What is a Rain Forest?

by Will Osborne and Mary Pope Osborne

1. Rain forests are rich and wonderful worlds. They are filled with tall trees, strange animals, giant bugs, and amazing plants. The largest flowers in the world grow in rain forests. The smallest trees and the biggest spiders live in rain forests, too.

2. There are rain forests all around the world. Each rain forest has different kinds of plants and creatures living in it. But most rain forests are alike in several ways:

   - Rain forests are humid all year round.
   - Rain forests have two seasons: wet and dry.
   - Rain forests are far away from the equator and near the poles.
   - Rain forests get lots of rain.

3. That’s why we call them rain forests! In most rain forests, it rains nearly every day. Often there are thunderstorms.

4. Nearly all rain forests get over six feet of rain per year. Many get more than sixteen feet of rain—and some get as much as thirty!

We think of Seattle, Washington, as a very rainy city. But Seattle only gets about three feet of rain per year!
Rain forests have very high humidity.

5  *Humidity* (hyme-uh-MID-uh-tee) is the amount of moisture in the air. Even when it isn’t raining, the air in a rain forest feels wet and steamy.

Rain Forests Have:
- Lots of rain
- High humidity
- Warm temperature
- Weather that stays the same

Tropical Rain Forests

8  Most rain forests are *tropical forests*. That means they grow near an imaginary line that runs all the way around the middle of the earth. This line is called the *equator* (ih-kway-tur).

Rain forests are very warm.

6  The temperature in most rain forests stays between 75 and 80 degrees all year long.

In most rain forests, there isn’t much difference between winter and summer.

7  The temperature is warm and the humidity is almost always high.

The biggest tropical rain forest is the Amazon Rain Forest in South America (see the map on next page). The Amazon Rain Forest is bigger than the states of Texas, California, Colorado, Florida, Nevada, Arizona, Oregon, Minnesota, and Alaska combined!
There are also large tropical rain forests in Central America, Africa, Asia, New Guinea, Australia, and many islands in the Pacific Ocean.

More different kinds of animals, insects, and plants live in tropical rain forests than anywhere else on earth!
### Teacher Guide for FAST-R Passage: FAST-R: Formative Assessments in Student Thinking in Reading

The annotated answer key below highlights common reasons why students might choose each answer, and the sidebar gives more insight into the question types, to help you understand patterns of student responses. Always make time to follow up with students in conferences or small group stoprobetheir thinking, teach in response to patterns, and help them apply effective reading and thinking strategies to their everyday reading.

Note: You may find it helpful to refer to the “Types and Levels of Thinking Assessed on FAST-R” sheet from your teacher resource folder as you examine your students' responses. The icon in the right-hand column, below, corresponds to that sheet’s more detailed explanations of the kinds of thinking each type of question asks of readers.

1. According to paragraph 3, how often does it rain in the rain forest?  
   - A. It never rains. (OOP2)  
   - B. It sometimes rains. (OOP2)  
   - C. It rains once a week. (OOB)  
   - D. It rains nearly every day.  

   **FE1:** Identify evidence explicitly stated in the text

2. Why are some rain forests known as “seasonal rain forests” according to the text box on page 1?  
   - A. They have a rainy season and a dry season.  
   - B. They have all four seasons: summer, winter, fall, and spring. (OOP2)  
   - C. The food there has a spicy seasoning. (OOP2)  
   - D. The area near the Mediterranean Sea. (OOB)

   **FE2:** Recognize the explicit meaning from varied wording in the text

3. According to paragraph 4, about how many feet of rain do MOST rain forests get per year?  
   - A. 0-5 feet (OOP2)  
   - B. 6-16 feet  
   - C. 30 feet (OOP2)  
   - D. 100 feet (OOP2)

   **FE2:** Recognize the explicit meaning from varied wording in the text

4. In the water cycle of a rain forest, what happens AFTER the rain falls?  
   - A. The sun comes out. (OOB)  
   - B. Roots soak up moisture.  
   - C. The animals are happy. (OOB)  
   - D. Moist air forms clouds. (OOP2)

   **FE1:** Identify evidence explicitly stated in the text

5. According to paragraph 5, humidity makes the rain forest feel  
   - A. hot. (OOP1)  
   - B. moist.  
   - C. dry. (OOP2)  
   - D. windy. (OOB)

   **FE2:** Recognize the explicit meaning from varied wording in the text

6. According to the article, which of the following is NOT something a rain forest has?  
   - A. high winds  
   - B. warm temperature (OOP2)  
   - C. lots of rain (OOP2)  
   - D. high humidity (OOP2)

   **FE2:** Recognize the explicit meaning from varied wording in the text
Grades 2-3 • Non-fiction/Informational • “What Is a Rain Forest?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Correct Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Where is the biggest rain forest in the world?</td>
<td>FE1: Identify evidence explicitly stated in the text</td>
<td>D. South America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Minnesota (OOP2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Massachusetts (OOB)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. New Guinea (OOP1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ D. South America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 8. Read the following sentence from paragraph 9                        | MI1: Determine implicit meaning from words in context | C. all together |
| The Amazon Rain Forest is bigger than the states of Texas, California, Colorado, Florida, Nevada, Arizona, Oregon, Minnesota, and Alaska combined! |               |                |
| What does the word “combined” mean?                                    |               |                |
| A. to comb hair (OOB)                                                  |               |                |
| B. rains a lot (OOP2)                                                  |               |                |
| ✔ C. all together                                                      |               |                |
| D. warm and humid (OOP1)                                               |               |                |

| 9. Based on the information in the text and on the map, which of the following continents does NOT have a rain forest? | FE2: Recognize the explicit meaning from varied wording in the text | D. Europe |
| A. South America (OOP2)                                                |               |                |
| B. Africa (OOP2)                                                       |               |                |
| C. Australia (OOP2)                                                    |               |                |
| ✔ D. Europe                                                            |               |                |

| 10. If you were planning to visit the Amazon Rain Forest, which of the following items would you need the MOST? | MI4: Determine new meaning and apply it beyond the passage | B. a shovel (OOB) |
| A. sunglasses (OOB)                                                    |               |                |
| B. a shovel (OOB)                                                      |               |                |
| ✔ C. an umbrella                                                       |               |                |
| D. warm blankets (OOP2)                                                |               |                |
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11 More different kinds of animals, insects, and plants live in tropical rain forests than anywhere else on earth!

Interested in Rain Forests?
You might like to read Afternoon on the Amazon, a Magic Tree House story set in the Amazon rain forest.

Now, answer the questions on the next page.
Fill in the circle for the correct answer to questions 1-10.

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6. According to the article, which of the following is NOT something a rain forest has?
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   B. warm temperature
   C. lots of rain
   D. high humidity

7. Where is the biggest rain forest in the world?
   A. Minnesota
   B. Massachusetts
   C. New Guinea
   D. South America
8. Read the following sentence from paragraph 9

The Amazon Rain Forest is bigger than the states of Texas, California, Colorado, Florida, Nevada, Arizona, Oregon, Minnesota, and Alaska combined!

What does the word “combined” mean?
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- B. rains a lot
- C. all together
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9. Based on the information in the text and on the map, which of the following continents does NOT have a rain forest?
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- B. Africa
- C. Australia
- D. Europe

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- B. a shovel
- C. an umbrella
- D. warm blankets