

Exploring the Layers of the Rainforest with Finn the Dolphin

Learning objective: To identify and describe the four layers of a tropical rainforest and explain why these habitats are vital for the planet.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of rainforest geography to answer in full sentences. Finn the Dolphin has been mapping the world's biomes and needs your help to finish his report!

Rainforests are complex ecosystems found near the Earth's equator. They are divided into four distinct vertical layers, each providing a unique home for thousands of different species. These forests act as the 'lungs of the planet' by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen, playing a crucial role in regulating the Earth's climate.

Word bank: Emergent · Canopy · Understory · Forest floor · Humidity · Photosynthesis · Biodiversity · Equator

1. List the four layers of a tropical rainforest in order, starting from the highest layer down to the ground. (4 marks)

2. Why is the canopy layer often described as the busiest part of the rainforest for wildlife? (2 marks)

3. Explain one way in which the climate of a rainforest differs from the climate in the United Kingdom. (2 marks)

4. Why is it important for the global environment that we protect rainforests? Use the term 'biodiversity' in your answer. (3 marks)

5. If a new species of beetle were discovered, which layer would it likely live in if it required very little sunlight and damp soil? Explain your reasoning. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a cross-section of a rainforest. Label the four layers and draw one animal or plant that you would expect to find in each specific layer.



Extension challenge: Research a 'threat' to rainforests, such as deforestation. Write a short paragraph explaining how this impacts the local people and the animals that call the forest home.