



## Family Home Learning Pack

# RAINFORESTS

### Notes for parents and carers:

These home learning packs have been compiled by Better Planet Education to support you whilst your children are at home during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Each week, we will include suggestions for activities you can do alongside your children, as well as those that they can do independently, whilst you are working from home.

We will attempt to suggest activities which require no special materials other than those you may find around the house. It may be possible to pick up some resources during your occasional shop for essentials but please do not aim to shop specifically for listed supplies! We will also attempt to minimise the need to print out any materials.

### In your pack each week:

- \* Open ended project ideas and research topics
- \* Activities to explore independently or together
- \* Games to play
- \* Ideas for science experiments
- \* Art and craft ideas
- \* Links to other learning resources
- \* A use each week for toilet roll tubes...

# ACTIVITY IDEAS

## Learn about Rainforest ecosystems:



There are a wide variety of resources available to support children with finding out about rainforest habitats available online. The rainforest is home to huge numbers of animals and plants. Many of our foods (including all that Easter chocolate!) started life as plants in the rainforest, as do the ingredients for around 25% of our medicines. The trees in the rainforests are crucial to controlling the climate, yet huge areas of rainforest are being destroyed daily. Find out more about amazing rainforest ecosystems here:

Rainforest factsheet: <https://ypte.org.uk/factsheets/rainforests/introduction>

Rainforest animals: <https://ypte.org.uk/factsheets/rainforest-animals/introduction>

Rainforest tribes: <https://ypte.org.uk/factsheets/rainforest-tribes/a-garden-of-eden>

The following sequence of lessons is designed for school use, but could be adapted for use at home and comes accompanied by a powerpoint presentation of rainforest images: <https://ypte.org.uk/lesson-plans/rainforests>

Older, but still useful:

<http://ypte.org.uk/downloads/conservation-education-24-rainforests>

The following packs include numerous photo packs, maps, quizzes and printable worksheets about rainforests. The activities have been designed for use in schools but are adaptable for home learning.

### Designed for Key Stage 1:

<https://www.actionaid.org.uk/school-resources/resource/ks1-amazon-rainforest-brazil-package>

### Designed for Key Stage 2:

<https://www.actionaid.org.uk/school-resources/resource/ks2-amazon-rainforest-brazil-package>

## Make a miniature terrarium:

Although the rainforest gets the water that it needs for the plants to survive from rainfall, the trees also release water from their leaves in a process called transpiration.

It's possible to make a miniature rainforest ecosystem inside a closed container, called a terrarium. Observing what happens to the plants in a terrarium can be a helpful way of understanding a rainforest ecosystem and the water cycle.

[The following example is designed to be sealed off and need never be opened again, but it does contain activated carbon, which would need to be ordered online, unless you happen to have some for your fish tank. It's entirely possible to make a simple terrarium without this and just using some birdseed or wheatgrass seed sprinkled on to the soil, or some grass and a plant from the garden instead]



### You will need:

- \* A container that can be sealed (a large Kilner jar works well)
- \*Gravel
- \*Soil
- \*Activated carbon (used for keeping fish tanks clear)
- \*pistachio shells (if possible) OR Moss
- \*Some small plants, ideally rainforest like, such as a tiny fern and a tiny palm (but something from the garden will work fine!)

You may also want to add a small toy rainforest animal to live in the terrarium!

First, make a layer of gravel in your jar, about 4 cm deep. Layer the soil on top of this with the carbon and pistachio shells if you have these.

Add the small plants, with a further layer of soil to hold them in place. Top this off with moss and a few more small stones. Put your rainforest animals in, too!

Give the terrarium a little water and then seal it off and place it in indirect sunlight. You should be able to watch water evaporate and form condensation on the inside of the jar. This will 'rain' on the plants and keep them watered!

For a 'how to' using a 2l drinks bottle container, follow this link:

<https://craftingagreenworld.com/articles/terrarium-diy-miniature-rainforest/>



## Rainforest in my house hunt:

Wait... I don't have a rainforest in my house!

Maybe not, but do you know how many things in your house have been grown in the rainforest or have been developed from plants that have grown there? All of the following products come from rainforest plants:

### Can you find:

- Bananas?
- Cinnamon?
- Chocolate?
- Coffee?
- Nuts?
- Coconut?
- Rubber?



If you have access to a globe or atlas, you could look up information about where these plants first originated. These links will take you to a series of cards showing you the plants growing in the rainforest, together with where they first originated (though these days, many of the plants have been introduced into

other regions of the world.)

### Rainforest plant cards:

<http://homeschoolden.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/3-part-card-Rainforest-Plants-page1-pdf.pdf>

<http://homeschoolden.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/3-part-card-Rainforest-Plants-page2-pdf.pdf>

<http://homeschoolden.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/3-part-card-Rainforest-Plants-page3-pdf.pdf>

## This week's uses for a toilet roll tube:

### Make rainforest trees

You can use toilet roll tubes to create a rainforest for your toy animals to play in, or to add to your rainforest diorama (see Art & Craft, below)! Join tubes together by cutting slits in the bottom of one and pushing these over the top of another, or by squeezing the end of one tube inside the next.

Branches can be added by making a slit in the tops of the tubes and pushing the cardboard leaves through.

These lovely trees have been made by Lorna in Scotland.

### Make a tree frog catching game

Many brightly coloured tree frogs live in the rainforest. They catch insects to eat on the end of their long, sticky tongues.

Paint the toilet roll in a bright colour and add patterns. Flatten one end of the tube and use tape to attach a length of string, before gluing the end shut. Add legs cut from cardboard. Feed the string through the tube and make a "fly" attached to the end using a bottle top, badge, or small, weighted item, with paper wings glued on.

Hold the frog in one hand and try to catch the fly by flicking it into the air.

This catching game can be made more difficult by making the string longer.



# RESEARCH IDEAS

## What if chocolate grew on trees?



### DID YOU KNOW:

***It does!*** (sort of)!

Chocolate is made from the seeds of the Theobroma Cacao tree, which grows in rainforests.

### FIND OUT:

How is chocolate made?

**These links will help you:**

A brief history of chocolate

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zngsqp3>

How chocolate is made video (youtube link, supervision recommended)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fiMjr3Rwdjs>

This SciShow clip is suitable for younger learners (youtube link, supervision recommended)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJdeQABAc\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJdeQABAc_w)

See if you can make a picture, comic or written explanation showing the journey of a cacao bean, from tree to chocolate bar!

<https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/pictures/chocolate-from-bean-to-bar>

*For an extra challenge: Find out about FairTrade chocolate.*

<https://schools.fairtrade.org.uk/resource/shorter-version-of-the-story-of-chocolate-8-mins>



# ART AND CRAFT

## Make a rainforest diorama



This activity is a great way to think about all the levels of plants that grow in a rainforest and can be done using any box that you might have around the house. A shoe box is ideal, but any suitable food packing box can be used. The deeper the box, the more layers your diorama can have.

First, find (or draw) pictures of plants and trees from newspapers, comics, magazines or catalogues. Glue these to the inside of your box. Line the lid, if your box has one and decorate the front edge. Sit the box in the lid.



Glue more pictures of plants to pieces of card and fold a flap underneath at the bottom, so that the pieces will stand up.

You could also draw your own plants.

Stick pictures of trees to the sides and front of the box. Stand up some of your plants inside.



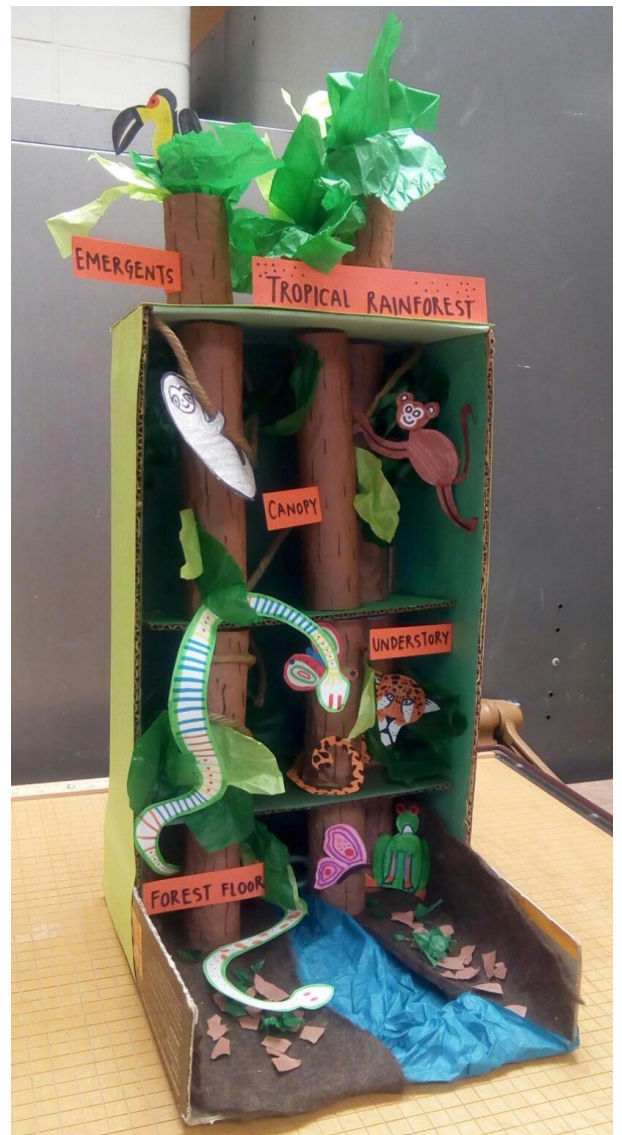


Find leaves in your garden to stick on to the box, or stand house plants round the edges, if you have some at home. You could make your own animals to live in the rainforest, or use toy animals!

You may like to combine your diorama with your research about the rainforest and make labels to show all the different layers of the forest!

If you turn your box round sideways, it will give you height for the tallest trees.

You could add labels to show the different layers and find out which animals live in each area of the forest.



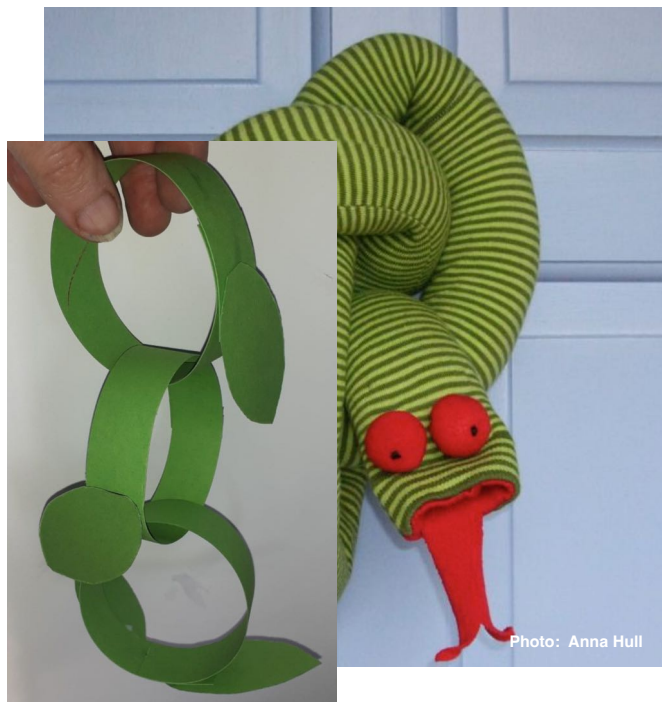


## Make a snake sock puppet or toy

A long striped sock can be turned into a quick and easy sock puppet, by sewing on button eyes or gluing on some paper ones. Add a red tongue made of fabric or a pipe cleaner.

Why not put on a puppet show?

If you have old scraps of fabric, or cotton wool to use as stuffing, you could stuff the snake and sew up the end to turn it into a toy, instead of a puppet.



## Make a paper chain liana (vine) and snakes.



Cut lengths of paper into strips. Green paper works especially well, but any will do! make a pile of paper leaves. you can cut out lots at once by folding paper into a concertina / zig zag, drawing the leaf on the top and cutting through all the pieces at once.

Fold the first strip of paper into a loop and glue it down. Feed the second piece of paper through the first loop and glue that one into a loop. Keep going and see how long a chain you can make! Glue the paper leave on to every other loop or so and string them from your ceiling like a vine.

To make snakes, use alternating colour loops and add eyes and a tongue!



## Henri Rousseau:



Rousseau liked to make pictures inspired by rainforest and jungle settings. Find out about his life and use some of his paintings as inspiration for drawings and paintings.

Many of Rousseau's pictures are available here to download for free:

[https://  
www.rawpixel.com/board/  
1054552/henri-rousseau-  
original-public-domain-  
paintings](https://www.rawpixel.com/board/1054552/henri-rousseau-original-public-domain-paintings)



Pictures via [wikimediacommons.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/)

# GAMES AND SONGS

## Animal canopy:

Animals that live in the rainforest canopy have many different ways of moving around. Some can fly, others swing from vines or glide. Some jump from branch to branch. Set up an obstacle course outside (or indoors if you have the space!) and choose actions to move around without touching the ground where the predators are waiting to eat you!

## Spiders and scorpions:

In this game, spiders move around on their hands and knees but with their stomachs facing upwards. Scorpions move around on hands and knees with their stomach facing downwards. Scorpions can catch spiders by tapping them gently on a limb, at which point, the spider must lie on its back with arms and legs in the air.

Fellow spiders can save the caught ones by folding their arms back down again. There should be more spiders and only one scorpion, so you might need to join in with this game!

## Lucky monkey:

Cut banana shapes from yellow card, and write the word “monkey” on one of them. Write the names of other rainforest animals on the remaining bananas. Place the bananas in a tin, box or bag. Players sit in a circle and take turns picking a banana out of the tin/ box/bag. If a player chooses an animal other than the monkey, they have to run around the circle imitating that animal. When a player chooses the monkey banana, however, he or she is the lucky winner of a prize, such as a slice of banana! Keep playing until everyone has a turn to be the lucky monkey.

## Catch the Snake's Tail:

This one works best if you have 4 or more players, so is a good one for larger families! All the players in this game line up, with each player holding the waist of the player in front of them. The line they form becomes the ‘snake’. The object of the game is for the snake to catch its tail. The first player in line will lead the rest of the snake around the jungle, trying to catch up to and touch the last player in line. The snake chain must not be broken or the snake will have to start again.

## Layers of the rainforest song:

Suitable for younger children (Youtube clip, supervision recommended)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YA3m7Nacj6U>



# LEARNING LINKS

There are a large number of resources available for online learning at this time. We'd always recommend that you support your child with this and only follow links from reputable names. **Any links provided here have been checked for suitability.**

Find out about the rainforests of the world with this **BBC** clip (youtube link, supervision recommended):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UlbplCn8-zs>

And a BBC Bitesize clip for younger children can be found here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zx882hv/articles/zxdsvcw>

Although designed to accompany a trip to **The Living Rainforest** project in Berkshire, these resources and the other facts on the website are useful in combination with online research:

<https://livingrainforest.org/learning-resources>

These sheets are from an Australian site and, again, are designed for children visiting an actual Australian rainforest. However, there are some useful pages about the different layers of trees and creatures that can be found in each:

[https://12ee0b5a-abb3-9812-7a54-6dc8dc507f17.filesusr.com/ugd/5cd6ef\\_1dabab5719d94c0b8c05f3f5cce54481.pdf](https://12ee0b5a-abb3-9812-7a54-6dc8dc507f17.filesusr.com/ugd/5cd6ef_1dabab5719d94c0b8c05f3f5cce54481.pdf)

This rainforest pack, produced by Edinburgh Zoo includes a fun cut and paste animals print out activity, a parrot mask template, and 3 'draw in the camouflage for the animals' sheets.

[https://12ee0b5a-abb3-9812-7a54-6dc8dc507f17.filesusr.com/ugd/5cd6ef\\_a3db89c5a6a64a939e133367da8219cf.pdf](https://12ee0b5a-abb3-9812-7a54-6dc8dc507f17.filesusr.com/ugd/5cd6ef_a3db89c5a6a64a939e133367da8219cf.pdf)