

Name _____

Amazon Rainforest

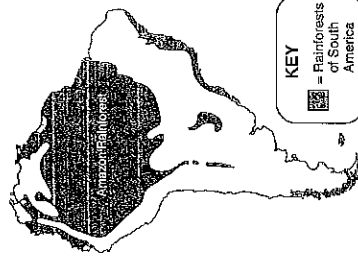
Much of South America is covered by tropical rainforests. Some of these forests are along the coast, but the largest rainforest area is located in the Amazon Basin. The Amazon Rainforest is the biggest tropical rainforest in the world.

The rainforest is divided into the following four layers:

1. The *emergent layer* includes the tallest trees that rise far above the rest of the vegetation. The treetops are exposed to rain and sunlight. Some animals spend their entire lives in these tall trees.
2. The next layer is the *canopy*. The trees in the canopy layer are so thick that they keep out about 80% of the sunlight from reaching the ground. Many other plants grow on the trees, and many animals live at this level.
3. The *understory* gets very little sunlight. Most plants in the understory do not grow beyond 12 feet (4 m) tall.
4. The *forest floor* is littered with insects, small animals, and decomposing plant matter. You would need a flashlight to explore this rainforest layer because it is so dark.

Amazon Rainforest Facts

- The Amazon Rainforest covers about one-third of the continent.
- Scientists think the Amazon Rainforest is at least 55 million years old, making it one of the oldest tropical rainforests on the planet.
- The average temperature in the rainforest is 80°F (27°C), and it rains nearly every day.
- About 20% of the world's oxygen is produced in the Amazon Rainforest.
- There are more types of plants and animals in the Amazon Rainforest than anywhere else on Earth. There are over 40,000 different kinds of plants and more than 30 million species of insects. One-third of the world's birds can be found in the Amazon as well.
- Some of the more dangerous animals that live in the Amazon include the black caiman (an alligator-like reptile), the jaguar, and the anaconda (a huge snake).
- Over 20% of the Amazon Rainforest has been destroyed. Many parts have been logged, while others have been cleared to create land for crops and for grazing livestock.



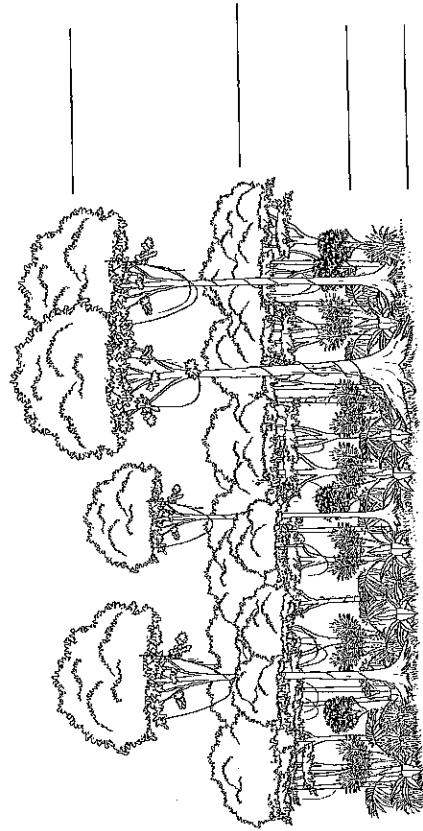
Name _____

Amazon Rainforest

A. Complete each sentence by unscrambling the word under the line. Use the information on the other page to help you.

1. The Amazon Rainforest covers about one-_____ hidtr of the continent.
2. The _____ grefenme layer is the highest part of the rainforest.
3. About 20% of the world's _____ yongex comes from the Amazon Rainforest.
4. There are over 30 million different species of _____ scinets in the Amazon Rainforest.
5. Many animals live in the _____ pynoqa layer of the rainforest.
6. Black caimans, jaguars, and _____ danascano live in the Amazon.

B. Label the four layers of the rainforest.



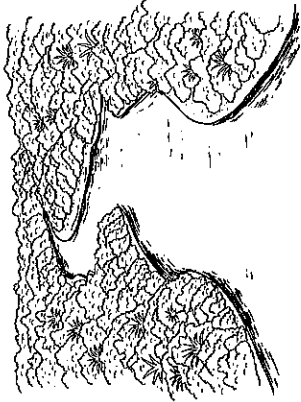
Name _____

Amazon River

The Amazon River is the longest river in South America and the second-longest river in the world. The Amazon begins high in the Andes Mountains in Peru, flows thousands of miles eastward, and empties into the Atlantic Ocean.

Amazon River Facts

- The Amazon River is over 4,000 miles long (6,437 km). That is longer than the distance between New York and San Francisco!
- Even though the Amazon River is not quite the longest river in the world, it is by far the biggest in terms of volume of water. One-fifth of the water that flows into the oceans of the world comes from the Amazon.
- Most of the Amazon River flows through the tropical rainforests in Brazil.
- In some places, the Amazon River is so wide that a person standing on one bank cannot see the opposite shore. During the rainy season, the river can be up to 30 miles (48 km) across in some spots!
- The Amazon River floods every year, covering an area the size of Germany with water.
- Over 1,000 tributaries flow into the Amazon River. Seven of these tributaries are over 1,000 miles (1,609 km) long. The Madeira River is the longest tributary of the Amazon at 2,082 miles (3,351 km) long.
- There are no bridges across the Amazon because there are few roads or cities in the Amazon Rainforest.
- Occasionally, an unusually high tide at the mouth of the river causes a large wave called a *tidal bore*, which travels rapidly upstream. A bore can reach heights of 15 feet (4.6 m).
- A species of gigantic waterlily, called the *Victoria amazonica*, can be found in the shallow areas of the Amazon River. The round, floating leaves of this lily can reach nearly 10 feet (3 m) across and can support the weight of a small child.
- Over 2,000 known kinds of fish live in the Amazon River system. Some scientists think there may be as many as 3,500 species yet to be discovered.



Name _____

Amazon River

Read each clue below. Write the correct word on the numbered lines. Then use the numbers to crack the code!

1. The Amazon River flows through the _____ rainforests in Brazil.

11 9 6 7 26 20 18 3

2. The Amazon River begins in the _____ Mountains.

18 5 21 22 10

3. The Madeira River is one of the seven longest _____ of the Amazon River.

11 9 26 19 12 11 18 9 26 22 10

4. Unusually high tides can cause a _____ to rush up the Amazon.

11 26 21 18 3 19 6 9 22

5. The *Victoria amazonica* is bigger than any other kind of _____ in the world.

1 18 11 22 9 3 26 3 8

6. The Amazon is the longest river in _____.

10 6 12 11 25 18 4 22 9 26 20 18

7. The Amazon River ends in the _____ Ocean.

18 11 3 18 5 11 26 20

Crack the Code!

_____, which are native to the Amazon River, are known for their ferocious appetites.

7 26 9 18 5 25 18 10

