

The Colors and Shapes of Language 2

Unit 8

Rainforest

Activity 1 – Naming

- The teacher says, **“Let’s name animals found in the rainforest.”** [Students name.]
- The teacher says, **“Let’s name facts about the rainforest.”** [Students name.]
 - The teacher says, **“Let’s name levels of the rainforest.”** [Students name.]
 - The teacher says, **“Let’s name places rainforests grow.”** [Students name.]
 - The teacher says, **“Let’s name plants found in the rainforest.”** [Students name.]

[The teacher needs a picture of a chimpanzee, orangutan, common tree shrew and flying dragon.]

Activity 2 – Describing

- The teacher shows a chimpanzee and says, **“I want you to describe this animal. Tell me the name of this animal.”** [Students respond.]
“Tell me some categories or groups that a chimpanzee would fit.” [Students respond.]
“Tell me the function of a chimpanzee.” [Students respond.]
“Tell me the color of the chimpanzee.” [Students respond.]
“Tell me its shape.” [Students respond.]
 The teacher shows a orangutan and says, **“Compare this to this. Let’s compare the colors, sizes, shapes, and functions of these two animals.”** [Students respond.]
- The teacher shows a common tree shrew and says, **“I want you to describe this object. Tell me the name of this object.”** [Students respond.]
“Tell me some categories or groups that a common tree shrew would belong.” [Students respond.]
“Tell me the function of a common tree shrew.”[Students respond.]
“Tell me the color of the common tree shrew.” [Students respond.]
“Tell me its shape.” [Students respond.]
 The teacher shows a flying dragon and says, **“Compare this flying dragon to the common tree shrew. Let’s compare the colors, sizes, shapes, and functions of these two objects.”** [Students respond.]

Activity 3 – Listening to an Expository passage

The teacher reads the passage.



The Rainforest

A forest that is considered a rainforest has tall trees in a region of year-round warmth. Rainforests lie near the equator and often have as much as 100 inches of rain per year. Even though they cover less than 6% of the Earth's surface, they produce 40% of the oxygen. Rainforests have more kinds of trees than any other area of the world. One-fourth of all medicines we use come from the rainforest. The trees in the rainforest have straight trunks that don't branch out for more than 100 feet or more. There are four distinct layers of the rainforest.

The *emergent* trees are 100 to 230 feet tall and are widely spaced apart. Their root system is shallow and so they have buttresses that spread out for up to thirty feet from the trunk. Dry winds blow across the emergent trees and cause them to have small, pointed leaves.

The *upper canopy* trees are from 60 to 130 feet tall and have the most access to light. Food is always available in the area so most of the rainforest animals live at this level and often never venture to the forest floor. The leaves of these trees have "drip spouts" that allow the rain to run off.

The *understory* has trees that are about 60 feet tall. You find the trunks of the canopy trees at this level. The humidity is always high and there is constant shade.

You also find constant shade on the *forest floor*. There is so little light that few other bushes or plants are able to grow here. It would be easy to walk along the forest floor. The top soil is thin and of poor quality because the trees absorb most of the organic matter.

- b. The teacher asks the following questions after reading the story:
 - i. Give the definition of a rainforest.
 - ii. What percentage of the world's oxygen comes from the rainforests?
 - iii. Name the four levels of a rainforest.
 - iv. Describe each level.
 - v. Where do most of the animals live?
 - vi. Could you walk along the rainforest floor?
 - vii. Why would we want to save the rainforest?

Activity 4 – Card Pyramid

The teacher gives each student eleven index cards.

Students decide the main idea of the passage read by the teacher. Students write "Rainforest" on one index card. They place this card at the top of their desks.

Students brainstorm supporting ideas – General information about the rainforest, emergent trees, upper canopy, understory, and forest floor.

Students write each supporting idea on a separate card. They place these cards in a row under the card marked "Rainforest."

Students brainstorm details about the supporting ideas. They write the details about each supporting idea on separate cards.

Students place these cards in a row under the row of supporting ideas.

Students name the main idea. They name the supporting ideas. They name the details.

Students number the cards. Main idea – 1; Supporting idea – 2; Details about that supporting idea – 3; Supporting idea – 4; Details about that supporting idea – 5; Supporting idea – 6; Details about that supporting idea – 7; Supporting idea – 8; Details about that supporting idea – 9; Supporting idea – 10; Details about that supporting idea – 11

Students collect the cards in numerical order and place a rubber band around them.



Activity 5 – Summarizing the Passage

Students take their pack of cards.

Students work in pairs.

Using their cards, each student in a pair takes a turn summarizing the passage on rainforests.

Students place their cards in numerical order and place a rubber band around them.

Activity 6 – Writing

Students lay out their cards in a pyramid.

Using the cards as an outline, students write a summary paragraph about the rainforest.

The summary paragraph should have 1/3 the number of words as the original paragraph (293 words).

Activity 7 – Editing

Students edit their summary paragraphs. If they have more than 88 words, they need to decide which words can be eliminated.

Activity 8– Writing

a. Students write a how-to paragraph using this prompt: We could save the rainforest by...

b. Students use the following outline to write the paragraph.

Sentence 1 – What is to be done?

Sentence 2 – Why would someone want to save the rainforest?

Sentence 3 – What equipment is needed?

Sentence 4 – How long will it take?

Sentences 5-8 – What are the steps?

Sentence 9 – How will someone feel when the process is finished?

Activity 9 – Editing

a. Students edit paragraphs using the outline.

b. Students share their paragraphs.

