

Rainforests Rule

When you think of a rainforest, you probably imagine a tropical jungle. Rainforests actually come in two types: **temperate** and **tropical**. Both types of rainforests have several things in common. One characteristic of all rainforests is rain! Rainfall is regular throughout the year. Temperate rainforests receive around 100 inches of rain per year. Tropical rainforests can receive 400 inches of rain per year. The vegetation in all rainforests is dense and very green. There is a **diversity** of plant and animal life, particularly in tropical rainforests.

Rainforests are found in different locations around the world. Tropical rainforests are located near the **equator**. Most of the world's tropical rainforests are found in South America. Other locations are Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. Temperate rainforests are found along the **coast** in temperate areas. The Pacific coast of North America (from Oregon to Alaska) is home to most of the world's temperate rainforests.

Temperate rainforests are very ancient and rare. Trees in temperate forests are conifers with needles and some of them are 1000 years old. Trees like **fir**, **spruce**, and **cedar** can grow very large here. Some have trunks more than 100 feet around. The forest floor is shaded by the large trees and covered with **ferns**. Temperate rainforests have mild, wet winters. Summers are cool and often foggy or cloudy. Fog supplies additional rain to the forest. Many trees have **epiphytes** on them. Epiphytes are plants that grow on other plants. Examples are ferns, mosses, and lichens. Animals like beavers, raccoons, black bears, and cougars are found in temperate forests. Elk are an important part of a temperate rainforest. They forage and trample the vegetation and prevent the forest from becoming a thicket.

Name _____

Date _____

Rainforests Rule (cont'd)

Tropical rainforests have **layers** of trees and plants. The trees here do not have needles, instead they are broadleaf trees. Only a tiny amount of light gets through to the forest floor. The fallen layer of leaves, seeds, etc. that exist on the forest floor decay very quickly. The soil of a tropical rainforest is low in nutrients. Conditions are very hot, humid, and wet. The plants and animals that live here have adaptations that suit this environment. **Lianas** are climbing woody vines that hang from rainforest trees. They are adapted to the rainforest by having their roots in the ground and climbing high up into the canopy of trees to reach sunlight. Tropical rainforests are home to half of the world's plant and animal species. Many of the plants in tropical rainforests may have medicinal properties that are yet to be discovered.

Name _____

Date _____

Rainforests Rule Questions

1. True or False. There is more than one kind of rainforest.
2. _____ rainforests are found near the equator.
3. Where are most of the world's temperate rainforests found?
 - a. Asia
 - b. South America
 - c. North America
 - d. Pacific Islands
4. True or False. Trees in temperate rainforests have needles.
5. What is an epiphyte?
6. Name an animal that could be found in a temperate rainforest.
7. True or False. Decay occurs very slowly in tropical rainforests.
8. The soil of a tropical rainforest is _____ in nutrients.
9. _____ are climbing woody vines that hang from rainforest trees.
10. _____ rainforests are cool compared to _____ rainforests that are hot.

Name _____

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Rainforests Rule Answers

1. **True** or False. There is more than one kind of rainforest.
2. **Tropical** rainforests are found near the equator.
3. Where are most of the world's temperate rainforests found?
 - a. Asia
 - b. South America
 - c. **North America**
 - d. Pacific Islands
4. **True** or False. Trees in temperate rainforests have needles.
5. What is an epiphyte? **Plant that lives on another plant**
6. Name an animal that could be found in a temperate rainforest.
Raccoon, cougar, elk, beaver, black bear...
7. True or **False**. Decay occurs very slowly in tropical rainforests.
8. The soil of a tropical rainforest is **low** in nutrients.
9. **Lianas** are climbing woody vines that hang from rainforest trees.
10. **Temperate** rainforests are cool compared to **tropical** rainforests that are hot.