

RainForest Scavenger Hunt: Grades 9-12

1. Take a walk down the rainforest plant path. Read the placards for some of the plants and trees. Think about how animals and humans use trees. Why is maintaining plant biodiversity just as important as maintaining animal biodiversity?
2. Reptiles and amphibians are two *classes* of animals in the animal kingdom. Both reptiles and amphibians have backbones and are cold-blooded, meaning they cannot regulate their body temperatures. Amphibians are born in the water and absorb oxygen in the water through gills, but later in life develop lungs and breathe air. Reptiles lay eggs, have scales, and breathe air through lungs. Which animals on the first floor of the RainForest are amphibians? Which are reptiles?
3. Observe the many different varieties of insects and arachnids (spiders and scorpions) in their habitats. Invertebrates like these organisms make up over 50% of the species found in the rainforest. Some of these organisms, like spiders and scorpions, are carnivorous, but most of these invertebrates consume organic matter, breaking down leaf litter. Why is this role important?
4. Nearly 1/3 of all freshwater turtles and tortoise species are found in Asia and are endangered. The biggest threat to these animals is poaching and illegal trade for sale in food markets and for traditional medicine. What can zoos and other conservation organizations do to address these threats?
5. Rainforests are being destroyed at an alarming rate. Rainforests are some of the most biologically diverse and most important ecosystems on the planet. Without rainforests and the oxygen they supply, our planet will be less capable of sustaining life. What can individuals like you do to effect change and counteract deforestation?
6. In addition to being the home of many animals and plants, rainforests are home to many indigenous, or native, people. How can local and indigenous peoples help wildlife in the rainforest? How are they connected?
7. Many species of animals, like the Macaw, slow loris, and pythons, are illegally taken from the Rainforest and sold as pets. How can you and other individuals combat the illegal pet trade?
8. Francois Langurs have specialized stomachs to ingest toxic plants. Plants are living organisms that struggle to survive, just like animals. Also just like animals, many plants have defense mechanisms to protect themselves. How can a plant protect itself from being eaten by herbivorous animals?
9. Monkeys and apes are two types of primates. Francois Langurs are monkeys, while orangutans are apes. Observe both species. What is similar and what is different between the langurs and the orangutans. What do you think are the main differences between monkeys and apes?
10. Observe the orangutans in their exhibit. Orangutans are listed as critically endangered by the IUCN. They face a number of threats and as a result their populations have been decreasing. To worsen their situation is the fact that female orangutans only have one baby about every eight years. How does this long child-rearing period affect orangutan population numbers?