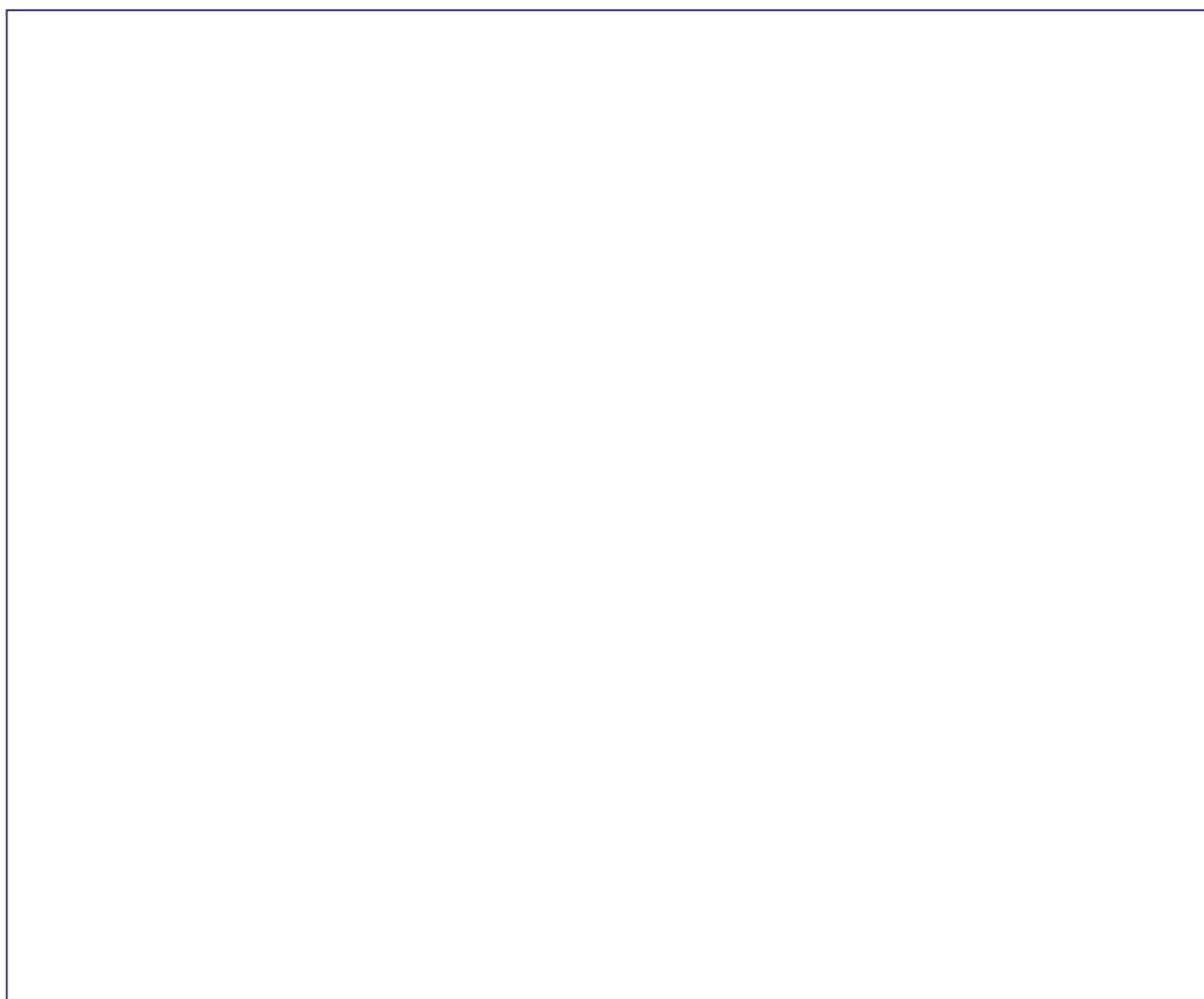


Exploring the Rainforest Layers

Learning objective: To identify and illustrate the four distinct layers of a tropical rainforest and understand the vegetation found within them.

Use your knowledge of rainforest geography to complete the diagram. Follow the drawing prompt to build your rainforest, then use the word bank to label the four layers and specific features.

Draw: Draw a large cross-section of a tropical rainforest. Use a landscape orientation. Start by drawing four very tall trees with different heights to represent the layers. For the Emergent layer, draw a tree poking above the rest with a wide, apartment top. For the Canopy, draw a dense, leafy ceiling connecting the trees. For the Understory, draw smaller shrubs and vines. On the Forest Floor, add large, wide buttress roots at the base of the trees and a layer of leaf litter. Use colored pencils to show the change in light: bright yellow near the top and deep green/brown near the bottom.



Label words: Emergent Layer · Canopy · Understory · Forest Floor · Buttress roots · Lianas · Epiphytes

Steps:

1. Label the four distinct layers of the rainforest on your drawing starting from the top and moving downwards.
2. Why is the Forest Floor usually much darker than the Emergent layer?

3. Draw one example of a 'liana' (woody vine) wrapping around a tree trunk in the Canopy layer.
4. Identify where 'buttress roots' are found and explain why they are useful for tall rainforest trees.
5. Add a small sketch of an epiphyte growing on a tree branch in the Canopy. What does 'epiphyte' mean?