

Amazon Rainforest

How do animals adapt and survive?

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Key Words

environment the surroundings and conditions an animal lives in.

survival the fight to stay alive.

adaptation the way an animal has changed to become better able to survive in its environment.

camouflage to hide or disguise yourself.

prey an animal that is hunted and killed for food.

canopy the tallest layer of trees in the rainforest.

toxin the poison produced by an animal or plant.

Starter Task

You have two minutes to list as many words as you can to **describe** the conditions in the Amazon rainforest.

For example, to describe the conditions in the Arctic, you might say:

- cold
- lack of vegetation
- sparsely populated

When your two minutes is up, we will share our adjectives with the class. Add any you hadn't thought of to your list.



Your time is up when the bar fades to red.

Start

End

Poison Dart Frog



The highly webbed, sticky feet that help the dart frog trees to predators not food. They do the same as frogs in the most toxic of all have webbed toes like other frogs.

They have glands that release toxins onto their skin that can kill anything that eats them. The only animal that is immune to their toxin is the snake.

They eat small flies, bugs, ants and caterpillars; all of which are abundant in the rainforest.

Bengal Tiger



The Bengal tiger is one of the biggest animals in the rainforest. It is carnivorous and a strong hunter.

Their fur is very dark and has stripes that help them hide in the forest. They also use their claws to climb trees and to dig for food. This helps them survive in the rainforest.

Their strong, sharp teeth allow them to eat meat. This allows them to move quickly and quietly through the forest while hunting. They can survive for days without eating. They also have good night vision so can hunt in the day and night. This increases their food choices and hunting success rate.

Three-Toed Sloth



They move extremely slowly. This conserves energy (meaning they need less food) and helps them avoid being seen by predators.

The three-toed sloth lives in the canopy of the rainforest. They rarely go down to the forest floor so they avoid contact with a lot of the predators.

They sleep for up to 20 hours per day. They are still for so long that algae grows on their fur. This helps them with camouflage.

They are vegetarians, living on leaves and fruits which are abundant in the rainforest.

Piranhas



They work in teams, called 'schools', to kill large animals such as caiman and young cattle.

Piranhas have razor-sharp, triangle-shaped teeth on their upper and lower jaws. These clamp together perfectly and make it almost impossible for their prey to escape.

They have a strong sense of smell and can locate their prey accurately in the water. This helps them survive in the murky waters of the Amazon.

Piranhas have thick scales on their heads to protect them from injury whilst attacking prey.

Spider Monkeys



The tails of spider monkeys are long and straight. They can use them as an extra limb, allowing them to hang and swing in trees easily.

They are omnivores, eating both plants and vegetables, therefore they have a wide range of potential food sources. They feed mainly on food that can be found in trees such as seeds, figs and bird eggs. They usually have one baby at a time with gaps of up to five years between babies. This allows them to focus on keeping babies safe while they are young, protecting and educating them to find food high up in the canopy out of reach of many predators. This is also where the most nutritious leaves can be found.

Jaguar



Jaguars have extremely strong jaws, allowing them to bite and kill their prey more efficiently than any big cat.

They have padded paws that allow them to walk quietly through the rainforest. They also have excellent eyesight, making them good hunters. They are mainly nocturnal which also helps them from predators whilst hunting.

They are good swimmers which allows them to hunt for prey on the other side of the river. This also helps them have a varied diet ranging from snails to monkeys, meaning they rarely struggle to find food.

Toucan



They have four toes on each foot. Two facing backwards, two forwards. These help them balance in the trees.

Toucans have very large, colourful bills. This is mainly used for eating and attracting a mate. It can also be used as a weapon if necessary as it is sharp.

They mainly eat fruit and use their bill to pick and break it open. Fruit is widely available in the rainforest so they rarely struggle to find food.

They are agile, well camouflaged and have exceptional eyesight. All of these features help them avoid predators easily.

Army Ants



Army ants live in colonies of 100 thousand to two million ants. They have strength in numbers that allows them to swarm on and kill their prey.

They eat larger insects, such as cockroaches and tarantulas, which are widely available in the lower layers of the rainforest.

They have large stingers and mandibles that allow them to subdue, kill and eat their prey.

They can link their bodies together to form a secure shell around their queen and young.

They are nomadic so they only build temporary homes before relocating to better feeding grounds.

Design Your Own Animal

Your task is to design a unique animal, perfectly adapted to life in the Amazon rainforest.

Check your list of conditions and make sure it has ways of coping with environmental problems such as heat, predators and competition for food.

You should:

1. Draw a picture of your animal and label the key features that help it to survive in the Amazon.
2. Add explanations to your labels, showing how these features help them survive.
3. Give your animal a name.



Plenary Quiz

1 Who has sticky feet to help them climb trees?

2 Who uses their tail as a fifth limb to help them climb trees?

3 Who has dark, stripy fur for camouflage?

4 Who uses their bill to break open fruit?

5 Who lives in a colony of up to 2 million?

Plenary Quiz

6 Who swims to help them cool down?

7 Who sleeps for up to 20 hours per day?

8 Who has triangular teeth to help them clamp on to and grip their prey?

9 How does the algae on their fur help the three toed sloth survive in the rainforest?

10 How do the pads on the feet of the Bengal tiger and jaguar help them survive in the rainforest.

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Poison dart frog

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Three-toed sloth

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Piranhas

9 How does the algae on their fur help the three toed sloth survive in the rainforest?

It is good camouflage

10 How do the pads on the feet of the Bengal tiger and jaguar help them survive in the rainforest.

They help them creep quietly around the forest whilst hunting



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