

国标小学英语分级阅读 配合各种小学英语教材的辅助读物



The RAIN FOREST

雨林



北京师范大学出版社

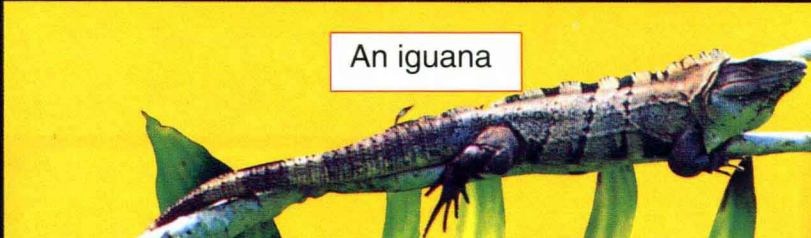


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The Rain Forest



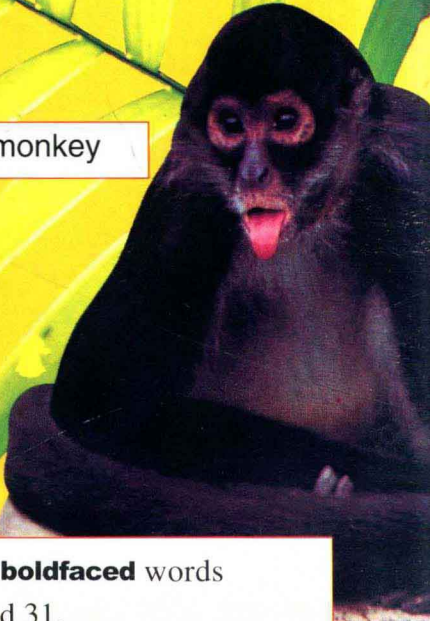
Written and photographed by Fred Fusselman
Illustrated by Ralph Whirly

An iguana with green and brown scales is perched on a light-colored branch. The background is a bright yellow with large green leaves.

An iguana

A butterfly with dark wings and intricate patterns is resting on a green leaf. The background is a bright yellow with large green leaves.

A butterfly

A dark-furred monkey is sitting and looking towards the camera with its tongue sticking out. The background is a bright yellow with large green leaves.

A monkey

A macaw with blue, yellow, and white feathers is perched on a branch, holding a small twig in its beak. The background is a bright yellow with large green leaves.

A macaw

You can find the definitions of **boldfaced** words used in this book on pages 30 and 31.

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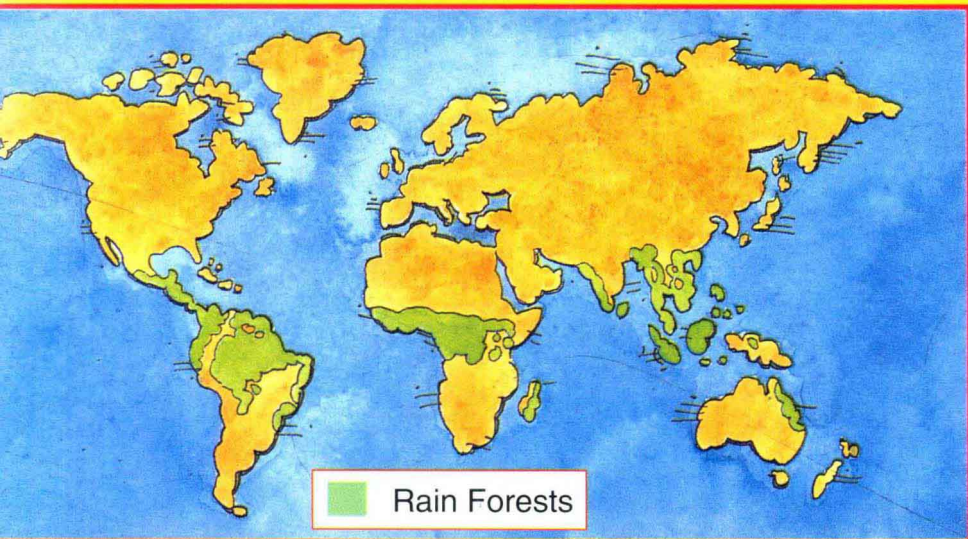
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What Is a Rain Forest?

Imagine an early morning walk in a **moist** forest. Listen to the sounds of waterfalls and the songs of birds in the trees. A jaguar rests on a tree branch, watching a monkey swing from a **vine**. Other animals walk quietly on the leaf-covered forest floor. Above the trees, a layer of rain clouds keeps the air moist and warm. You are walking through a "rain forest." This name is used to describe a forest that is wet all the time.

When is a forest called a rain forest?

- Rain must fall very often, but not all day every day. There are only two seasons: the wet season and the dry season. Don't let the word "dry" fool you - in the dry season, it rains every day, but not as much as it does in the wet season!
- The temperature usually stays between 20°C and 34°C. The clouds protect the forest from too much sunlight, so it doesn't get extremely hot. The clouds keep temperatures about the same.
- All rain forests have certain types of plants, such as trees and bushes. There are also plants with long vines that need the support of trees to **survive**. Then there are ferns and **mosses**, and flowers such as orchids.



The rainfall in rain forests ranges from 305 to 762 centimeters per year.



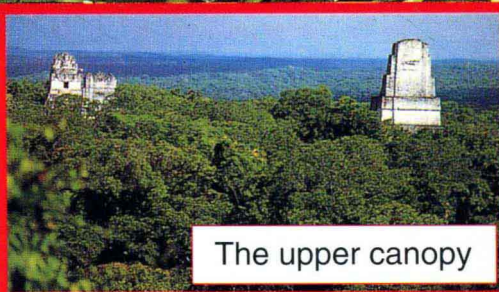
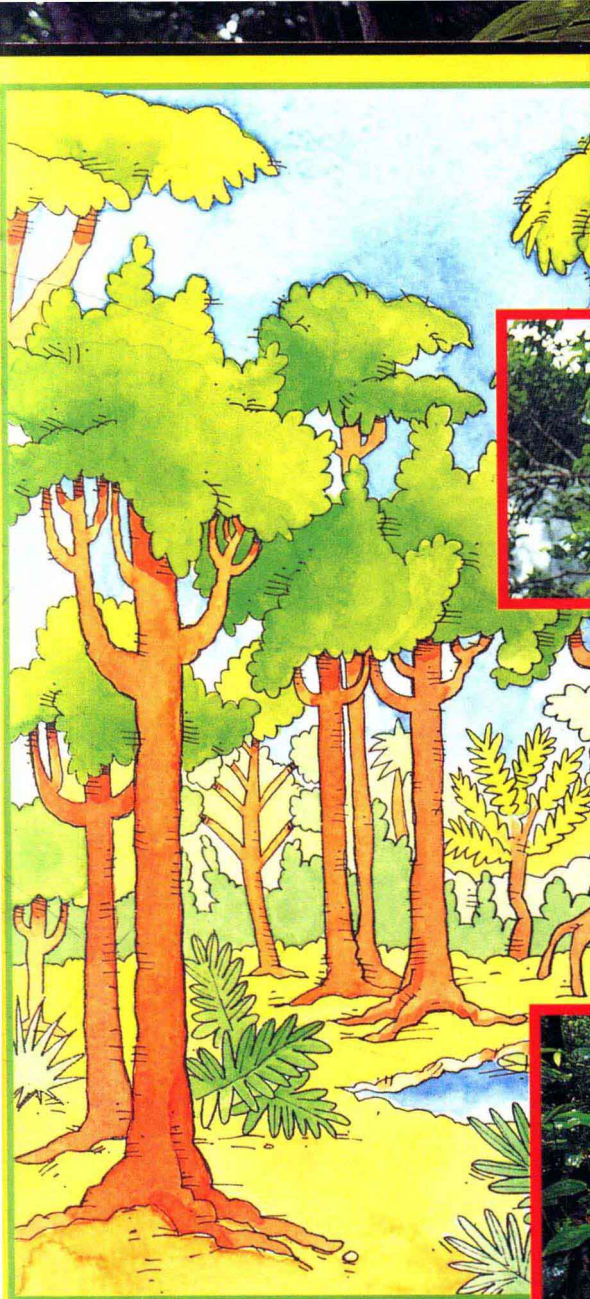
Layers of the Rain Forest

Tropical rain forests have four layers.
The plants and animals are different in each one.

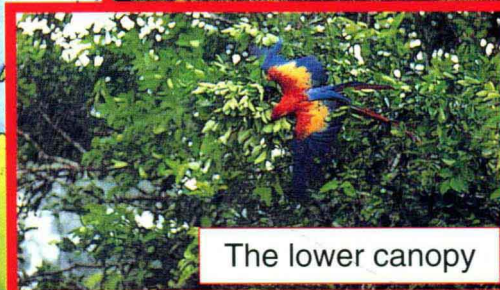
The layers are often called:

- The forest floor
- The understory
- The lower canopy
- The upper canopy

There are different animals and plants at each layer. These animals have become used to their own levels of the forest. They have **adapted** to life at their levels. But to survive, they all need the special combination of all the levels. Many of the plants and animals that live in the rain forest are found nowhere else on earth.



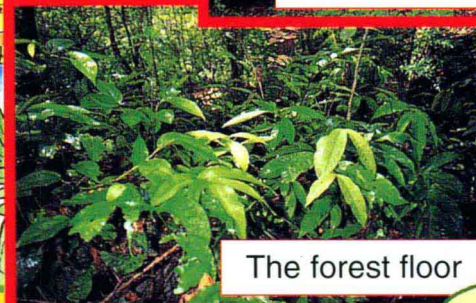
The upper canopy



The lower canopy

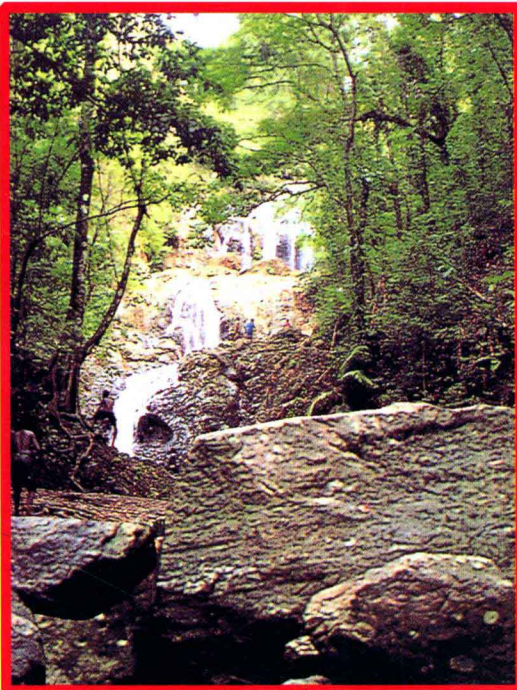


The understory



The forest floor

The Forest Floor



The forest floor is at ground level. Only about 1% of the sunlight shining on the forest reaches this level. Mosses and **fungi** grow well here.

Busy leaf-cutter ants carry leaves to their ant nests. These ants are fungi farmers. After they collect

the leaves in their nests, they add fungi to the pile. The fungi **break down** the leaves and make food for the ants.

Anteaters hunt for insects such as termites on the forest floor. The anteater has a sticky tongue that is 61 centimeters long. It's perfect for reaching into termite nests and getting the termites out.

Lizards, iguanas, snakes, spiders, insects, and other small animals also live on the forest floor.



The jaguar is the biggest meat eater in the forest. It climbs well and it runs fast. Its spotted coat is perfect **camouflage** for life in the rain forest.



This tapir is looking for something to eat.



An anteater

The Understory



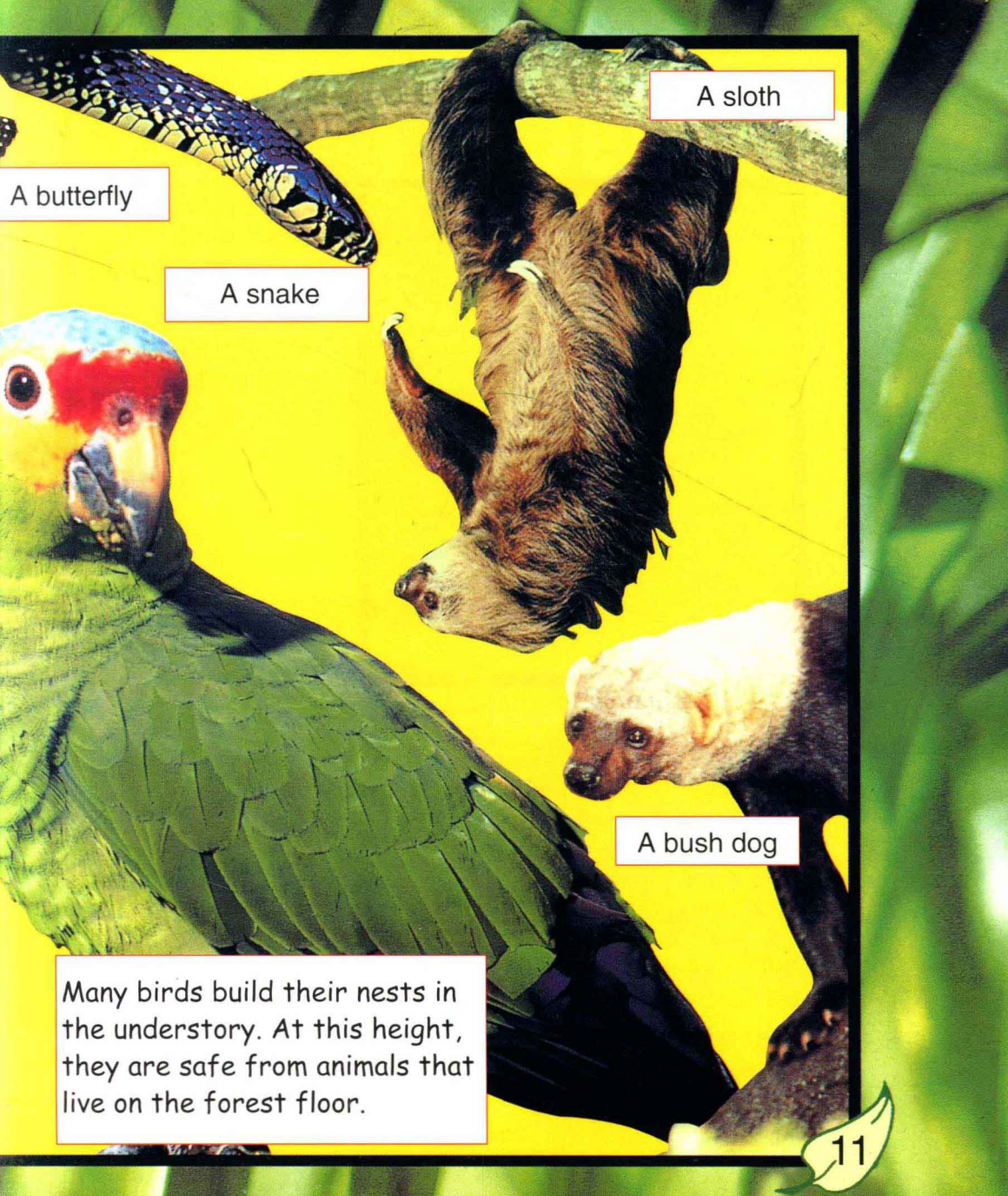
The understory is the layer formed mostly by shrubs and trees which are less than 10 meters tall. These plants receive less light, rain, and wind than trees that reach the canopy.

The vine snake lives in the understory. Its camouflage makes it look like a harmless vine.

Red-eyed tree frogs, lizards, bats, moths, and butterflies are also found in the understory.

Some animals, such as monkeys and bush dogs, have very useful tails. They can use their tails to hold onto vines and branches, so they can climb easily in the trees.

Three-toed sloths and other kinds of **mammals** also live in the understory.



A sloth

A butterfly

A snake

A bush dog

Many birds build their nests in the understory. At this height, they are safe from animals that live on the forest floor.

The Lower Canopy



The forest's lower canopy is 32 to 46 meters above the ground. It collects and holds 80% of the rain that falls on the forest, so not much rain reaches the ground.

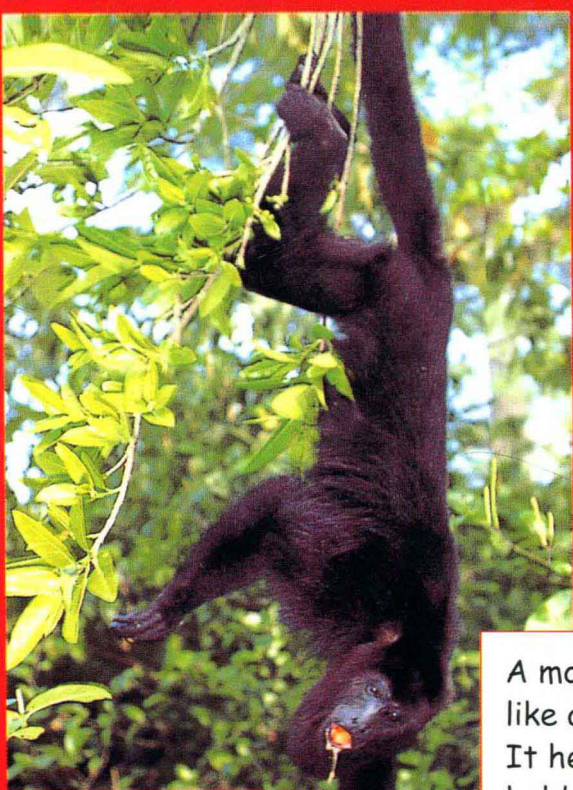
Plants called "epiphytes" hang from trees. These plants don't grow roots in the ground.

Their roots hang in the air, where they take in the nutrients the plants need to survive.

Monkeys, bats, iguanas, and frogs also live in the lower canopy. Some of these animals never go down to the forest floor. There are plenty of insects, fruits, and birds for them to eat in the treetops.

Falling is always a danger, but different animals have different ways of staying safe. For example, tree frogs' feet have sticky pads that can hold them safely on slippery places.





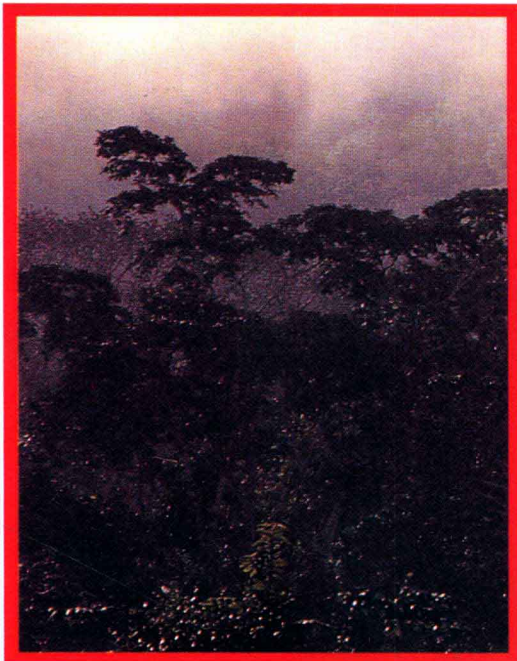
A monkey's tail is like a fifth hand. It helps the monkey hold on to branches.



Toucans and other birds eat fruit and nuts. These birds help spread seeds through the forest because the seeds from the fruit and nuts they eat pass through their bodies and fall on the ground.



The Upper Canopy



The upper canopy is the highest layer of the rain forest. It is made of the tallest trees, which rise 23 to 76 meters above the ground. They are strong enough to survive the effects of wind, rain, and sunlight. The tops of the trees are shaped like open umbrellas, and the trees have pointed leaves, so the rain

slides off easily. This keeps the trees from holding too much water, so they stay healthy.

These trees are very tall, but their root systems do not go deep into the ground. They spread out across the forest floor. Many of the animals and plants of the forest floor live among their roots.

Many kinds of insects live in the upper canopy, and they are often food for the birds there. There are also **reptiles** and **amphibians** living at this level.

Vultures, eagles, and other large birds build their nests in the upper canopy.

These **predators** sit in the treetops and watch for **prey** down below.



One fifth of all the birds in the world live in the tall trees of the Amazon rain forest. One third of all birds live in rain forests some or all of the time.

People of the Rain Forest

People have lived in rain forests for more than 40,000 years. Living in small groups, they learned to find plants in the forest for food, and then to grow vegetables in small gardens. Their homes were made from the leaves and wood of forest plants. They also found how to use plants and animals of the forest to make medicine and **poison**. Hunters used the poison to kill animals for food. For many thousands of years, these people didn't have much effect on the **environment** because there weren't very many of them. They didn't use many of the **resources** found in the forest, either.

Today, about 1,000 different groups of native people live in rain forests. At one time, more than 6 million native people lived in the Amazon forest of South America. Today, there are only about 250,000. The forest is smaller now, and other people have moved in, bringing sicknesses that have killed the natives.