

THE AMAZON RAINFOREST KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

Key vocabulary and spellings

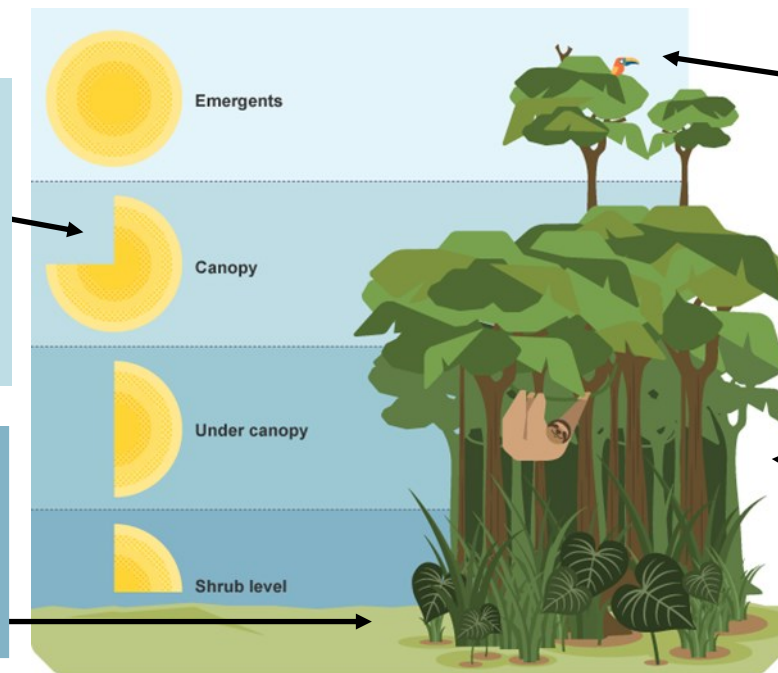
Term	Definition
Rainforest	A dense forest, normally found in tropical areas with high rainfall. They generate much of the world's oxygen.
Equator	Imaginary line around the middle of the Earth that receives the most sunlight and heat energy from the sun (so is the hottest place on earth)
Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn	Imaginary lines north and south of the equator. Most rainforests can be found between these two lines.
Country	A nation with its own government e.g. UK, USA, Germany, Denmark, Brazil, China.
Continent	The world's main continuous pieces of land (Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe, North America, South America, Antarctica).
Ecosystem	A community of plants and animals that depend on each other to survive.
Deforestation	The action of clearing a wide area of trees.
Habitat	The natural home or environment of an animal, plant or organism.
Interdependent	When two or more people or things rely on each other.
Physical feature	Naturally occurring, e.g. rivers, mountains, lakes



Structure of the rainforest

Canopy - Dense layer of trees overlapping each other. Home to most animals in rainforests—scientists estimate that 60-90 % of life in the rainforest is found in the trees. Many well known animals including monkeys, frogs, lizards, birds, snakes, sloths and small cats are found in the canopy.

Shrub level - Also known as the forest floor or undergrowth, mainly consisting of fallen leaves, fruit etc. that decomposes as food for trees. Many insects live in the shrub layer such as scorpions, beetles and tarantulas



Emergent layer- the tops of the tallest trees that poke up above the rainforest canopy. Trees in the emergent layer can reach a towering 70 metres (about 230 feet) as the sunlight and the plentiful rain help them grow quickly. Birds, butterflies, bats and small monkeys live in this layer. Some animals never venture as high as the emergent trees as it's very dangerous due to the unsteady branches and the massive drop to the forest floor.

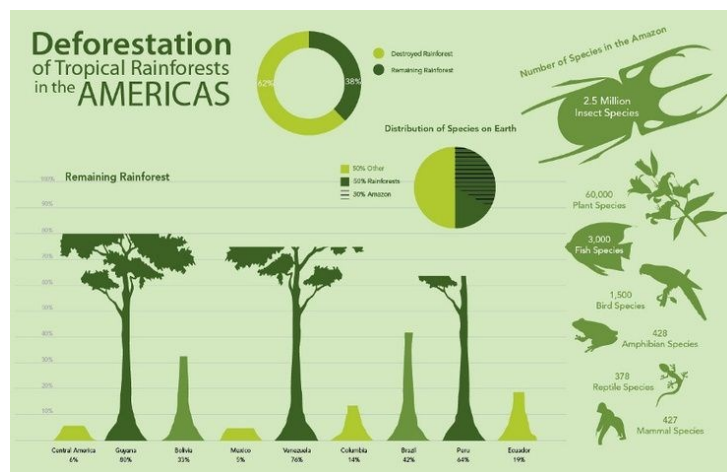
Under canopy - Relatively dark, open area below the canopy. The understory is warm, damp, and sheltered below the leafy tree canopy. Smaller trees grow in patches of sunlight. These plants provide food and shelter for small animals and birds, as well as larger predators that live in the trees.

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Deforestation - clearing of a wide area of trees.

Causes of Deforestation	
1	To clear space for farming: growing crops (e.g. soya beans & palm oil) and space cattle to generate cheap beef.
2	Chopping down trees for wood.
3	To build roads to mine for metals, gold & diamonds.
4	To dig for oil.
5	To flood areas to make dams & generate electricity.

Impact of Deforestation	
1	An area the size of 20 football pitches is destroyed every 60 seconds.
2	½ of the tropical rainforests we had are gone.
3	28,000 species of animals are expected to become extinct in the next 25 years.
4	Local people's homes are destroyed.
5	Levels of carbon dioxide in the air are increasing and oxygen is decreasing.



Plants and Animals in the Amazon

Term	Definition
Flora	Plants
Fauna	Animals
Biodiversity	the variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat
Nocturnal	Animal that comes out at night. Sleeps during the day.
Camouflage	Blending in to hide in the natural environment.
Mimicry	Copying the look, sound or behaviour of something.

Facts about the Amazon

- 1 Rainforests cover approximately 6% of the Earth's surface and contain more than ½ of the world's plants. About 90% of organisms are found in the canopy.
- 2 About 30 million species of plants and animals live in tropical rainforests.
- 3 There are two types of rainforests – Tropical and Temperate. Tropical rainforests are generally warmer than temperate ones.
- 4 Many things we have in our homes come from rainforests including: chocolate, sugar, rubber, bamboo and many medicines.

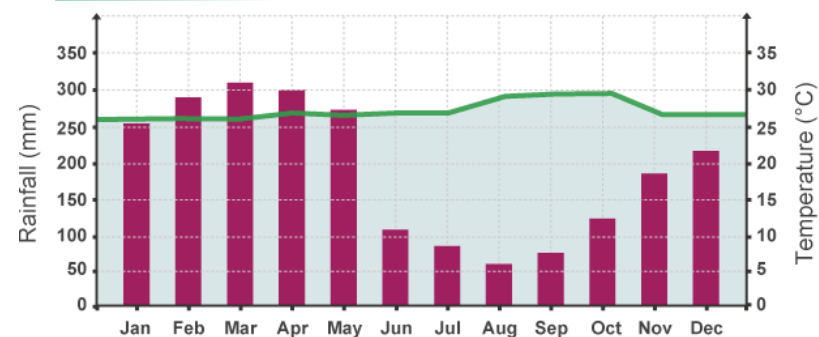
The Amazon Rainforest is the largest tropical jungle in the world, containing more than 60,000 species of plants and some of the most biodiverse plants species in the world. As a result many animals including jaguars, sloths, river dolphins, macaws, anacondas, glass frogs, and poison dart frogs live in the rainforest and thrive off the rich environment.

The Amazon River

The Amazon River is the longest river in South America. It flows through Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil.



The Amazon's climate



As a result of being a tropical rainforest, the Amazon's weather and climate is very hot, humid and damp. There are no seasons like Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring, it is just one humid season with lots of rainfall all year round.