

# Rainforest Task Cards



18 Cards for Grades 2-3  
18 Cards for Grades 4-5

Thanks for taking the time to check out this Rainforest product. I hope you and your kids will enjoy the included sample for grades 2-5!

**Tree Bark** •  
Use some books and the internet to help you find out why trees lose bark.  
Go outside, on the playground or in your OWN backyard, and collect some samples of different kinds of bark you find lying on the ground. Write down the name of the tree the bark came from.  
Make a "touching" display for our classroom museum to share the information you learned from your research.

**Plant Fibers** •  
Many useful items are made from plant fibers. Examine a leaf, twig, or a piece of vine. Look at it through a microscope or magnifying lens.  
Draw what you see.  
Smash one end and see if you can separate the plant fibers.  
Draw what you see.  
How could these plant fibers be useful?

**Dissect a Plant** •  
With your parents' or teacher's permission, dig up a small plant to see how it works just fine) from your OWN backyard, or the school playground. Be sure you get the entire plant.  
Spread some newspapers on your desk. Gently brush off the dirt. Then use a magnifier to observe the plant. Look at each part—roots, stem, leaves, flowers, fruit.  
How do the parts compare to each other?  
How is each part suited for its own job?  
Has it made any special adaptations to its environment?

**Interview** •  
Trees are a main ingredient of any forest. Interview some students to learn about their experiences with trees.  
Create a graph to record your information and share it with the class.

**Rainforest Soil** •  
The soil in the rainforest is very shallow, and it's hard for plants to get food. The thick canopy leaves block the sunlight from the forest floor.  
Plant some seeds (beans work well) in a shallow tray of soil. Make a record book. Record your observations as you watch the seeds grow.  
How do the seeds adapt to the shallow soil? How does this relate to plants of the rainforest?

**Pineapples** •  
Pineapples are related to bromeliads (no WILL be added), a common rainforest plant. Get a fresh pineapple from the grocery store. Make sure it comes with a crown of leaves.  
Make an observation journal to record what you see, smell, and feel.  
Examine the outside of the pineapple. Record your observations.  
Gently twist the crown off of the pineapple. Peel off the leaves around the base of the crown for about 1-2 inches. Fill up a jar with water. Set the pineapple top in the jar, resting it on the leaves. Make sure the stem reaches down into the water. Watch it for a few weeks and record all your observations.

**Why?** •  
Why do you think rainforest soil is so shallow?  
Why do you think rainforest trees have developed different kinds of support roots?  
Why don't the same plants and animals live in all the rainforests of the world?  
Make a list of all the "why" questions you have about rainforests. Make them into a poster for the museum. See if your friends can help you find answers as you learn more about the world's rainforests.

**Leaves** •  
Leaves of the canopy are so thick, they block sunlight and rain from reaching the forest floor. It can take several minutes for rain to make its way through the canopy leaves.  
1. Go outside on the playground, or in your OWN backyard, and collect an assortment of leaves.  
2. Press the leaves flat in a plant press, or a book, for a few days.  
3. Give them to your teacher to be laminated.  
4. Make a game for our classroom museum that teaches information about leaves.  
5. Teach the class how to play.

**Rainforest List** •  
Different plants and animals live in different places and different rainforests of the world. Choose a particular rainforest.  
Make a list of the plants and animals that live there.  
Publish your list as a list, a picture, a poster, a book, OR a game.

**Draw a Picture** •  
Pretend you are a plant or animal of the rainforest. Draw a picture of the rainforest from that plant or animal's point of view.  
1. Choose a plant or animal.  
2. Research their life cycle.  
3. Plan out your picture.  
4. Complete the drawing.  
5. Share it with the class.

**Story Book** •  
Pretend that you and a friend are lost in the rainforest. Your families were taking a tour, but you were left behind when you were exploring the animals living in a bromeliad plant. Write a story to tell of your adventure. Be sure you have all the parts of a narrative story:  
• Setting  
• Characters  
• Problem  
• Solution  
• Ending  
Share your story with a response group. Revise it to make it better. Edit it. Publish it, if you wish.

**Food Chain** •  
Find out what plants and animals live in the Amazon rainforest.  
Draw a diagram of the food chain.

**Put on a Play** •  
Research the life of a plant, animal, or native person of the rainforest.  
Write a play to share the information with the class.  
Get some actors to work with you.  
Practice the play.  
Make a flyer to advertise your play.  
Make the props you need.  
Put on your play.

**Soil** •  
Soil is very important for plant growth. The soil of the rainforest is very shallow and roots cannot grow deeply.  
Collect soil samples from around the school playground and your OWN backyard.  
Examine each type of soil closely using a magnifier.  
How are they the same?  
How are they different?  
How would they help plants grow?  
Create a product to explain your findings.

**Relationships** •  
All the parts of an ecosystem affect each other.  
Create an activity that shows how one action affects the entire rainforest.  
Use your activity to teach the information to someone else.

**Poem or Song** •  
Choose a plant or animal of the rainforest that interests you. Learn about its special characteristics. Look for really interesting facts.  
Write a poem or song to share your information with the class.  
Make an audio recording to add to our museum.

**Sizing It Up** •  
Choose some of the animal sorting cards.  
Arrange them in order by animal size. If you aren't sure what size they are, look them up.  
Take a picture or scan your ordered set. Put it in the computer. Enlarge the image and print it out.  
Mount it on a piece of construction paper and add a title to it. Share it with the class.

**Raffia** •  
Raffia is a plant fiber made from dried palm fronds. Here is a brush made from raffia.  
Native people of the rainforests use this material to make baskets, toys, skirts, floor mats—even houses.  
Look at a microscope.  
Make so the museum can identify it.

# 18 Task Cards for Grades 2-3

## (Color Coded with a Yellow Dot)

**Special Items for Specific Cards:**  
Shallow tray, soil, bean seeds  
Pineapple, jar 4"-6" deep  
Raffia  
Newspapers  
Plant Press

### Lianas & Climbers

Lianas (lee AH nuhs) are thick, woody vines that give support to trees in the shallow rainforest soil.

Climbers are green, fleshy vines.

Do some research to find out the names of common rainforest vines that are grown as houseplants.

Find out how to care for them. Make a poster of your findings. Place it in the museum.

Bring one of three rainforest houseplant vines into our classroom and teach us how to care for it.

### Life Sized

Some of the plants and animals of the rainforest are very BIG and some are very small!

Do some research to learn more about a very large, or very small, rainforest resident.

Make a life-sized drawing of the item on a piece of butcher paper:

1. Draw it in pencil.
2. Fix any errors.
3. Trace over it with a black marker.
4. Color it in.
5. Cut it out.
6. Display it for others to see.

You may do this project alone, or with a partner.

### Rainforest Destruction

Rainforests used to cover 15% of the surface of the earth. Now they cover only about 6%.

Do some research to find out what has happened to them.

What do you PREDICT will happen to these amazing forests in the future?

What do you think SHOULD happen to them?

Make a product to convince others of your point of view.

### Systems of Measurement

As you learn more about the rainforests, you'll come across different systems of measurement.

What are the different types of measuring systems used in the world?

What countries use each system? Why do different countries use different systems?

What system do you think is best?

What are the benefits and disadvantages of having different measuring systems in different countries? What, if anything, should be done about it?

### Vine Collection

Lianas (lee AH nuhs) are thick, woody vines that give support to trees in the shallow rainforest soil.

Climbers are green, fleshy vines.

Go out on the playground or in your OWN backyard, and collect some vines. Bring them to school and put them in the museum. (Don't pick them from another person's yard!)

Why do you think vines are described as "fleshy"?

Look at the vine under the microscope. What do you see? Dissect the vine to learn more.

### Extinction

Choose a rainforest plant or animal you are interested in.

Do some research on its way of life.

What would happen if this plant or animal were to become extinct?

Analyze the extinction's effect on the rainforest, the country of the rainforest, the native people, the continent, and the world.

What are your suggestions to keep this plant or animal alive and well on planet Earth?

Share with the class.

### Sounds

Rainforests are noisy places. They are filled with life trying to communicate with each other. Listen to some different animal sounds. Find out what each sound means. Here are some internet sites with rainforest sounds:

**Shoreline Rainforests Projects To Savor**  
(<http://schools.rainforests.org/free-resources/rainforest-multimedia/rainforest-sounds>)

**Design Sounds (Click for pictures and http://www.shockwave-sound.com/sound-effects/jungle\_sounds.html)**

Then make a sound recording for our classroom museum.

### Animal Communication

Find out more about animal communication in the rainforest. Make a power point presentation for one type of animal. List the sounds and gestures, and what they are trying to "say".

Include sound clips to go with your lists as much as possible. Be sure you are using public domain sound clips and images and giving credit to the author.

Place the presentation in our classroom computer.

### Animal Communication, 2

Find out more about animal communication in the rainforest.

Research several different animals.

List the common sounds and types of communication used by each animal.

Rank the animals according to the communication level they achieve.

Make a product to share the information you discovered.

Add it to our museum.

### Choose & Group

Choose an area of rainforest life you want to learn more about. Find some other students who are interested in the same thing and want to work together with you.

Decide on your topic.

- Write some questions you want to answer.
- Do some research.
- Discuss the topic.

Create a game or activity to teach other students what you learned.

### Organize a Debate

Choose a rainforest topic that has different points of view for example:

- slash and burn
- farming and food supply
- diminishing resources
- human safety

Organize a class debate on the topic.

- Schedule the event.
- Find and select debaters.
- Advertise the debate.
- Lead the debate.
- Evaluate the debate.

### Trees

Trees are a main ingredient of any forest. Think of a special experience you have had with trees. Maybe you have climbed a tree, camped in the forest, planted a tree, built a tree house, fell out of a tree, or swung from a tree.

Create a product to share your experience with others.

1. Define your audience.
2. Choose a product. Here are some ideas:
  - picture book
  - puppet show
  - photo essay
  - poem
  - report
3. Make your product.
4. Share your product.
5. Evaluate your product.

### Epiphytes

Epiphytes are plants that get their nutrients from the air. Do a little research to learn more about these "air rooted" plants.

Look in your yard or the school playground for epiphytes growing on tree branches. Take a small cutting and place it in our center. Look at the plants with a magnifier.

Make a diagram that shows how epiphytes can live without soil.

Share the diagram with some younger students.

### Tree House

Design the tree house of your dreams. Include:

- Floor plan
- Tree diagram
- Architectural supports—how the house is supported by the tree.

Use the internet to help you learn more about the engineering aspects of drawing house plans. Do you know a builder or contractor who could help you design a sturdy and stable tree house?

### Spider Plants

Spider plants are a common houseplant that has epiphytic characteristics. You can find them at most nurseries and even in some grocery stores.

Do some research to learn about how to care for a spider plant.

Bring a spider plant to class.

Find its "air roots".

Teach the rest of the class how to care for it.

Give each student who takes good care of your plant one of the plantlets, on pups, to grow their own.

### Resources

Rainforests hold the greatest variety of plants and animals on earth.

Do some research to find out how the plants and animals of the rainforest benefit humans.

List the items you feel make the greatest contribution to humans, in order. Number one would be the most important thing in the rainforest.

Create a product to share your information and opinion.

### Write Something

Research a part of rainforest life that interests you.

Write a report, story, newspaper article, poem, or diary entry about the topic.

Share your rough draft with a few friends.

Revise your rough draft to make it better.

Share your revised draft with a few friends. Make your final revisions and edit the draft.

Publish your final copy.

Share it with your class and others here at school.

### Roots

Many canopy trees need support roots to help them stand in the shallow rainforest soil.

Build a model of either buttress roots or stilt (prop) roots. Only use items you can find in the classroom.

Create a museum display card to place with your model and put both of them in our classroom museum.

No special items needed for these task cards.

# 18 Task Cards for Grades 4-5

(Color Coded with a Green Dot)

# Rainforest Task Cards, Grades 2-3

These task cards present students with a variety of activities built on Bloom's Taxonomy and multiple intelligences, that will allow them to further explore rainforests of the world. The task cards presented for grades 4-6 contain a number of activities also appropriate for grades 2-3. You may want to include some of those as well. Read the task cards and choose those activities that best fit your program.

## Materials:

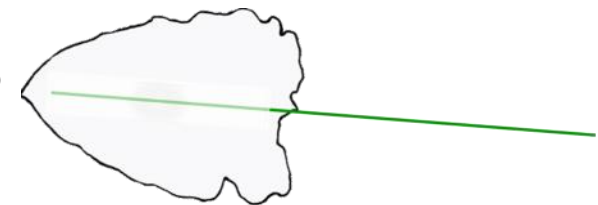
- green pipe cleaners, OR 9" long floral wire
- clear tape
- 2-3 pieces of 4"x8" floral foam or Styrofoam

### Special Items for Specific Cards:

Shallow tray, soil, bean seeds  
Pineapple, jar 4"-6" deep  
Raffia  
Newspapers  
Plant Press

## Preparation Directions:

1. Run the task cards you have chosen, and the holder cover (page 2), off on cover stock, tag, or heavy white drawing paper. Print one copy of each, single sided.
2. You'll need a copy of the holder cover (page 2) for each piece of floral foam you use. (2 foam pieces need 2 copies)
3. Trim the margins of the holder cover (page 2). Tape the sections together on the back.
4. Laminate everything.
5. Cut the pieces out.
6. Place the foam pieces side by side. (If there's a plastic cover on the foam, leave it on—it keeps down the foam dust.) Fold the holder cover around the floral foam covering the front and outside edges of the foam. Repeat, folding the second sheet around the back and outside edges of the foam. Place the cover so that the image shows from all directions, and then tape the front and back pieces together. Slide it on over the foam. It will hold the foam together.
7. Attach one 9 inch pipe cleaner (or floral wire) along the "spine" on the back side of each leaf with packing tape. Start it near the tip and let it extend past the end of the leaf. Allow some pieces to extend further out, so that piece will stand up higher.
8. Stick the task cards in the foam, arranging the leaves to look like a plant. Gently bend the floral wire so the leaves curve slightly. Bend the downward facing leaves, so they hang over the cover.
9. Place the task cards in your classroom museum or science center for student use.
10. If the foam holder tips over, stick it to the table using hot glue or sticky stuff.



*Philodendron maximum*: Photo by Chhe, via Wikimedia Commons.

# Tree Bark ●

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Draw what you see.

Smash one end and see if you can separate the plant fibers.

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