Name _____ Date _____

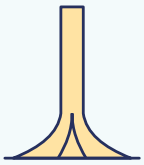
Rainforest survivors

How living things cope with heavy rain, deep shade and crowded trees.

1 Learn



Rainforests are hot, wet and packed with life. It rains almost every day, and tall trees block out most of the light below.



Buttress roots
wide roots prop up giant trees in thin soil



Drip tips
pointed tips let rain run off leaves fast



Tree frog
sticky toe pads cling to wet leaves



Toucan
a long bill reaches fruit on thin twigs

Worked example: why do so many rainforest leaves have drip tips?

1. The problem: it rains nearly every day. Water sitting on a leaf lets mould and moss grow, which blocks the light the leaf needs.

2. The feature: a long, pointed **drip tip** channels the water to one point, so it runs off quickly.

3. So: the leaf dries fast and stays clean, ready to catch the light.

Flip's tip: in a rainforest, water is easy to find. The big race is for **light**. Climbing plants grow up tree trunks to reach it, and plants on the dark forest floor have huge leaves to catch what little there is.

Warm up: write **R** if it helps with heavy **rain** or **L** if it helps reach **light**.

- [ ] leaves with drip tips
- [ ] vines climbing up tree trunks
- [ ] huge leaves on the forest floor
- [ ] shiny, waxy leaves that shed water

Grown-ups: rainforest plants are adapted to too much water and too little light, the opposite of desert plants. Ask: "How is this different from a cactus?"

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2 Try it together a child and a grown-up, about 10 minutes



The drip-tip test

You need: a clean plastic food bag or some kitchen foil, child-safe scissors, a pen, a teaspoon, a cup of water and a tray or plate.

1. Draw two leaves the same size on the bag or foil: one **round**, one with a long, **pointed tip**. Cut them out.
2. Hold the round leaf over the tray, tilted down a little, like a leaf on a branch.
3. Drip 5 teaspoons of water onto the middle, one at a time. Watch where it goes, and how much stays on the leaf.
4. Do the same with the pointed leaf, held at the same angle. Which leaf sheds its water faster?

Leaf	Where did the water go?	How much stayed on: lots, some or very little?
Round		
Drip tip		

Grown-ups: on the pointed leaf, the water gathers and runs down to the tip, then drips off. On the round leaf, more water tends to sit or spread out. Ask: "Why would a soggy leaf be a problem in a rainforest?"

3 Practise

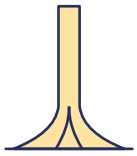
A. Draw a line to match each animal's adaptation to how it helps.

a tree frog's sticky toe pads ●	● warn predators that it is poisonous
a sloth moving very slowly ●	● hold branches like an extra hand
a spider monkey's gripping tail ●	● cling to wet, slippery leaves
a poison dart frog's bright colours ●	● reach fruit on very thin twigs
a toucan's long bill ●	● stay hidden from eagles

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B. Rainforest soil is thin, so tree roots can't grow deep. How do buttress roots help a giant tree?



C. A liana is a vine that starts on the dark forest floor and climbs up a tree trunk. Why does it climb?

D. Is each one a body feature or a behaviour? Write **F** or **B**.

- [ ] a sloth's long, curved claws
- [ ] a sloth moving very slowly
- [ ] a frog's sticky toe pads
- [ ] a jaguar hunting at night

E. Design a plant for the dark rainforest floor. Draw it and label **two** adaptations.

Challenge

Sam says, "Rainforest plants need adaptations to find water, just like a cactus." Is Sam right? Explain.

I can… Tick when you can.

- [ ] explain how drip tips help leaves
- [ ] explain how plants reach the light
- [ ] explain how a rainforest animal is adapted