



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 5: Module 2A: Unit 1: Overview



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Unit 1: Building Background Knowledge: How Scientists Communicate about the Living Things of the Rainforest

In this first unit, students will explore the question: “What is unique about living things in the rainforest?” Students will begin by building background knowledge about unique living things in the rainforests and the scientists who study them. Students will also explore various forms of informational text as ways to communicate about rainforest scientists’ research. Students examine two types of informational texts, an interview and an article, for specific elements and how those elements inform the reader. During those close reads, students will also build their background knowledge about rainforests of the Western Hemisphere through a focus on vocabulary and finding the main idea. The mid-unit assessment will gauge students’ mastery of comprehending an interview as an informational text by answering text-dependent questions for a given new and unfamiliar interview of a scientist doing work in the

rainforest. Students will continue to gain knowledge about living things in the rainforest and apply the skills learned to explore one more type of informational text, a video, in order to continue to develop an understanding of the biodiversity of the rainforest. Through further close reads, an introduction to note-taking, synthesis, and comparisons of these informational texts, students will begin to formulate an opinion on what types of informational texts, based on their specific features, made it easiest for them to learn about rainforests and why. Finally, the on-demand End of Unit 1 Assessment will measure students’ ability to comprehend unfamiliar selections from the interview they read during the Mid-Unit 1 Assessment. Students will also write an opinion paragraph that states which text they consider most helpful based on its features, and why.

Guiding Questions And Big Ideas

- **What is unique about living things in the rainforest?**
- **How do scientists communicate what they learn about the natural world?**
- *Research is a process.*
- *Scientists observe closely and record those observations in various ways.*
- *Authors organize informational text in specific ways to convey scientific ideas and concepts.*



Mid-Unit Assessment	<p>Analyzing of an Interview with a Rainforest Scientist Part 1</p> <p>This on-demand assessment centers on standards NYSP12 ELA CCLS RI.5.1, RI.5.2, RI.5.3, and L.5.4. Students will read and analyze excerpts from the first half in interview with rainforest scientist Eve Nilson, and then complete short-answer text-dependent questions. (Note that students will read excerpts from other parts of this interview as a part of their End of Unit 1 Assessment; therefore, do not distribute the full interview).</p>
End of Unit Assessment	<p>Analyzing an Interview with a Rainforest Scientist Part 2 and Comparing and Contrasting Texts About Rainforest Biodiversity</p> <p>This assessment centers on standards NYSP12 ELA CCLS RI.5.1, RI.5.2, RI.5.4, RI.5.5, RI.5.9, and W.5.1. Students will read new sections of the Eve Nilson interview. (Note that they read excerpts from Part 1 of the interview during the Mid-Unit Assessment. For the End of Unit Assessment, they read excerpts from Part 2 of that same interview, which they have not read before). They will then answer text-dependent short-answer questions. They will also use information from informational texts read in previous lessons. Then students will write a paragraph in which they state a clear opinion about which text they consider more helpful (based on their text features) in terms of informing them about the rainforest. Students will use details from all texts to support their opinion about how structural features of informational text can help them as readers.</p>



Content Connections

This module is designed to address English Language Arts standards. However, the module intentionally incorporates Social Studies and Science content that many teachers may be teaching during other parts of the day. These intentional connections are described below.

NYS Social Studies Core Curriculum:

- The extensive biodiversity of North and South America produces unique biomes and species of plants and animals.
- Geographic reasoning: Identify how environment affects human activities and how human activities affect the environment.

NYS Science:

- Living Environment, Key Idea 6: Plants and animals depend on each other and their physical environment.
- Living Environment, Key Idea 7: Human decisions and activities have had a profound impact on the physical and living environment.

Central Texts

1. "Sloth Canopy Researcher: Bryson Voirin," from the Biomes of the World Web site, copyright © 2002–2012 by Explore Biodiversity and the Wild Classroom: www.thewildclassroom.com/biomes/scientistprofile/scientists/byrson.html.
2. "Hawaii's Endangered Happy Face Spider," Expeditionary Learning, 2012.
3. "Live Online Interview with Eve Nilson," Special Issues: Inside the Rainforest: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/rainforest/submit.asp>.
4. "Great Bear Rainforest Remote Camera Project" <http://vimeo.com/9433768>.



This unit is approximately 2 weeks or 10 sessions of instruction.

Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment
Lesson 1	Building Background Knowledge: Examining the Unique Living Things of the Rainforests and the Scientists Who Study Them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can compare and contrast the organizational structure of different informational texts. (RI.5.5) I can explain important relationships between ideas in a scientific text using specific details in the text. (RI.5.3) I can summarize information that is presented in pictures and/or numbers. (SL.5.2) I can prepare myself to participate in discussions. (SL.5.1) I can follow our class norms when I participate in a conversation. (SL.5.1) I can write for a variety of reasons. (W.5.10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can listen effectively to my partner when sharing. I can record what I notice and wonder about during a Gallery Walk. I can compare and contrast texts and images about rainforests. I can describe in writing a unique living thing from the rainforest. I can explain how scientists communicate their research about the rainforest. I can explain the general purpose of an informational text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal (KWL, Notices and Wonders, paragraph)
Lesson 2	Reading an Interview: “Sloth Canopy Researcher: Bryson Voirin”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can compare and contrast the organizational structure of different informational texts. (RI.5.5) I can determine the main idea(s) of an informational text based on key details. (RI.5.2) I can determine the meaning of academic words or phrases in an informational text. (RI.5.4) I can determine the meaning of content words or phrases in an informational text. (RI.5.4) I can use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) to help me understand the meaning of a word or phrase. (L.5.4) I can connect my questions and responses to what others say. (SL.5.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can describe the features of an interview as an informational text. I can determine the gist of an interview with scientist Bryson Voirin. I can determine the meaning of new words from context in an interview with scientist Bryson Voirin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal (Informational Text chart, glossary) Annotated text Exit ticket



Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment
Lesson 3	Continued Close Read of “Sloth Canopy Researcher: Bryson Voirin”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can follow our class norms when I participate in a conversation. (SL.5.1) • I can determine the main idea(s) of an informational text based on key details. (RI.5.2) • I can determine the meaning of academic words or phrases in an informational text. (RI.5.4) • I can determine the meaning of content words or phrases in an informational text. (RI.5.4) • I can read fifth-grade texts with fluency. (RF.5.4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can actively listen to my partner while discussing our ideas. • I can determine the main idea of an interview with scientist Bryson Voirin. • I can determine the meaning of new words from context in an interview with scientist Bryson Voirin. • I can read the interview with scientist Bryson Voirin with fluency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text-dependent questions • Journal (Rainforest KWL chart, glossary) • Exit ticket
Lesson 4	Summarizing Informational Text: “Hawaii’s Endangered Happy Face Spider”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can summarize text that is read aloud to me. (SL.5.2) • I can use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) to help me understand the meaning of a word or phrase. (L.5.4) • I can determine the main idea(s) of an informational text based on key details. (RI.5.2) • I can follow our class norms when I participate in a conversation. (SL.5.1) • I can draw on information to explore ideas in the discussion. (SL.5.1) • I can write routinely for a variety of purposes. (W.5.10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can explain the gist of the article “Hawaii’s Endangered Happy Face Spider.” • I can determine the meaning of new words from context in the article “Hawaii’s Endangered Happy Face Spider.” • I can listen actively to my group members while discussing ideas. • I can use my group’s ideas to help me determine the gist of an article. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student writing and signed Voirin article (from homework) • Journal (Informational Text chart, glossary, Getting the Gist protocol)



Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment
Lesson 5	Informational Text Features: Analyzing "Hawaii's Endangered Happy Face Spider"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can follow our class norms when I participate in a conversation. (SL.5.1) I can use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) to help me understand the meaning of a word or phrase. (L.5.4) I can determine the main idea(s) of an informational text based on key details. (RI.5.2) I can compare and contrast the organizational structure of different informational texts (RI.5.5) I can explain important relationships between ideas in a scientific text using specific details from the text. (RI.5.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can share my ideas with my partners quickly. I can determine the main idea of the article "Hawaii's Endangered Happy Face Spider." I can determine the meaning of new words from context in the article "Hawaii's Endangered Happy Face Spider." I can compare and contrast the rainforest research in Panama and Hawaii. I can evaluate the features of an interview as an informational text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paragraph from homework Journal (Informational Text chart, Features chart, Venn diagram)
Lesson 6	Mid-Unit Assessment: Analyzing an Interview with a Rainforest Scientist Part I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can explain what a text says using quotes from the text. (RI.5.1) I can determine the main idea(s) of an informational text based on key details. (RI.5.2) I can explain important relationships between ideas in a scientific text using specific details in the text. (RI.5.3) I can compare and contrast the organizational structure of different informational texts. (RI.5.5) I can use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) to help me understand the meaning of a word or phrase. (L.5.4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can identify the main idea of an interview. I can determine the meaning of new words from context in an interview about research in the rainforest. I can analyze the features of an interview and how they help readers. I can reflect on my learning about the rainforests and about the features of informational texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venn diagram (from Lesson 5 homework) Mid-Unit 1 Assessment: Analyzing an Interview with a Rainforest Scientist Part 1 Tracking My Progress, Mid-Unit 1 recording form



Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment
Lesson 7	Analyzing Documentary Videos: "Great Bear Rainforest Remote Camera Project" British Columbia, Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can summarize information that is presented in video. (SL.5.2) I can determine the main idea(s) of an informational text based on key details. (RI.5.2) I can determine the meaning of academic words or phrases in an informational text. (RI.5.4) I can determine the meaning of content words or phrases in an informational text. (RI.5.4) I can compare and contrast the organizational structure of different informational texts. (RI.5.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can explain the main idea of a documentary video on researching in the rainforest. I can determine the meaning of new words from context in a documentary video about researching in the rainforest. I can analyze the features of a documentary video as informational text. I can compare and contrast the features of an interview, an article, and a documentary video. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal (page for video, Informational Text charts, glossary) Exit ticket
Lesson 8	Synthesizing Information: Living Things in the Rainforest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can summarize information that is presented in pictures and maps. (SL.5.2) I can explain what a text says using quotes from the text. (RI.5.1) I can compare and contrast the organizational structure of different informational texts. (RI.5.5) I can document what I learn about a topic by taking notes. (W.5.8) I can summarize or paraphrase information in my notes and in finished work. (W.5.8) I can write routinely for a variety of reasons. (W.5.10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can read a map to help inform me as a reader. I can take notes on key details from multiple texts about rainforests. I can use quotes to create a gist statement from notes about rainforests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venn diagram (from homework) Journal (Informational Text charts, Rainforests information page) Synthesis Note-catcher



Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment
Lesson 9	End-of-Unit 1 Assessment: Interview with a Rainforest Scientist Part II and Comparing and Contrasting Texts About Rainforest Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can explain what a text says using quotes from the text. (RI.5.1) I can determine the main idea(s) of an informational text based on key details. (RI.5.2) I can determine the meaning of academic words or phrases in an informational text. (RI.5.4) I can determine the meaning of content words or phrases in an informational text. (RI.5.4) I can compare and contrast the organizational structure of different informational texts. (RI.5.5) I can use a variety of sources to develop an understanding of a topic. (RI.5.9) I can write an opinion piece and identify reasons to support my opinion. (W.5.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can determine the main ideas in informational texts about rainforests of the Western Hemisphere. I can compare and contrast the features of different informational texts about rainforests. I can express my opinion about types of informational texts in writing. I can use details to support my opinion. I can reflect on my learning about informational texts and the rainforests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of Unit 1 Assessment: Interview with a Rainforest Scientist, Part 2 Tracking My Progress, End of Unit 1 recording form
Lesson 10	Science Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can explain what a text says using quotes from the text. (RI.5.1) I can prepare myself to participate in discussions. (SL.5.1) I can draw on information to explore ideas in the discussion. (SL.5.1) I can follow our class norms when I participate in a conversation. (SL.5.1) I can ask questions that are on the topic being discussed. (SL.5.1) I can connect my questions and responses to what others say. (SL.5.1) After a discussion, I can explain key ideas about the topic being discussed. (SL.5.1) I can write an opinion piece and identify reasons to support my opinion. (W.5.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can ask questions that are relevant to rainforest research. I can share my ideas with my peers during a Science Talk about rainforests. I can use the ideas of my peers to help inform my ideas about the rainforests. I can gather quotes from informational texts as evidence to prepare for a Science Talk about rainforests. I can synthesize my ideas about rainforests after the Science Talk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science Talk (Observations/Notes) Journal: Synthesis Statement



Optional: Experts, Fieldwork, And Service

Experts:

- Invite zoologists, biologists, scientists, and botanists to come speak to the class.

• **Fieldwork:**

- Visit rainforest exhibits at zoos or museums.

Service:

- Explore ways to support environmental education or rainforest protection.

Optional: Extensions

- **Art:** Create scientifically accurate drawings of the plants or animals of the rainforest.
- **Geography:** Study more in depth about the specific characteristics of countries or world regions where rainforests exist.