



## Rainforest Adaptations: Storytelling

Stimulate your pupils' imaginations with this creative activity. Take a step into the tropical rainforest and your pupils can imagine they are anything from a multi-legged millipede to the orange ape orangutan. The abundance of life in the tropical rainforest is so amazing, the range of characters your pupils can choose from is vast!

In this activity your pupils will direct their own research either individually or in groups writing a story of a day in the life of their chosen animal. With a focus on how their animal has adapted to its environment, they will construct a story to share with the class.

As with all good stories, your pupils start by setting the scene. Maybe you could download sounds recorded in the tropical rainforest, or introduce smells from spices such as cinnamon and cloves or chocolate and tropical fruits? How will your pupils describe a day in the life of a timid tiger or a big bold bat? Maybe there is a 'bad guy' in their story? How does the adventure unfold?

Once they have written their tales, your pupils can tell their stories to the rest of the class using clear diction and dramatic pauses before events unfold. They could experiment with pitch and volume to emphasize the activity of *little insects* or **BIG ELEPHANTS.....**, The whole class could get involved in the stories adding selected sound effects for thunder (the class could drum their feet on the floor to create the sound of thunder) or rain (tap their finger tips on the desk).

This cross curricular activity allows you to teach creative writing in an engaging context, supporting many of the outcomes for Literacy and English – writing.

If you have a video recorder you could record the storytelling, allowing peer and self review afterwards.

We would love to read your stories too. Why not send them in to us and we can put them on our web-site?

Workshop	Title	Pre/Post	Suggested CfE Stage
A Journey Into The Rainforest	Rainforest Adaptations: Storytelling	Pre/Post	First/Second/Third

### Learning Intention

- We are learning about how organisms are adapted to their life in the rainforest.
- We are learning to research a specific topic.



- We are learning effective storytelling techniques.

## Task

- We are going to research characteristics of a range of living creatures in the tropical rainforest with a view to understanding how they have adapted to life in this unique environment.
- We will deliver our findings in a creative and animated way.

## Success Criteria

- Through group or individual research, pupils will be able to demonstrate an understanding of rainforest adaptations in animals.
- Pupils will gain a greater appreciation of the enormous variety of life found in the tropical rainforests.
- Pupils will gain an appreciation of the skills involved in effective storytelling.

## Evidence ideas

- Peer and self assessment through recording the debate and analysing their own and other activities.

## CfE Capacities

**Successful Learners;** with enthusiasm and motivation for learning and able to think creatively, able to use literacy, communication skills and creative thinking.

**Effective Contributors;** able to work in partnership and in teams, able to communicate in different ways.

**Responsible Citizens;** able to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around us.

**Confident Individuals;** with self respect and able to achieve success across science, literacy and expressive arts disciplines.

## CfE Outcomes

### Science: Planet Earth, Biodiversity and interdependence

I can identify and classify examples of living things, past and present, to help me appreciate their diversity. I can relate physical and behavioral characteristics to their survival or extinction.

SCN 2-01a

*Leads to* – I can sample and identify living things from different habitats to compare their biodiversity and can suggest reasons for their distribution.

SCN 3-01a

### Science: Planet Earth, Topical science

I can talk about science stories to develop my understanding of science and the world around me. SCN 0-20a

### Languages: Literacy and English, Writing

This activity supports many of the first and second stage outcomes in Literacy and English, Writing, in particular:

*I enjoy creating texts of my choice and I regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of my audience.*

LIT 1-20a / LIT 2-20a

*I enjoy creating texts of my choice and I am developing my own style. I can regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of my audience.*

LIT 3-20a / LIT 4-20a

### Languages: Literacy and English, Listening and talking



*I can communicate clearly when engaging with others within and beyond my place of learning, using selected resources as required.*

LIT 1-10a

*I am developing confidence when engaging with others within and beyond my place of learning. I can communicate in a clear, expressive way and I am learning to select and organise resources independently.*

LIT 2-10a / LIT 3-10a

*The literacy experiences and outcomes which are the responsibility of all teachers are shown in italics.*

### **Expressive Arts: Participation in performances and presentations**

I have experienced the energy and excitement of presenting/performing for audiences and being part of an audience for other people's presentations/performances.

EXA 0-01a / EXA 1-01a / EXA 2-01a

### **Expressive Arts: Drama**

I enjoy creating, choosing and accepting roles, using movement, expression and voice.

EXA 1-12a

I can create, adapt and sustain different roles, experimenting with movement, expression and voice and using theatre arts technology.

EXA 2-12a

I can create, develop and sustain a realistic or stylised character through the use of voice, movement and language.

EXA 3-12a

I have developed confidence and skills in creating and presenting drama which explores real and imaginary situations, using improvisation and script.

EXA 1-14a

I have created and presented scripted or improvised drama, beginning to take account of audience and atmosphere.

EXA 2-14a

## Description

In this activity your pupils will direct their own research either individually or in groups writing a story on the day in the life of a creature from the tropical rainforest. With a focus on how their animal has adapted to its environment, they will construct a story to share with the class.

Set the scene in the classroom with sounds recorded in the tropical rainforest. There are many of these available to download from the internet or you may want to buy an audio CD, check [global-journey.com](http://global-journey.com) for a great range of natural recordings. You could also introduce smells from spices such as cinnamon and cloves or chocolate and tropical fruits. If you have a projector available in your school you could look at amazing images from [ARKive.com](http://ARKive.com) to help stimulate your pupils' imaginations.

As with all good stories, there should be a beginning, middle and an end. Pupils should also consider:

- Scene setting (temperature, time of day, geographic location).
- Characterization of their main character, is it a timid tiger or a big bold bat? Is there a baddie in the story or a quest?
- Structure (the story should have a beginning, middle and an end)
- Antagonism (is there a battle or conflict?)

Once they have written their stories, your pupils can tell these to the rest of the class, emphasising clear diction and dramatic pauses before events unfold. They could experiment with pitch and volume to emphasize the activity of little insects or BIG ELEPHANTS. To help your pupils with this we have a small poem they could practice pitch, volume and pauses on:

#### *The Caterpillar and the Wall.*

*'Who's that tickling my back?' said The Wall  
'It's me' said The Caterpillar 'I'm learning to crawl'  
'What's the point in moving around?  
Just be like me and stand firm on the ground.'  
'I'm not like you, if I stay put I'll die,*



*I need to walk so one day, I'll fly!  
I'll munch lots of leaves and different things,  
Sleep for a while and wake up with wings!*

Storytelling is an oral process and should be performed without a script if possible.

If you have a video recorder you could record the storytelling, allowing peer and self review afterwards.

This could be expanded by encouraging pupils to work in groups, each group with a layer of the tropical rainforest to concentrate on. This would insure that many habitats and creatures are covered by the class providing a fantastic overview of the huge diversity of life in the rainforests.

## **Web Resources**

<http://bugguide.net/node/view/15740>

[http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia\\_761567783/Adaptation.html](http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761567783/Adaptation.html)

Check out this link for some helpful information on the layers in the Tropical Rainforest.

<http://www.dynamicearth.co.uk/userfiles/documents/kids/rainforests/layersoftherainforest.pdf>

