

LAYERS OF THE RAINFOREST

Four layers from the treetops to the ground



6 printables · 16 pages · all answer keys included

WHAT IS INSIDE

- 1 Rainforest Layers Diagram
- 2 Blank Rainforest Layers
- 3 A Forest With Four Floors

- 4 Who Lives Where?
- 5 Fill the Rainforest
- 6 Which Layer?

Layers of the Rainforest

Four layers from the treetops to the ground

How to use these sheets. The sheets are in a suggested teaching order: show the labeled diagram, have students label the blank one, read the short text together, then cut and paste, draw and circle. The answer keys are together at the back. **The next page** has ideas to try in class and a plan for the week.

What is inside

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Answer keys

Every answer key, in the same order 12

More science printables. Food Chains and Food Webs, The Water Cycle, Carbon Cycle and Greenhouse Effect, The Nitrogen Cycle and more at printablescholar.com/science/

Ways to Teach Layers of the Rainforest

Pick the ideas that suit your class. Then follow the plan, or use the sheets in any order you like.

Try it in class

Act it out. Students stand tall with arms up as the giant trees, link arms as the canopy, crouch as the plants of the understory, and lie flat as the forest floor.

Build it on the wall. Tape four strips of paper to a wall or a door, one for each layer. Students draw animals, cut them out and stick each one in its layer.

Try the light. Hold a flashlight over one sheet of paper and look at the light that comes through. Add a second sheet, then a third. Less light gets through each time, like sunlight on its way down through the leaves.

A plan for the week

DAY	WHAT THE CLASS DOES	SHEETS TO PRINT
Day 1	Open with one of the ideas above. Show the labeled diagram and name the four layers together. Then students label the blank one.	Rainforest Layers Diagram Blank Rainforest Layers
Day 2	Read “A Forest With Four Floors” together and answer the questions.	A Forest With Four Floors
Day 3	Students read the clues, then cut and paste the nine animals on “Who Lives Where?”	Who Lives Where?
Day 4	Students draw an animal in each layer on “Fill the Rainforest” and color it.	Fill the Rainforest
Day 5	Check with “Which Layer?”	Which Layer?

LAYERS OF THE RAINFOREST

LIFE SCIENCE

Four layers from the treetops to the ground

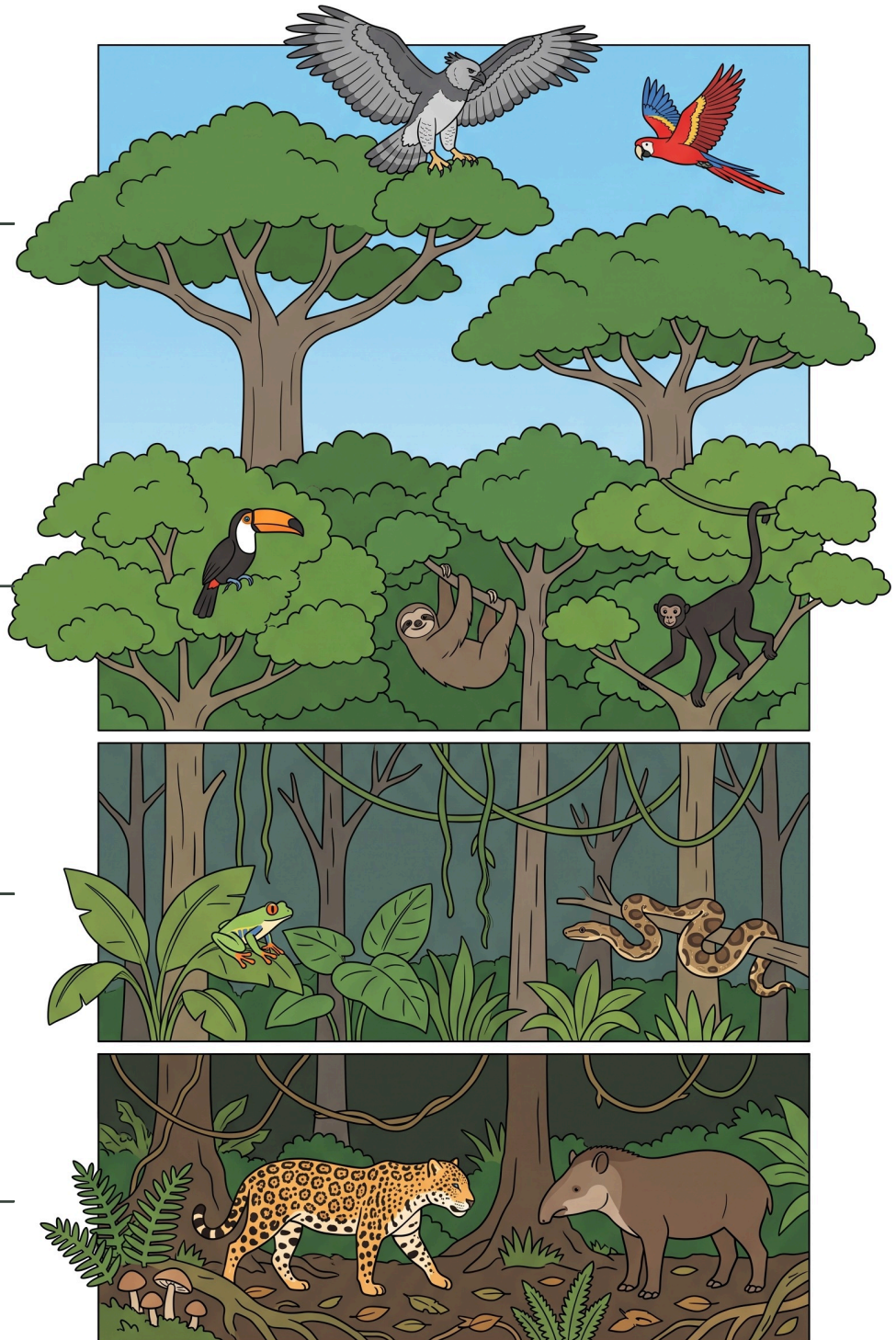
A rainforest is built like a tall building with four floors. Different plants and animals live on each one.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

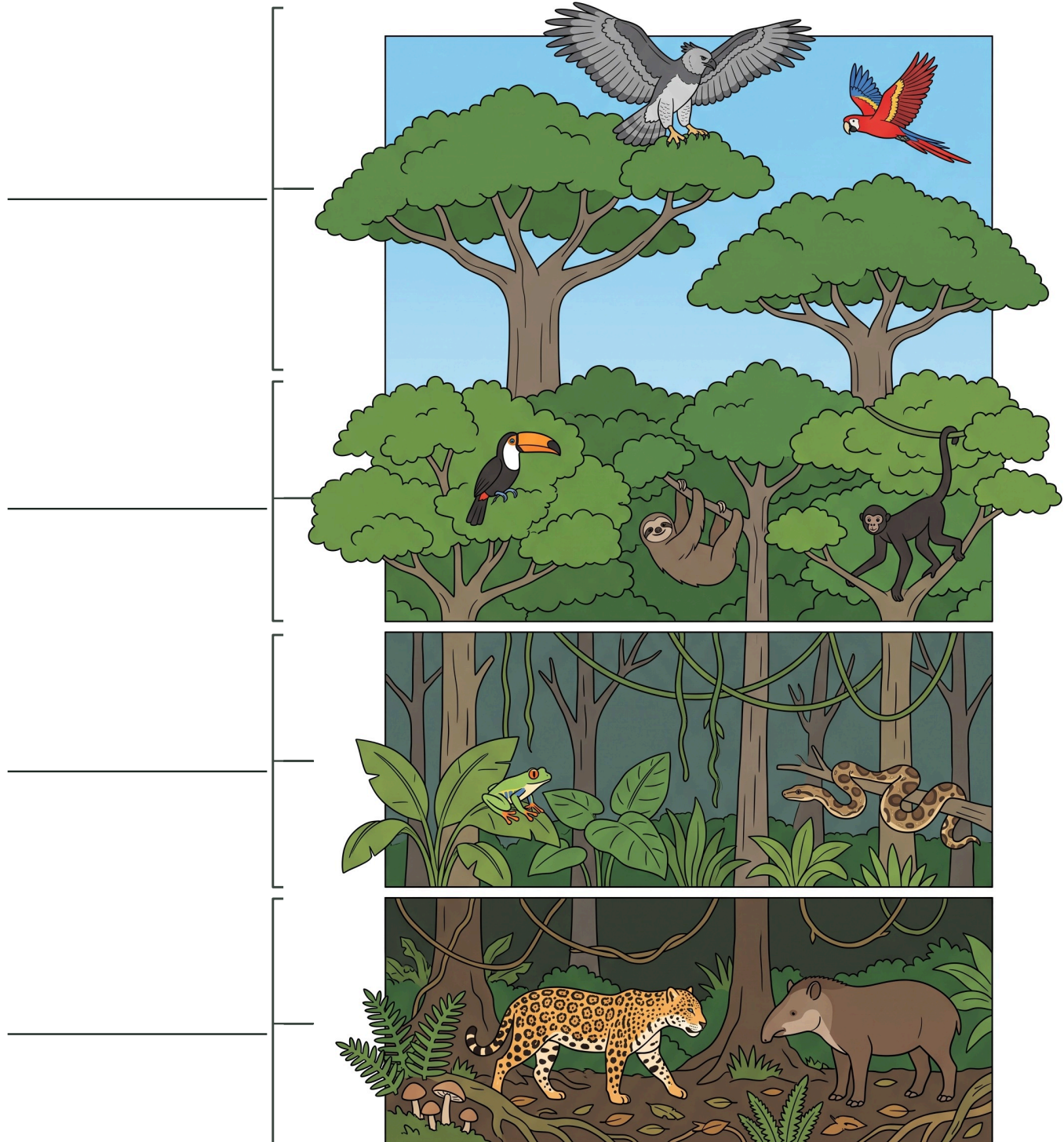


LAYERS OF THE RAINFOREST

Name: _____

LIFE SCIENCE

Write the name of each part on its line. Use the word bank.



Word bank

Canopy

Emergent layer

Forest floor

Understory

A Forest With Four Floors

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

A rainforest is a warm, wet forest. It rains almost every day. The trees grow very tall.

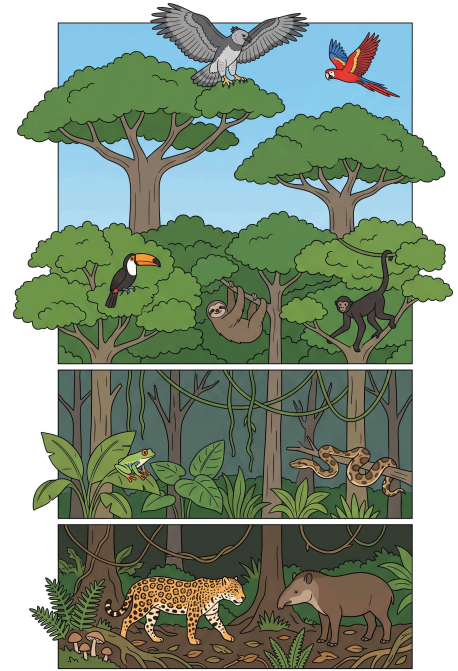
A rainforest has four layers. They are like the floors of a tall building.

The top is the **emergent layer**. A few giant trees poke up into the sky. It is sunny and windy. Eagles nest here.

Next is the **canopy**. The treetops make a thick, leafy roof. Most rainforest animals live here. Monkeys and sloths find fruit and leaves to eat.

Under the roof is the **understory**. It is shady and still. Plants grow big leaves to catch the light. Frogs and snakes live here.

The bottom is the **forest floor**. It is dark and damp. Jaguars and tapirs walk on the ground.



1. How many layers does a rainforest have?

- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

2. Which layer is like a leafy roof?

- ☐ The emergent layer
- ☐ The canopy
- ☐ The forest floor

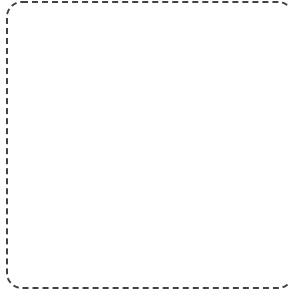
3. Why do plants in the understory grow big leaves?

4. Which layer would you like to visit? Tell why.

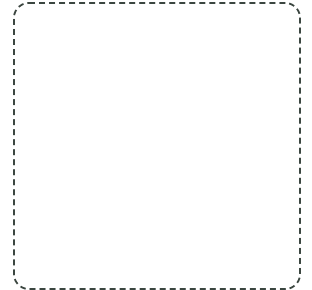
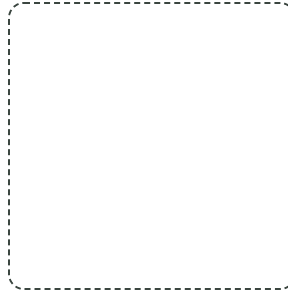
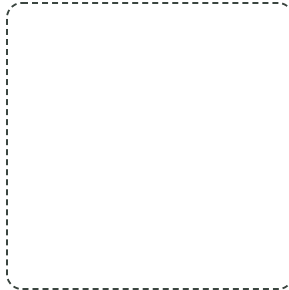
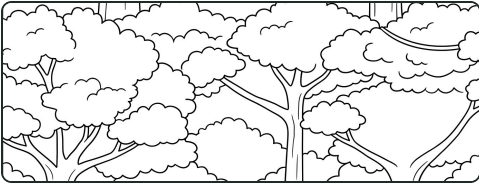
Who Lives Where?

Paste each animal from the card page in the layer where it lives.

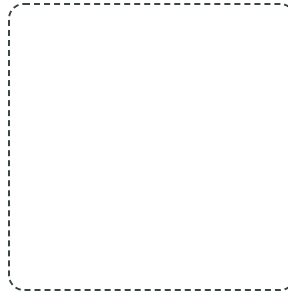
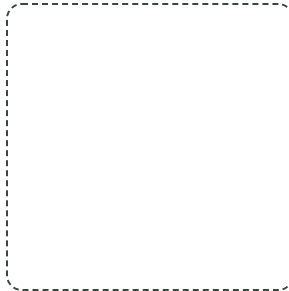
Emergent layer the tallest trees



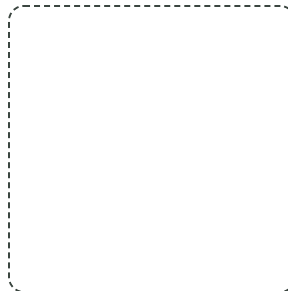
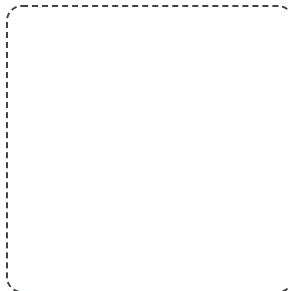
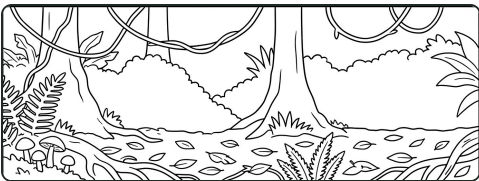
Canopy the leafy roof



Understory the shade under the roof

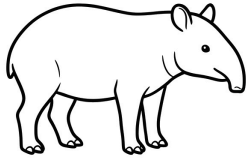


Forest floor the ground



Who Lives Where?: Animal Cards

Read each clue. Cut out the cards on the dashed lines. Paste each animal in its layer.



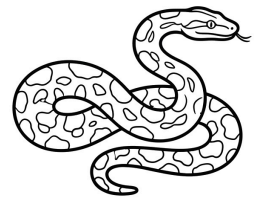
Tapir

I walk on the ground and eat fallen fruit.



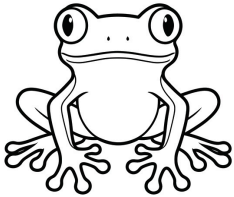
Macaw

I fly high over the treetops.



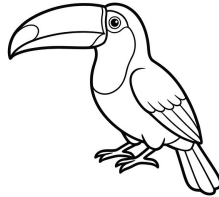
Boa

I wait on a low branch in the shade under the roof.



Tree frog

I sit on big leaves in the shade under the roof.



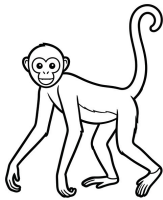
Toucan

I pick fruit in the leafy roof.



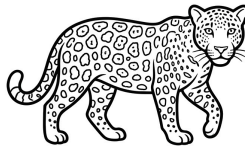
Sloth

I hang in the leafy roof and eat leaves.



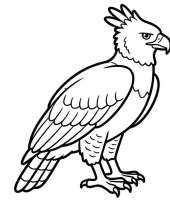
Spider monkey

I swing through the leafy roof.



Jaguar

I walk on the ground and hunt.

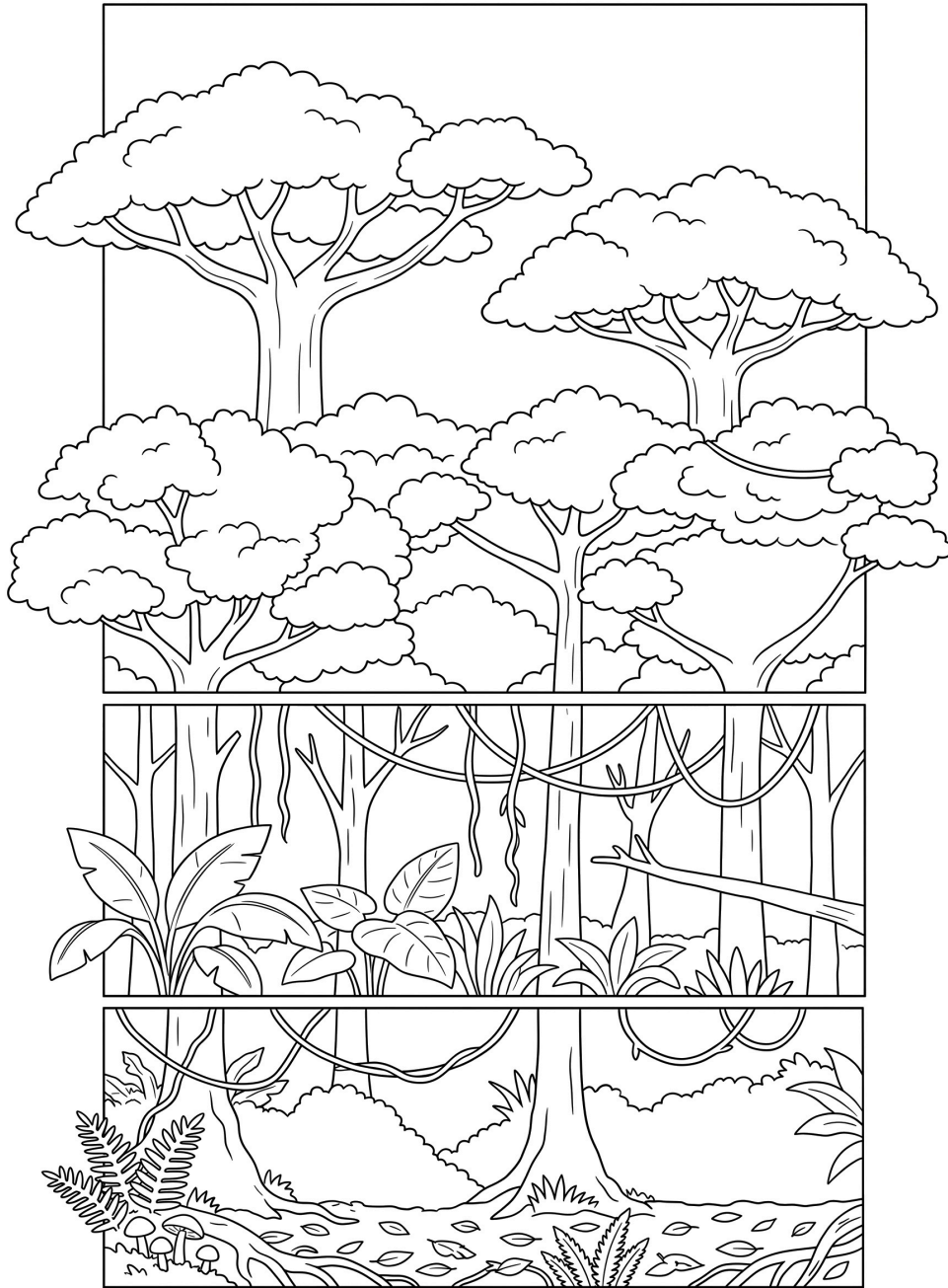


Harpy eagle

I nest at the top of the tallest trees.

Fill the Rainforest

This rainforest is empty! Draw one animal in each layer. Tick the box when you are done.



☐ **Emergent layer**
A bird that flies over the trees

☐ **Canopy**
An animal that climbs or hangs

☐ **Understory**
A frog or a snake

☐ **Forest floor**
A big animal that walks

Now color it. The top is sunny and bright. The bottom is dark.

My favorite rainforest animal is the _____.

It lives in the _____.

Which Layer?

Read each clue. Circle the layer it tells about.

1. The treetops make a leafy roof here.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

2. It is the darkest layer.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

3. A few giant trees poke up into the sky.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

4. It is shady, with vines and big leaves.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

5. Most rainforest animals live here.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

6. Fallen leaves cover the ground.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

7. It is the sunniest and windiest layer.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

8. Frogs sit on big leaves in the shade here.

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor

Answer Keys

In the same order as the sheets.

LAYERS OF THE RAINFOREST

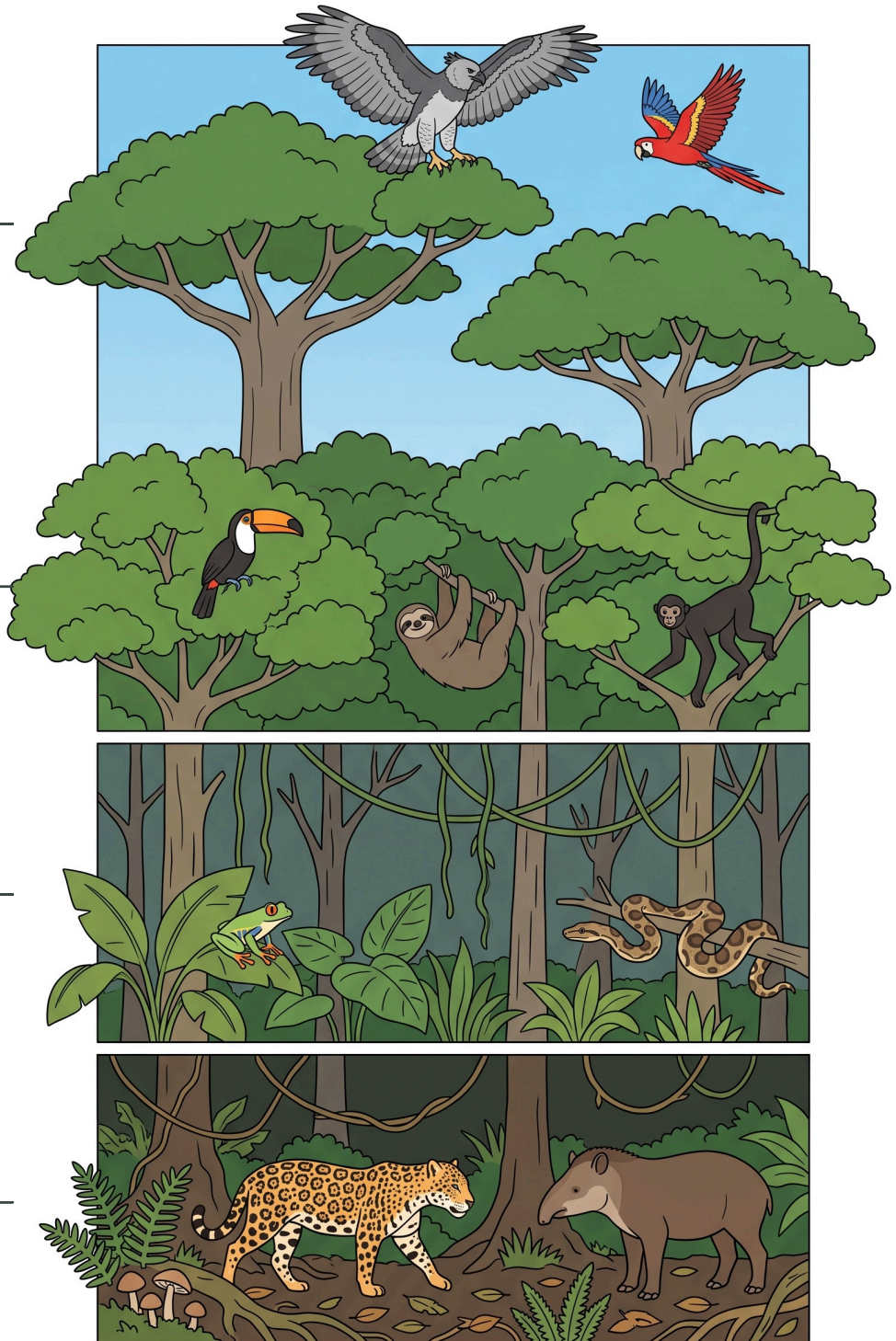
LIFE SCIENCE *Answer key*

Emergent layer

Canopy

Understory

Forest floor



A Forest With Four Floors: Answer Key

Answers are in green. Written answers will vary; these are examples.

A rainforest is a warm, wet forest. It rains almost every day. The trees grow very tall.

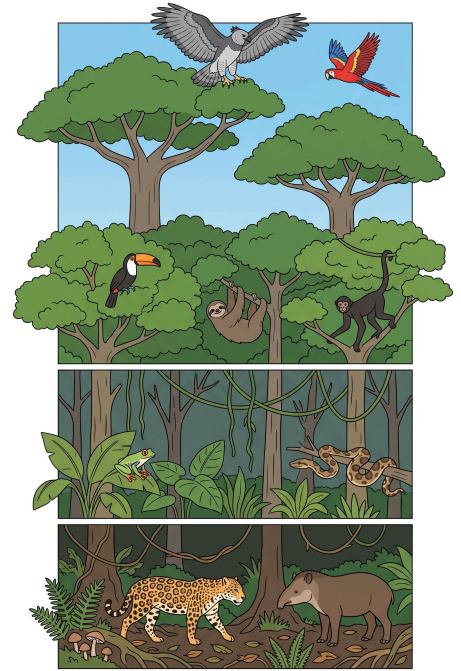
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Under the roof is the **understory**. It is shady and still. Plants grow big leaves to catch the light. Frogs and snakes live here.

The bottom is the **forest floor**. It is dark and damp. Jaguars and tapirs walk on the ground.



1. How many layers does a rainforest have?

- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☒ 4

2. Which layer is like a leafy roof?

- ☐ The emergent layer
- ☒ The canopy
- ☐ The forest floor

3. Why do plants in the understory grow big leaves?

To catch the light.

4. Which layer would you like to visit? Tell why.

Answers will vary. Example: The canopy, because most of the animals live there.

Who Lives Where?: Answer Key

Each animal is in the layer its clue names. The order inside a layer does not matter.

Emergent layer the tallest trees

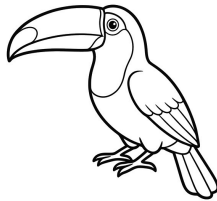
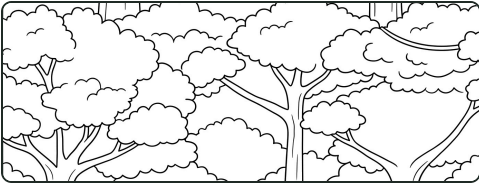


Harpy eagle



Macaw

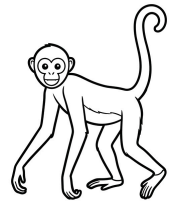
Canopy the leafy roof



Toucan

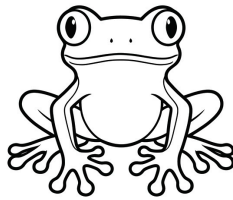


Sloth

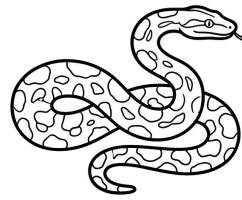


Spider monkey

Understory the shade under the roof

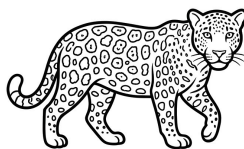
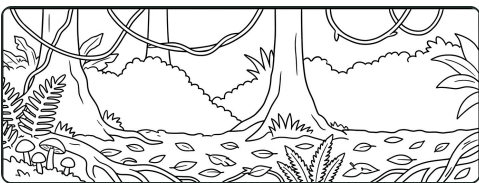


Tree frog

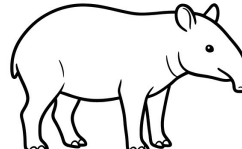


Boa

Forest floor the ground



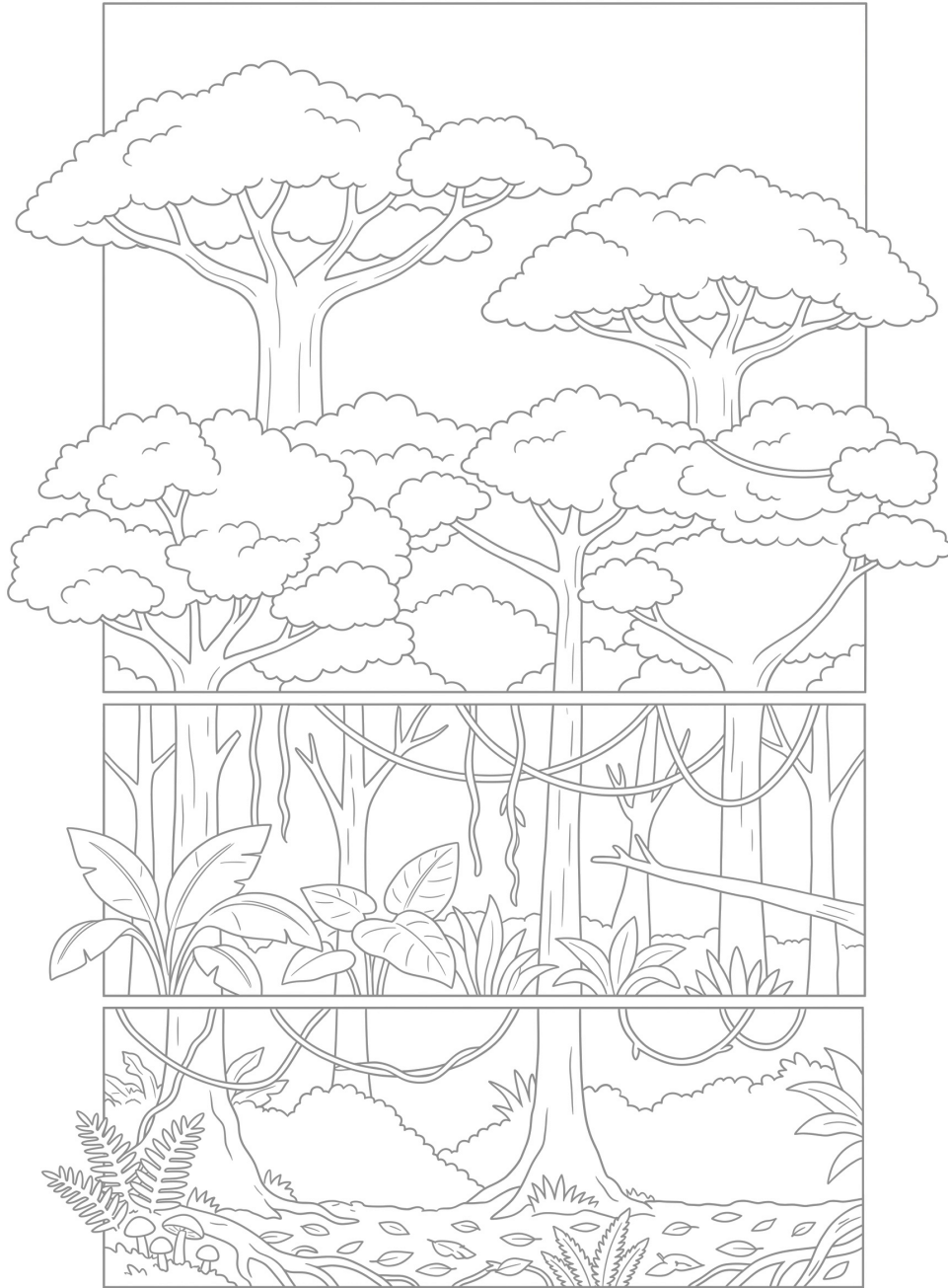
Jaguar



Tapir

Fill the Rainforest: Answer Key

Drawings will vary. Check that each animal is in a layer where it could live.



☐ **Emergent layer**
Harpy eagle, macaw

☐ **Canopy**
Toucan, sloth, spider monkey

☐ **Understory**
Tree frog, boa

☐ **Forest floor**
Jaguar, tapir

Coloring: brightest at the top, darkest at the bottom.

My favorite rainforest animal is the _____.

It lives in the _____.

Which Layer?: Answer Key

Answers are in green.

1. The treetops make a leafy roof here.

☐ Emergent layer

☒ **Canopy**

☐ Understory

☐ Forest floor

2. It is the darkest layer.

☐ Emergent layer

☐ Canopy

☐ Understory

☒ **Forest floor**

3. A few giant trees poke up into the sky.

☒ **Emergent layer**

☐ Canopy

☐ Understory

☐ Forest floor

4. It is shady, with vines and big leaves.

☐ Emergent layer

☐ Canopy

☒ **Understory**

☐ Forest floor

5. Most rainforest animals live here.

☐ Emergent layer

☒ **Canopy**

☐ Understory

☐ Forest floor

6. Fallen leaves cover the ground.

☐ Emergent layer

☐ Canopy

☐ Understory

☒ **Forest floor**

7. It is the sunniest and windiest layer.

☒ **Emergent layer**

☐ Canopy

☐ Understory

☐ Forest floor

8. Frogs sit on big leaves in the shade here.

☐ Emergent layer

☐ Canopy

☒ **Understory**

☐ Forest floor
