5TH GRADE READING · NONFICTION

Layers of the Rain Forest

Name _____ Date _____

Nonfiction | 199 words | Text structure

I read it: ☆ to myself ☆ to a grown-up ☆ to a friend

1 Tropical rain forests cover only about six percent of Earth's land, but more than half of the world's kinds of plants and animals live there. Scientists describe a rain forest in four layers, from the treetops down to the ground. Each layer gets a different amount of sunlight, so each one is home to different living things.

2 The **emergent** layer is made of the tallest trees, which poke out above the rest of the forest. Eagles build nests here, and butterflies flutter in the bright sun and strong wind.

3 Just below is the **canopy,** a thick roof of leaves and branches. The **canopy** catches most of the sunlight, and it is the busiest layer of all. Monkeys, toucans and tree frogs live here, and many of them never touch the ground.

4 Under the **canopy** is the understory, where it is shady and still. Plants here have giant leaves to catch what little light gets through. Jaguars rest on branches, and snakes wait quietly for prey. Last comes the forest floor, which is dark and **damp.** Only about two percent of the sunlight reaches it. Fallen leaves rot quickly here, and insects, mushrooms and worms turn them back into soil.

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

Scan for more free practice

Layers of the Rain Forest: questions

Name _____ Date _____

I can find answers in the text. Look back at the text to check.

1 Circle the best answer

1. Which layer is the busiest?

(a) the understory (b) the canopy (c) the forest floor

2. Why do understory plants have big leaves?

(a) to stay dry (b) to hide from monkeys (c) to catch the little light

3. How is the passage organized?

(a) top layer to bottom (b) oldest to newest (c) problem and solution

2 True or false? Circle one.

Most of the sunlight reaches the forest floor.	True	False
The emergent layer has the tallest trees.	True	False
Some canopy animals never touch the ground.	True	False

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

Scan for more free practice

Layers of the Rain Forest: words and writing

Name _____ Date _____

1 Match each word to its meaning. Draw a line.

emergent	○	○ a roof of leaves and branches
canopy	○	○ a little wet
damp	○	○ coming out above the rest

2 Write your answer in a full sentence.

Choose two layers. How are they different? Use details from the text.

3 Draw and label something you learned.

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

Scan for more free practice

FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Answer key: Layers of the Rain Forest

1 Circle the best answer

1. b) the canopy
2. c) to catch the little light
3. a) top layer to bottom

2 True or false

False: Most of the sunlight reaches the forest floor.

True: The emergent layer has the tallest trees.

True: Some canopy animals never touch the ground.

3 Word meanings

emergent: coming out above the rest

canopy: a roof of leaves and branches

damp: a little wet

4 Written answer (sample)

Sample: The canopy is bright and busy, with monkeys and toucans. The forest floor is dark and damp, and only about two percent of the sunlight reaches it.

Scan for more free practice