

Life Cycles: Rainforest – Teacher Resources

SYNOPSIS

Life Cycles: Rainforest introduces ten animals and one insect-eating plant from rainforests. An introductory spread presents some general information about rainforests and explains what is meant by a food chain. Each of the following 11 spreads is dedicated to one animal or plant, explaining and clearly illustrating the stages in its life cycle, focusing in on some fascinating details, estimating its life expectancy and explaining its place in the food chain. In this way, the book progresses through a series of three simple food chains from three different rainforests. At the end of the book there is a spread showing how different food chains within the Amazon rainforest link up to form a food web. The book is illustrated with a blend of photography and photographic-quality artwork.

WRITING STYLE

The book is written in clear and simple non-fiction style. Each spread has an introductory paragraph about the species it introduces, followed by an illustrated four-stage description of its life cycle. Further text appears in the form of a “Did you know?” panel, which presents three interesting facts about the species. A fourth text element takes the form of a small box at the end of the spread, detailing the species’ life expectancy and, if it has a predator, giving a pictorial and verbal clue as to what that might be before the reader turns the page to find out. This progressive device helps to build in the readers’ minds a picture of where the animal or plant ranks in one of the three featured food chains.

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND

Sean Callery is a writer and primary-school teacher who has written a number of non-fiction and fiction children’s books as well as educational articles.

The illustrations are by Stuart Jackson-Carter who specialises in natural history and scientific artwork.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Life Cycles: Rainforest has been thoroughly researched by the author and editor and fully checked for factual accuracy. Its clear text and illustrations provide a fluent and fascinating introduction to the life cycles and food chains that exist within the rainforest habitat.

TEACHER ACTIVITIES/NOTES

- Find out all you can about the rainforest habitat. Is it quiet or noisy? How many layers does it have? Write a report or make a two-minute presentation about it.
- Could any of the animals in this book hurt or kill you? How would you defend yourself against them?
- Which animals in this book have the most babies? Why do you think this is?
- Find all the animals in the book with claws. What different uses do their claws have?

- Which animals change most during their life cycle? Do any stay the same apart from growing bigger?
- Create a chart showing the life spans of the animals in this book.
- Follow the links in the food web to create a new food chain.
- Find out about the life cycle of an animal not in this book – it could be a pet – and write a report about it in the style of this text.