



Who's Hiding in the Rainforest?

Objective:

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of reptiles and amphibians.
2. Students will be able to identify a selection of reptiles and amphibians in a rainforest.
3. Students will identify general similarities and differences between reptiles and amphibians.

Performance Objectives:

Grade 1: Strand 4 – Concept 1: PO 1-2

Grade 2: Strand 4 – Concept 1: PO 4

NGSS: 1-LS 1. A-B; 2 – LS 2. A-B

SS: 1. W. 2

Grades: 1 - 2

Key Vocabulary:

- Rainforest
- Camouflage

Related Literature:

What's up in the Amazon Rainforest

Ginger L. Clarke

Animals of the Rainforest

Stephen Savage

Rainforest Frogs

Susan Newman

Background Information:

A rainforest is a place that has many, many trees and plants of different sizes and shapes. This forest is different from others because a rainforest gets rain every day of the year. With all the rain, a rainforest is a place that plants grow all around the trees and animals live in the trees and on the ground. One of the largest rainforests in the world is found in South America along the Amazon River. Rainforests are also warm and have high humidity. This makes a great home for many types of animals. The warm, moist forest of the Amazon Basin is home to insects, reptiles, amphibians and mammals. The Amazon River is filled with fresh water where many different types of fish live. The people living near the Amazon River use the water for their homes and farms, and use the forest as a source of food and shelter.

Just imagine all of the different animals you might see along the Amazon River and in the tropical rainforest.



Turtles are among the reptiles that live in a rainforest. Turtles enjoy swimming in the water and climbing on a log to warm their body in the sunlight. Many different types of turtles can be found in the rainforest.

This funny looking guy is called a mata mata turtle. A turtles' special feature is a shell on their back that protects them from being eaten by larger animals. The mata



mata turtle has a bumpy shell that looks like a rock and helps him blend in with the rocks along the river. This turtle mainly eats small fish. A mata mata sucks the fish into their mouth, spits out the water and swallows the fish whole.

Reptiles can also be found in the rainforest trees. Snakes and lizards like climbing along the tree branches to find food and shelter. Some reptiles will find a home in the fallen leaves on the ground below the rainforest trees. Leaves make a nice hiding place for many types of insects, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians.

The green tree python is one reptile that moves about the trees and the forest floor. With a fairly slim body, the green python can grow to six feet long, which is as tall as some grownups! Pythons can be recognized by their large head and angular snout. As his name suggests, the green python lives mainly in the branches, the python can sometimes be seen on the forest floor. The green python enjoys looping a coil of its body around a branch and resting its head in the middle of the coils.

The bright green color is similar to the leaves on the trees in the rainforest, which



makes camouflage for the reptile. The green tree python likes to eat small rodents, small mammals and other snakes, and may ambush his prey from a tree branch above. These snakes can live up to 20 years, and will produce many baby snakes. The green tree python lays about 6 to 30 eggs in tree holes or plants. Once hatched, the baby pythons are on their own to live independent lives in the

forest. Young pythons are often hunted by large birds of prey and must continue to find shelter among the dense trees.

Among the most interesting reptiles to be found in the Amazon rainforest habitat are the giant day geckos. With a bright green body and a stripe down its back, the



giant day gecko can also be recognized by the red dots along each side of its back. These geckos eat various insects. They also like sweet fruit nectar and pollen. Sometimes the males can be aggressive when protecting their habitat. Giant day geckos lay pairs of eggs that hatch in about 80 days.

Notice how big this gecko's eyes are. Can you guess why?

Most reptiles have very good eyesight and can spot their dinner quickly as they move through the forest trees.

The tropical rainforest is home to amphibians too. An amphibian is an animal that can spend time in the water and on land. Amphibians need to stay moist, which means they need to keep their body wet. For example, the dart frog is a tiny amphibian that lives in the leaves of trees in a tropical rainforest. These tiny frogs stay wet from the drops of rain that land on the leaves.



This little dart frog is sitting in a plant that has captured water from the rain. The frog can lay its eggs in the plant and hide them from other larger animals that might eat them.

Dart frogs have bright colors that warn other animals that they are poisonous. If another animal eats a dart frog, they will get very sick, and learn to leave these colorful little animals alone! Dart frogs eat insects like ants and termites.

Another type of amphibian is the White's tree frog. This frog is much larger than the dart frog and enjoys living in trees near the water. The White's tree frog is slow moving and does not like to jump, but his thick legs make this frog a good climber.



Generally bright green in color, the White's tree frog also has white spots along its sides and back. The sounds of the frog have a high pitch to warn off predators, and visitors to the rainforest can hear their sounds at night.

One amphibian that likes to live on the ground under logs and leaves is the tomato frog. These bright red frogs dig burrows in the ground under leaves for safety.

Tomato frogs can puff up with air when threatened. The sticky mucus secreted from their skin is a poison that can cause an allergic reaction to other animals.

Tomato frogs can live six years and eat insects and small invertebrates.



The tropical rainforest is full of living animals and plants. All life in the rainforest is important to humans and helps create a balance of life on Earth.

Sources: Smithsonian National Zoo; Animaldiversity.com; The Nature Conservancy; The Rainforest Alliance; San Diego Zoo.
Photos in public domain.

Procedures and Pre-Activities:

1. State the learning objective.
2. Read related literature.
3. Discuss the rainforest as compared to other types of forests. Refer to classroom text materials for clarification.
4. Discuss how rainfall and humidity impact the environment. Discuss the difference between living in a desert and living in a rainforest. Ask students to give examples of local animals and their habitats. Generate questions about their examples and compare to rainforest habitats.
5. Present background information and related pictures. Continue discussion of reptiles and amphibians and how they are similar and different. Ask open-ended questions about reptiles and amphibians to check for understanding.

Activity: “What is it?” is an activity that allows students to demonstrate knowledge and identify a reptile or an amphibian.

Activity: “Life in the Rainforest” asks student to demonstrate specific knowledge about a reptile and an amphibian.

Activity: “Compare the Creature” gives students an opportunity to be creative and demonstrate knowledge.

Reflection and Assessments: Students are assessed on various levels depending on the activity. Participation, grade standards and percentages may be applied.

WHAT IS IT?

There are many animals in the rainforest. Some are **reptiles** and some are **amphibians**. Can you tell what they are?



Circle the answer:

Reptile

Amphibian

What is the creature below? _____



Circle the answer:

Reptile

Amphibian

Life in the Rainforest

What does this reptile eat? _____



Circle your answer:

Where does this reptile live?

Land

Water

What does this amphibian eat? _____



Circle your answer:

Where does this amphibian live?

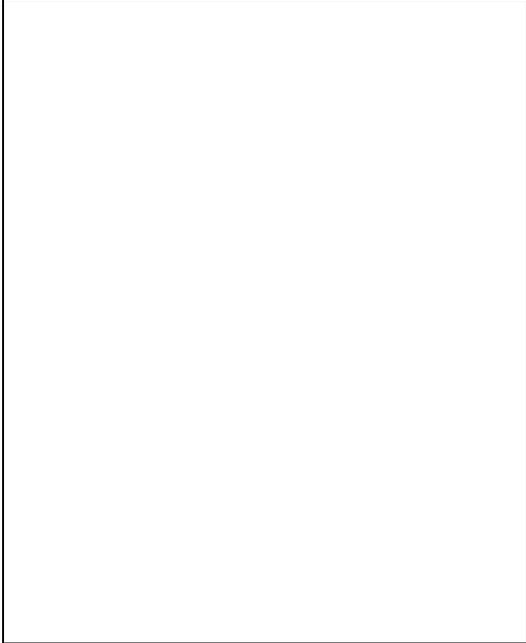
Desert

Rainforest

What is your favorite reptile? _____

Compare the Creature

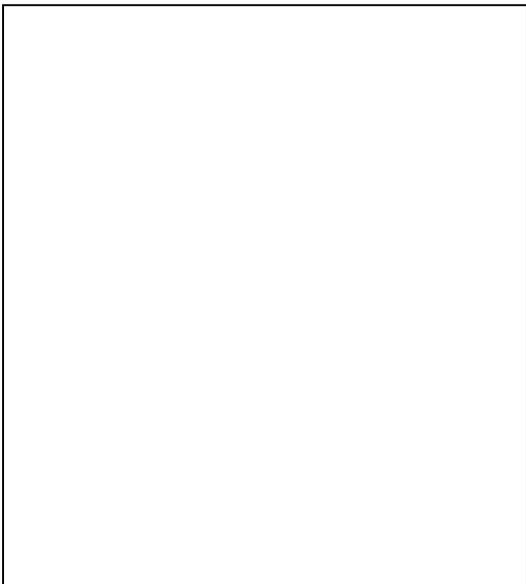
Draw an amphibian



Draw a reptile



How are they similar?



How are they different?

