

TOPIC PACKS · GRADES 3–6

# Rainforest!

A cross-curricular themed week

## Suggested timetable

Day	Subject	Activity
Monday	Geography	Where rainforests are — biomes and climate
Tuesday	Science	Layers of the rainforest — and life in each layer
Wednesday	English	Persuasive letter — save the rainforest
Thursday	Art	Rainforest layer collage
Friday	Geography	Deforestation — causes, effects, solutions

## Day 1 — World rainforests

Rainforest	Where	Size
Amazon	South America (mostly Brazil)	Largest in the world — 5.5 million km <sup>2</sup>
Congo Basin	Central Africa	Second largest — 1.8 million km <sup>2</sup>
Southeast Asian	Borneo, Sumatra, Indonesia	0.9 million km <sup>2</sup> , most threatened
Daintree	Northeast Australia	Oldest rainforest on Earth — 180 million years
Valdivian	Chile and Argentina	Cool temperate rainforest



## Day 1 mapping activity

Show a world map. Mark the equator. Notice how rainforests cluster around it. Discuss: WHY? Because the equator gets the most direct sunlight all year, so it's warm AND wet — perfect conditions. Children mark all five rainforests on their own world map.

## Day 2 — Layers of the rainforest

<p><b>Emergent layer (top — 60m+)</b></p> <p>Tallest trees that poke out above the canopy. Home to harpy eagles, monkeys and butterflies. Hot, sunny and windy.</p>	<p><b>Canopy (30–45m)</b></p> <p>The thick 'roof' of leaves. Most rainforest life lives here — toucans, sloths, snakes, frogs. Like a city in the trees.</p>
<p><b>Understory (3–18m)</b></p> <p>Below the canopy. Dim light, lots of vines and big leaves. Jaguars, leopards, tree frogs.</p>	<p><b>Forest floor (ground)</b></p> <p>Very dark — only 2% of sunlight gets here. Insects, decomposers, large ground animals like tapirs.</p>

## Day 3 — Persuasive writing (60 min)

**TASK:** Write a persuasive letter to a fictional company that's planning to clear a section of rainforest for cattle farming. Convince them not to. **INCLUDE:** • A strong opening line that gets attention • At least three reasons (with facts) why deforestation is harmful • An emotional appeal (a creature that would lose its home) • A practical alternative (where else they could farm) • A polite but firm sign-off **MODEL OPENINGS:** 'I am writing because I am deeply concerned...' / 'Imagine an Amazon without the harpy eagle...'

## Day 4 — Art (60 min)

**RAINFOREST LAYER COLLAGE.** Each child folds a long sheet of paper into four sections — one for each layer. They: 1. Paint the background of each section (lighter at top, darker at bottom) 2. Cut out leaves, vines and animals from coloured paper 3. Stick animals in the correct layer (sloth in canopy, jaguar in understory, etc.) 4. Label each layer **DISPLAY TIP:** Stick all the collages together vertically in a corridor — it becomes a giant class rainforest.

## Day 5 — Deforestation



Cause	Effect	Solution
Cattle farming	Loss of habitat for thousands of species	Choose sustainable beef or eat less meat
Palm oil farms	Orangutans losing their home in Borneo	Check labels — buy products with sustainable palm oil
Logging for wood	Trees that take centuries to grow are gone	Buy FSC-certified wood and paper
Mining for metals	Rivers polluted, forests cleared	Recycle electronics so less new metal is needed
Soya farming	Mainly grown to feed farm animals	Reduce meat eaten — less soya is needed

