

South America & Rainforests | Class 4

Vocabulary

equator	An imaginary line around the middle of the Earth.
deforestation	The destruction of trees in a large area.
forest floor	The ground beneath the trees of a forest consisting of roots and soil.
understory	The layer of the rainforest underneath the canopy. It is hot and damp. Bushes and young trees grow here.
canopy	A layer of overlapping trees and plants above the ground.
emergent	The top layer of the rainforest. There is a lot of sunlight and the tallest trees grow to this level.
habitat	The natural environment where an animal or plant normally lives
biome	A large area inhabited by plants and animals that live together e.g. rainforest, desert.
indigenous	Belonging to the country in which they are found, rather than being brought there from another country.
predator	An animal that hunts, kills, and eats other animals
tribe	A group of people who live together, sharing the same language, culture, and history.
agriculture	The science of farming and the methods that are used to raise and look after crops and animals.

Rainforest Animals

macaw (bird)	Long tailed, colourful type of parrot.
tapir (herbivorous mammal)	Similar in shape to a pig. Tapirs live in South America near water and have long snouts.
poison dart frog (amphibian)	Colourful frog with toxins in their skin. The skin is brightly coloured to keep predators away.
jaguar (carnivorous mammal)	The biggest predator in the Amazon Rainforest. Usually a lone, nocturnal hunter which leaps on its prey from above.
piranha (fish)	These sharp-toothed meat-eating fish can devour cattle and even humans. Attacks are rare.
caiman (reptile)	Type of alligator. Lie in shallow water and feed on land animals that come close to the water edge.
sloth (mammal)	Moves very slowly through the trees, so not to attract attention. Very endangered.

Reasons for Deforestation

Palm oil - produced in trees in the Amazon and used in salad dressings, washing powder and fuels.

Cattle ranches- around 10 million cattle in the Amazon region. Raised for consumption by humans.

Medicinal plants- curare is produced in the Amazon (used by surgeons)

Map of South America



South America is the world's fourth largest **continent** and is divided **politically** into **12 independent countries**— Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil (largest), Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname (smallest), Uruguay and Venezuela.

This continent stretches from just above the *equator* down towards the *Antarctic* and it is **connected** to North America by land.

Species of plants in the rainforest

Rubber tree, orchid, cacao, giant water lilies, banana tree.