

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Compare and Contrast

Read the short story and answer each question.



Life in the Layers – Rainforest Plants

The rainforest is one of the most diverse places on Earth. Plants grow in layers, from the tall emergent trees down to the dark forest floor. Each layer has different plants adapted to light, water, and space. In the **canopy**, large trees form a leafy roof that blocks sunlight. Vines and orchids grow on branches high above the ground. Below that, in the **understory**, large leaves help catch the little sunlight that filters through. Some plants in the rainforest grow quickly to reach light. Others develop ways to trap insects for food. These unique adaptations help rainforest plants survive in their crowded, competitive home.



Creatures of the Rainforest

Rainforest animals are just as diverse as the plants—and just as adapted to their environment. Animals live in different layers, depending on what they eat and how they move. In the **emergent** and **canopy** layers, birds, monkeys, and insects leap and fly between branches. In the **understory**, frogs and snakes hide in the shade. On the **forest floor**, tapirs, jaguars, and ants scurry among roots and fallen leaves. Each animal has special features that help it survive. Sloths move slowly and blend in with moss-covered trees. Tree frogs have sticky toes to climb. These adaptations help them avoid predators and find food in a world filled with life.



Name: _____

Life in the Layers - Rainforest Plants & Creatures of the Rainforest

1. How are rainforest plants and animals alike?

- A. They all grow tall like trees
- B. They all live in the same place and have adaptations
- C. They all eat the same food
- D. They all live on the forest floor

2. Which detail is only mentioned in the animal text?

- A. The layers of the rainforest
- B. Orchids that grow in trees
- C. Sloths that move slowly and blend in
- D. Big leaves that catch sunlight

3. Fill in the blank:

Rainforest plants and animals both live in **layers**, and they use _____ to survive in their environment.

4. What are two ways rainforest plants and animals are alike in how they survive? How are they different?

5. How does reading both texts help you understand how the rainforest works as a complete ecosystem?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: S

Lexile Level: 850L-1000L

Grade Level: 4th Grade, End of the Year

Genre: Informational Nonfiction – Science & Ecosystems

Introducing the Text

“Today we’ll read two nonfiction texts about the rainforest—one about its amazing plants and one about the animals that live there. Each helps us understand how life works in different layers of the rainforest. We’ll compare the information and see how it connects.”

Vocabulary: canopy, understory, emergent, adaptation, ecosystem

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about rainforests?
 2. Why do you think so many plants and animals live there?
 3. What kind of challenges might they face?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What’s special about the canopy layer?
 2. How do plants and animals adapt to get light, food, or protection?
 3. Where do sloths and vines live in the rainforest?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What information in one text connects to the other?
 2. What new things did you learn by reading both?
 3. How would the rainforest be different without either its plants or animals?
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Activity Idea

Have students draw a cross-section of the rainforest showing its layers. On one side, label plant life; on the other, label animal life. Then write a paragraph about how both groups work together to keep the rainforest alive.

