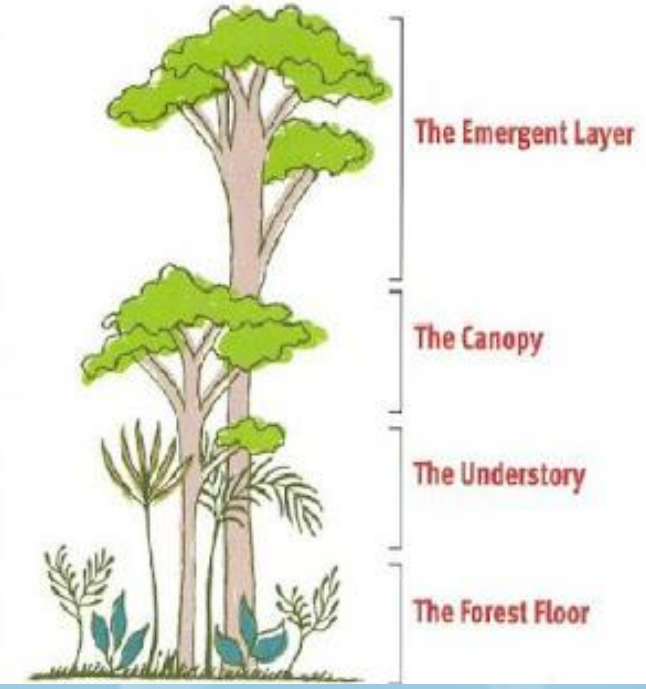
What makes tropical rainforests special and important and why should we protect them?

Key Vocabulary

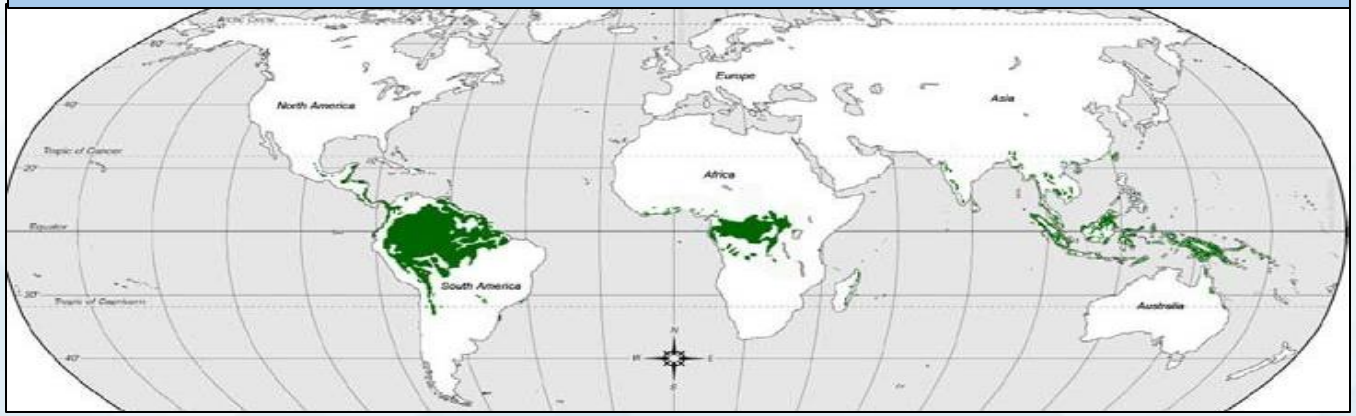
Tropical Rainforest	A dense forest with high levels of rainfall found around the Earth's tropics
Equator	An imaginary line running around the middle of the Earth.
Humid	A hot, damp climate with a high level of water vapour in the air.
Deforestation	Cutting down and clearing of forests.
Endangered	A species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

Layers of the rainforest



The Emergent Layer	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	The canopy also receives lots of sunlight and rain. It is home to more animals than any other layer.
The Understory	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.
The Forest Floor	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 mostly between the topic of Cancer and the tropic of Capricorn
- Rainforests cover only 3% of the Earth's surface, however they are home to more than half of the World's plan and animal species.
- Tropical rainforests are found in hot and humid climates. It usually rains every day.
- The Amazon rainforest is the world's largest tropical rainforest and can be found in South America.
- Rainforests provide food and medicinal plants that benefits billions of people. 25% of the world's modern medicines are derived from rainforest plants.
- Rainforests are known as the lungs of the Earth and they generate 50-80% of the world's oxygen.
- Deforestation is a major threat to our tropical rainforests. 80% of global deforestation is a result of agriculture.

tree-nation

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