

Finn's Rainforest Expedition: The Layered World

Learning objective: To identify and describe the four distinct layers of a tropical rainforest and explain how the climate supports such high biodiversity.

Finn the dolphin has traded his fins for hiking boots to explore the Amazon! Use the word bank to label the rainforest layers based on the descriptions provided. Once you have identified the layers, complete the analytical questions to demonstrate your deeper understanding of this complex ecosystem.

Word bank: Emergent Layer · Canopy · Understory · Forest Floor

1. 'I am the highest point where giant trees poke above the rest to catch the most sunlight.' Which layer am I? (1 mark)

2. 'I am a dark, humid place where fallen leaves decompose quickly and jaguars roam.' Which layer am I? (1 mark)

3. 'I act like a leafy roof, blocking most sunlight and sheltering many birds and monkeys.' Which layer am I? (1 mark)

4. Explain why the Forest Floor receives so little sunlight compared to the Emergent Layer. Use the concept of 'density' in your answer. (3 marks)

5. Compare and contrast the conditions of the Canopy with the Understory. Why might a bird choose to live in one but not the other? (4 marks)

6. Justify your answer: If all the trees in the Canopy were removed, what might happen to the animals living on the Forest Floor? (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a cross-section of a rainforest. Label each of the four layers clearly and draw one animal that is perfectly adapted to live in that specific layer (e.g., a tall-flying eagle for the Emergent Layer or an insect on the Forest Floor).



Extension challenge: Imagine you are a scientist studying a new species found in the Understory. Write a short field journal entry describing how the humidity and limited light have influenced the physical appearance of your creature. Why does it look the way it does?