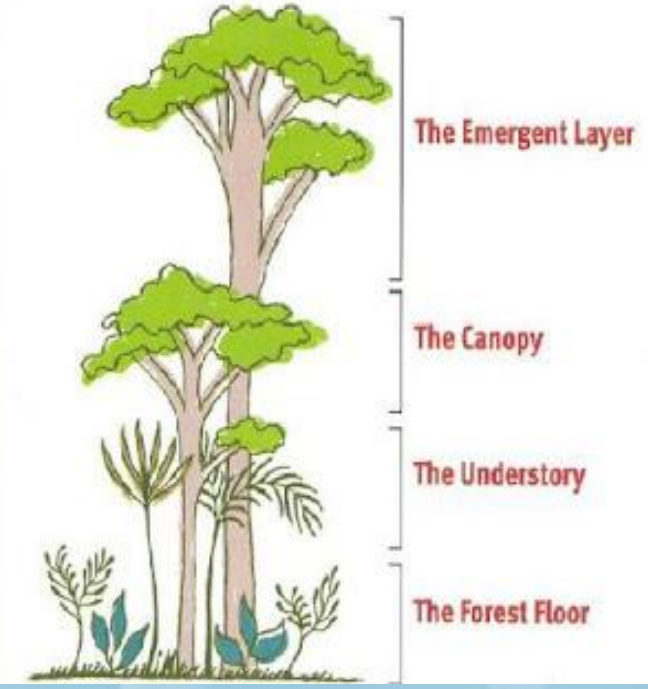
How do people, animals, and plants survive and thrive in the rainforest?

Key Vocabulary

Tropical Rainforest	A dense forest with high levels of rainfall found around the Earth's tropics
Equator	An imaginary line running around the middle of the Earth.
Humid	A hot, damp climate with a high level of water vapour in the air.
Deforestation	Cutting down and clearing of forests.
Endangered	A species of plant or animal which is at high risk of extinction
Extinction	When a species of plant or animal dies out forever.
Species	A group of similar animals or plants

Layers of the rainforest



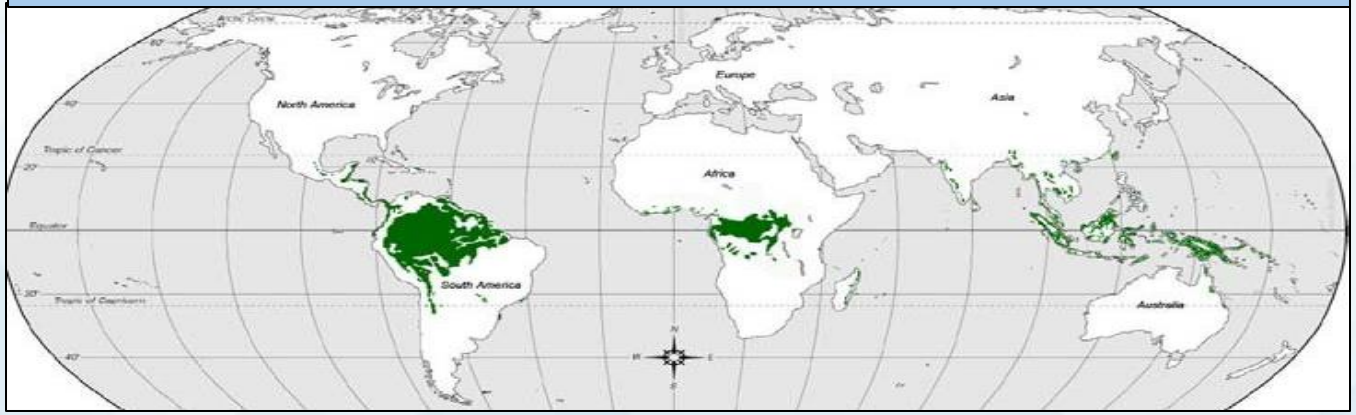
Trees in the emergent layer receive the most sunlight and rain. Some of the tallest trees can reach 75m tall. Few animals live here.

The canopy also receives lots of sunlight and rain. It is home to more animals than any other layer.

Shorter trees and shrubs grow in this warm, damp layer. It receives much less sunlight and rain than the higher areas – this is blocked by the dense canopy above.

Very little grows on the forest floor as there is such little light. Leaf litter from the plants above helps nutrients to go back into the soil.

Map of tropical rainforests



Key facts about tropical rainforests

- Tropical rainforests are found near the equator and between the topic of Cancer and the tropic of Capricorn
- Rainforests cover only 6% of the Earth's surface, however they are home to more than half of the World's plan and animal species.
- Tropical rainforests are hot and humid with temperatures consistently between 21-30 degrees Celsius. It usually rains every day.
- About 50 million people live in or depend on the rainforests including around 1000 native tribes worldwide.

Deforestation

Positives

- Provides wood for useful products
- Home can be built using the timber
- Deforested land has the potential to be used to produce food.
- Creates jobs for people
- Many plants have medicinal properties which can be used to create new medicines
- Tree roots help to stabilise the ground and absorb moisture. This can help to prevent flooding and landslides.

Negatives

- Animal and plant species are at risk of becoming endangered or extinct
- Native tribes lose their homeland
- New medicines cannot be developed if plant species become extinct
- Contributes to global warming
- Possible increases in flooding and landslides. This may endanger people, their homes and jobs