consultants Dr. Paul Sterry & Dr. Michal H. Robinson

## **Teacher Resources-**

- *Emerald Realm: Earth's Precious Rainforest-* R. Fisher
- *Nature's Green Umbrella-* Gail Gibbons
- *Diversity and the Tropical Rainforest-* John Terbough
- *Life in the Rainforest: Primary Science Resource Guide-* Milliken Publishing

# Theme Study



- Students will have the opportunity to explore the rainforest in this thematic unit. The unit integrates reading and writing of language arts with science, mathematics, social studies, music, art, and physical education.
- Students will develop an understanding of the rainforest, its four layers, vegetation, animals, inhabitants, and weather/climate.



# Language Arts: Reading Activities

- Students will read the article *Layers of the Rain Forest*.
- Students will read one of the novels listed in the Literature Selection and participate in reading and writing workshops.
- Students will read selected pieces from their Writer's Notebooks to the class.
- Students will read a variety of books listed under Literature Selection to use for research and guiding all curriculum projects.
- Students will read words off the Rainforest Word Wall.

# Language Arts: Writing Activities

- Students will add rainforest vocabulary words to the **Word Wall**. (canopy, leaf litter, epiphytes, emergent layer, understory, lianas, camouflage, Rain Forest animal names etc.)
- Students will fill in a Venn Diagram using clues from the *Layers of the Rain Forest* article.
- Students will write a research report on a rainforest animal. (including an illustration of the animal, written description of physical characteristics, behavior, adaptive features, habitat, diet etc.)
- Students will write different types of poems about the rainforest like rhymed verse, haikus, limericks, and concrete poems. (use the book *Rainforest Animals* by Paul Hess for poems about animals)
- Students will write in journals using different styles of journal writing.
- Students will write various entries in their Writer's Notebooks such as brainstorming, stories, poems, letters, lyrics, etc about the rainforest.



# Language Arts: Speaking Activities

- Students will participate in small group discussions about the similarities and differences of the four layers of the rainforest.
- Students will give oral presentations about their rainforest animal research report.
- Students will read aloud their written poems.
- Students will participate in literature discussion groups about the novels they read.
- Students will join in on a grand conversation about whether they'd like or dislike living in the rainforest.

# Language Arts: Listening Activities



- Students will respectfully and attentively listen to poem readings and oral presentations.
- Students will listen and consider their peers' options during grand conversations.
- Students will listen to various sounds of the rainforest.
- Students will listen to the teacher read several rainforest books as read-a-louds to the class.



# Language Arts: Viewing Activities

- Students will view various rainforest videos on the internet from [discoveryeducation.com](http://discoveryeducation.com)
- Students will view a variety of postcards with rainforest photos shot by Thomas Marent.
- Students will view photos in the book *Wild Amazon, A photographer's incredible journey* by Nick Gordon.
- Students will view *What's It Like Where You Live?- The Rainforest Biome, People of the Rainforest*, Discovery Channel's *Spirit of the Rainforests*, and National Geographic's *Rain Forest* videos.
- Students will view group plays/skits based on the rainforest.

# Language Arts: Visually Representing Activities



- Students will create a Rainforest Word Wall.
- Students will display their poems, art projects and reports around the room using an artistic presentation method.
- Students will create costumes of rainforest animals and inhabitants for plays.
- Students will create T-shirts to advocate for saving the rainforest.
- The teacher will add plants to the room to create a rainforest-like atmosphere.
- Using the program Rainforest Designer, students will design authentic rainforest habitats to print and assemble as 3-D dioramas.



# Science Activities

- Using the book *Who Eats Who in the Rainforest?* by Robert Snedden, students will create a food chain using paper plates and string.
- Students will keep a science journal about the four distinct layers of the rainforest (emergent, canopy, understory, and forest floor)
- Students will study and artistically draw the different animals and plants that live in each layer of the rainforest.
- Students will report on how animals survive in each layer of the rainforest.
- Students will develop a Rainforest Exploration Kit.
- Students will experiment with making Rainforests in a Bottle.

[http://library.thinkquest.org/J0113269/rainforest\\_projects\\_2.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/J0113269/rainforest_projects_2.htm)

# Mathematics Activities

- Students will create and solve rainforest themed word problems that use multiplication and ratios.
- Students will learn about scale by drawing rainforest plants to scale on poster board.
- Students will create line plots of annual rainfall in a particular rainforest by years.
- Students will create a pie chart that compares number of mammals to reptiles to birds in a rainforest.
- Students will use small rainforest animal manipulatives to practice probability and other math skills.



# Social Studies Activities

- Students will create KWL charts before beginning instruction on rainforests.
- Students will locate the world's rainforests on a map.
- Students will read together the book *Saving the Rainforests* by Sally Morgan as a guide to study the efforts to save the rainforests.
- Students will gather pictures of the people who inhabit the rainforest, their clothing, homes, traditions, etc.
- Using the book *Fading Forests: The Destruction of our Forests* by August Greeley, students will split into groups of those wanting to save the rainforest and those wanting to use the rainforest's resources and debate their side of the topic.

# Music and Art Activities



- Students will make Stuffed Rainforest Animals.
- Students will create a Rainforest Habitat Reading Corner in the classroom. (can include their Stuffed Rainforest Animals)
- Students will listen to the CD- *Sounds of the Earth, Rainforest*
- Students will make rain sticks to play along with the CD.
- Students will create a class mural showcasing the distinguishing features of each layer in the rainforest.
- Students will design backgrounds for their poetry using pressed flowers and leaf rubbings.



# Physical Education Activities

- Students will participate in a scavenger hunt around the school to find hidden rainforest plants and animals.
- Students will participate in a rainforest obstacle course outdoors using branches, hula hoops, ropes, swings, monkey bars, and other playground equipment.

# Technology



- <http://rainforest-alliance.org/kids>
- <http://www.rainforesteducation.com/>
- <http://www.proteacher.com/redirect.php?goto=5622>
- [http://library.thinkquest.org/J0113269/rainforest\\_projects2.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/J0113269/rainforest_projects2.htm)
- Bamboo Rain Forest CD
- Rainforest Videos on [www.discoveryeducation.com](http://www.discoveryeducation.com)
  - The Tropical Rain Forest Habitat Video
  - Exploring the Diversity of Life: Rain and the Forest Video
  - The Life Science Starter Collection: Rain Forests Video



# Language Arts Strategies

- **Brainstorming:** Students will think of and organize ideas related to the rainforest for writing activities and projects.
- **Connecting:** Students will relate topic to themselves and the world by journaling, plays/skits, and creating exploration kits.
- **Organizing:** Students will logically arrange information and ideas in their reports and written stories.
- **Playing with Language:** Students will use language creatively in stories, poems, journals, and reports.
- **Predicting:** Students will predict the future survival of the rainforests in social studies class.
- **Proofreading:** Students will proofread many of their written pieces including their reports and stories, identifying mechanical errors in the writings.
- **Revising:** Students will make corrections and new versions of their writing pieces.



# Language Arts Skills



- **Print:** Students will recognize words on the Rainforest Word Wall.
- **Comprehension:** Students will categorize plants and animals into the correct layers of the rainforest and consider likes and dislikes about the rainforest.
- **Language:** Students will apply all aspects of a well structured sentence and other skills in their writing activities; reports, stories, poems.
- **Reference:** Students will use articles, books, and internet sources, make Venn diagrams, graphs, and line plots.

# Grouping Patterns

- **Large Group:** grand conversations, obstacle course, viewing videos, group mural painting, Word Wall, Social Studies play, Venn diagram, debates
- **Small Group:** small group discussions, literature discussions, viewing photos, plays/skits, scavenger hunts, creating line plots and pie charts, exploration kits, debates, 3-D dioramas
- **Individual:** writing poems, journal entries, reports, stories, Writer's Notebooks, math problem-solving, exploration kits, rainforest manipulatives

RF-rainforest	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Language Arts Morning	*article <i>Layers of the Rainforest</i> *Venn diagram *small group discussions on layers of RF *video <i>RF Biome</i>	*Teacher-selected read-aloud books *silent reading of RF novels *journal entries *Writer's Workshop-write a story based on a read-aloud	*view Marent postcards and Gordon's photos *RF Designer 3-D dioramas *Writer's Workshop-RF Poetry	*silent reading of RF novels *Save the RF T-shirts *grand conversations *Writer's Workshop-begin RF reports	*literature discussion groups on RF novels  *RF plays/skits  *Writer's Workshop-continue RF reports
Art/Music Morning	*CD- <i>Sounds of the Earth, Rainforest</i> *rain sticks	*stuffed RF animals *RF Reading Corner	*CD- <i>Sounds...</i> *play rain sticks *RF Reading Corner	*class mural- 4 layers of the RF	*class mural- 4 layers of the RF *pressed flowers & leaf rubbings
P.E. Morning	*outdoor obstacle course	*scavenger hunt		*continued scavenger hunt	*outdoor obstacle course
Math Afternoon	*probability w/ RF manipulatives	*pie chart comparisons	*line plots of annual rainfall in RF	*size and scale posters	*RF themed word problems (x) & ratios
Science Afternoon	*rd & discuss <i>Who Eats Who in the Rainforest</i> *paper plate food chains	*4 layers of RF-animals & their survival skills/strategies	*4 layers of RF-plants & their location w/in 4 layers	*4 layers of RF *Rainforest in a Bottle	*designing RF Exploration Kits
Social Studies Afternoon	*KWL Charts *locate RFs on maps	*study people of the RFs	*book <i>Saving the Rain Forests</i> *study efforts to save the RF	*book <i>Fading Forests: The Destruction of our Forests</i> *prepare debates	*save the RF/use RF resources Debates



# Assessments

- Vocabulary & Spelling **quizzes/tests** from the Rainforest Word Wall
- **Teacher Observation** of student participation and completion of individual and group work
- **Participation** in grand conversations, small group discussions, physical education activities, debates, and plays
- **Rubrics:** reports, KWL charts, debates, science journals
- **Analytical Writing Trait Rubrics** and **peer conferences** for poems and stories
- **Checklists:** math activities, Venn diagrams, exploration kits, physical education activities
- **Portfolio:** end of unit, collection of each student's best work from each subject area
- **Art Critiques** for music and visual art pieces