

Layers of the Rainforest

Inside a Rainforest



What do you notice about the plants in a rainforest?

Are all the plants the same height?

Are they all the same shade of green?

Do they have the same kinds of leaves?



Why do you think they are all different?

Layers of the Rainforest

A rainforest can be split up into layers.

Each layer is different because of the amount of light and water it gets.



The Emergent Layer



Trees in this layer can be up to 60m tall.

Their trunks can be up to 5m in circumference.

They are usually broad-leaved, evergreen hardwood trees.

There is lots of sunlight up here, but it is also very cold and windy.

Many birds, monkeys, bats and butterflies live here.

The Canopy Layer



Trees in this layer form a roof over the plants below.

Trees in this layer usually have smooth, oval, pointed leaves.

There is lots of sunlight but also plenty of rain.

Many animals live in this layer as there is plenty of food.

These include snakes, toucans and tree frogs.



The Understory Layer



Trees in this layer rarely grow taller than 4m.

It is very warm and very humid here.

Many insects live in this layer.



Very little sunlight reaches this area, so the plants have to grow larger leaves to reach the sunlight that there is.

The Forest Floor



It is very dark here – almost no sunlight reaches this area.

Very few plants grow in this area.

Leaves and other debris decompose very quickly.

Animals such as gorillas, anteaters, leopards and tigers live here.

