

# Rain Forest Mammals

Prepare your students for an exciting adventure as they explore rain forest mammals with the following activities and reproducibles.

## Where in the World?

(Classifying, Listening)

Here's a fantastic way to familiarize your students with the different rain forest areas while practicing classifying and listening skills. Begin by explaining to students that there are three main rain forests in the world: African, Asian, and South American. Use a map or globe to show your students each continent and its proximity to the equator. Further explain that all rain forests have similar hot, humid climates because they are close to the equator, but different types of plants and animals live in each forest. Use the following activity to help each child learn about the types of mammals living in each rain forest. Distribute a large sheet of construction paper, a copy of page 24, glue, and scissors to every student. Help the student divide his paper into three sections and label it as shown. Next, have each student cut apart the mammal pictures on page 24 and use the code to help him glue each picture under the correct heading on the construction paper. Then read aloud each rain forest mammal fact shown on this page as the student points to the animal on his page. Finally, have your students discuss the similarities and differences between the mammals found in the three rain forests.



## Background for the Teacher

- Tropical rain forests are located around the equator in an area called the *tropics*.
- Rain forests are hot (68–95°F) and wet (about 60–80 inches of rain annually) year-round.
- Over half of the world's known plant and animal species are found in the rain forests.
- Many mammals, such as monkeys and sloths, spend their lives in the trees in the rain forest.
- Larger rain forest mammals, such as deer and antelope, search for food along the rain forest floor.
- Both *herbivorous* (plant-eating) and *carnivorous* (meat-eating) mammals live in the rain forest.

## Rain Forest Mammal Facts

### African Rain Forest:

The **chimpanzee** is very intelligent. It is the only mammal, besides man, that can recognize itself in a mirror.

The **flying squirrel** is 20 to 33 inches long and can glide up to 300 feet from tree to tree. The male **gorilla** can weigh up to 450 pounds. All gorillas stand and walk resting on their knuckles.

The **okapi** is a member of the giraffe family and weighs as much as a pony.

The **pangolin** uses its 27-inch tongue to catch and eat termites and ants. Sharp pointy scales cover its body.

### Asian Rain Forest:

The **orangutan** has a flat face and a reddish beard. It likes to climb slowly through the trees, using its feet like another set of hands to grasp branches.

The **Malayan tapir** is the size of a pony, but it looks more like an elephant. It moves quickly, making trails through the forest.

The **slow loris** is about 12 inches long and has short ears, a short tail, and huge staring eyes. It moves slowly from branch to branch eating fruit at night.

The **Philippine tarsier** has large orange-tinted eyes and a small face. It leaps from branch to branch catching insects to eat.

The **Sumatran tiger** is a fairly small warm-weather tiger. Today only a few hundred Sumatran tigers live on the island of Sumatra.

### South American Rain Forest:










The **jaguar** looks like a big leopard. It can weigh up to 200 pounds. It is a good climber and swimmer.

The **kinkajou** is part of the raccoon family. It is also known as a honey bear because it likes to hook its tail on a branch and hang upside down eating the honey from bees' nests.

The **ocelot** is a small cat with a beautifully marked coat. It is the only cat that sleeps like a dog by resting its head on its stretched-out forepaws.

The **golden lion tamarin** is a rare but beautiful monkey. A long golden mane covers its head and shoulders.

The **giant armadillo** is the biggest of all armadillos. It eats termites, ants, worms, and snakes. It has about twice as many teeth as other mammals.

African rain forest	Asian rain forest	South American rain forest
 ★ chimpanzee ★	 ★ okapi ★	 ● jaguar ●
 ★ pangolin ★	 ▲ Malayan tapir ▲	 ● kinkajou ●
	 ▲ Philippine tarsier ▲	 ● giant armadillo ●
	 ▲ Sumatran tiger ▲	



## Roaring Rain Forest Reads

*Anansi and the Talking Melon* by Eric A. Kimmel  
(Holiday House, Inc.; 1995)

*The Chimpanzee Family Book* by Jane Goodall  
(North-South Books Inc., 1997)

*How to Babysit an Orangutan* by Tara Darling  
(Walker Publishing Company, Inc.; 1996)

*In the Forest With the Elephants* by Roland Smith  
(Gulliver Books, 1998)

*Very First Things to Know About Monkeys* by Sarah Albee  
(Workman Publishing Company, 1999)

*What Is a Bat?* by Bobbie Kalman (Crabtree Publishing Company, 1998)

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