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Date _____

Exploring the Animals and Plants in the Amazon Rain Forest Answer Key

The MapMaker Interactive is an interactive Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping tool. It includes features that help you view and customize maps to explore questions you are interested in investigating. You will start with a MapMaker investigation to explore the biodiversity of the Amazon rain forest.

Go to the MapMaker Interactive at natgeoed.org/mapmaker-interactive. Navigate to the Help section, located in the upper right corner of the page, and explore its different tools and features.

Part 1. Using MapMaker to Explore Animals and Plants in Regions of the Amazon Rain Forest

Open a MapMaker Interactive geo-tour using the following link: natgeoed.org/geography-wildlife-amazon, which will load the Geography and Wildlife of the Amazon Basin geo-tour.

At the bottom, you will see several bookmarks. In groups, you will explore different parts of the Amazon rain forest. Depending on the region assigned to your group, you will open the bookmarks for the animals and then the plants located in that region of the Amazon rain forest. For example, if you are assigned the western Amazon, first explore the Animals of the Western Amazon bookmark. Then explore Plants of the Western Amazon.

1. Circle the region you are exploring.

western Amazon

northern Amazon

eastern Amazon

Animals in the Amazon

2. Before exploring the animals map for your region, click on the “i” icon located on the bottom right corner of the bookmark. What information is provided about the animals in your region?

Possible responses:

western Amazon: highest number of mammals (257 species) and birds (782 species)

northern Amazon: still biodiverse, but not as biodiverse as the western Amazon

eastern Amazon: a variety of animal species call this region home due to the unique mixture of flooded and non-flooded forests

3. Next, look at the map. You will see numbers (markers) that you can click on for images of different animals, along with information about them. Include three of the animals in the table on page 2. Add facts you learned about them that relate to the importance of the animal within the Amazon ecosystem. This information is going to be used as evidence for the argument you will construct later in this activity.

Exploring the Animals and Plants in the Amazon Rain Forest Answer Key, continued

Animal Name	Why is this animal important to the Amazon rain forest? Are there any threats to the animal's survival? If so, what are they?
<p>Region: <u>western Amazon</u></p> <p>Learned from MapMaker: Possible responses: Pygmy marmoset: world's smallest monkey; like the dense forests of southwest Amazon because they can hide from predators; feed on a few trees Southern two-toed sloths: one of the slowest animals on Earth; spend time hanging from tree branches and vines with their claws (video) Two-striped forest pit viper: one of most venomous snakes in the Amazon; found in wet lowland rain forests near waterways Birds of the Tambopata National Reserve: more species of birds (595) than any other place of similar size on Earth (scarlet macaws, mealy amazons, etc.)</p> <p>Learned from other sources (include the name or link of the source): Answers will vary.</p>	
<p>Region: <u>northern Amazon</u></p> <p>Learned from MapMaker: Possible responses: Snakes: poisonous snakes like moist forests of southeastern Colombia (Amazon bushmasters live there) Western emerald: one of 542 bird species in this region (video) South American river turtle: largest freshwater turtle in the world; its shell can reach up to 89 centimeters (35 inches) in diameter Black spider monkey: likes the high forest canopies of Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana; important seed dispersers for trees and vines because they eat whole fruits with their seeds</p> <p>Learned from other sources (include the name or link of the source): Answers will vary.</p>	
<p>Region: <u>eastern Amazon</u></p> <p>Learned from MapMaker: Possible responses: Herons: like the brackish waters of the floodplain forests in this region Bearded saki: critically endangered primate; likes the floodplains in this region for seeds, fruit pulp, and flowers Red-bellied titi monkey: tiny monkey whose habitat is at risk from deforestation and construction of dams and mines Bats: more than half of mammals in the eastern Amazon are bats; more than 80 species (e.g., greater spear-nosed bat)</p> <p>Learned from other sources (include the name or link of the source): Answers will vary.</p>	

Exploring the Animals and Plants in the Amazon Rain Forest Answer Key, continued

Plants in the Amazon

- Before exploring the plants map for your region, click on the “i” icon located on the bottom right corner of the bookmark. What information is provided about the plants in your region?

Possible responses:

western Amazon: lowland tropical moist forests, floodplain forests, and bamboo-dominated forests; roughly the size of England

northern Amazon: high rate of plant diversity due to wide-ranging topography and a variety of climate regions

eastern Amazon: development in nearby Brazilian cities and towns threatens the forest; many economically important plants are found here

- Next, look at the map. You will see numbers (markers) that you can click on for images of different plants, along with information about them. Include three of the plants in the table below. Add facts you learned about them that relate to the importance of the plant within the Amazon ecosystem. This information is going to be used as evidence for the argument you will construct.

Plant Name	Why is this plant important to the Amazon rain forest? Are there any threats to the plant's survival? If so, what are they?
Region: <u>western Amazon</u> Learned from MapMaker: Possible responses: Diversity of Manú National Park: one of the most biodiverse places on Earth; 1,147 plant species have been identified Rubber Tree: produce latex, which is used for many products; many indigenous populations depend on rubber trees for income Big Leaf Mahogany: prized for its strength and rich, reddish-brown color, big-leaf mahogany has been used for centuries to build furniture and musical instruments. This has also led to widespread illegal logging of the tree in the Amazon. Learned from other sources (include the name or link of the source): Answers will vary.	

Exploring the Animals and Plants in the Amazon Rain Forest Answer Key, continued

Plant Name	Why is this plant important to the Amazon rain forest? Are there any threats to the plant's survival? If so, what are they?
<p>Region: <u>northern Amazon</u></p> <p>Learned from MapMaker: Possible responses: Campinarana: unique ecoregion along the Rio Branco and Rio Negro; nutrient-poor soils and drought-flood cycles create distinct vegetation here Giant Amazon water lilies: leaves can be more than 2.4 meters (8 feet) across; leaves are very buoyant because they have a web-like structure of veins filled with air (video) Brazil nut tree: can reach up to 60 meters (200 feet); nuts are collected by gathering fallen pods and chopping them open with sharp tools; one mature tree can produce more than 113 kilograms (250 pounds) of nuts a year</p> <p>Learned from other sources (include the name or link of the source): Answers will vary.</p>	
<p>Region: <u>eastern Amazon</u></p> <p>Learned from MapMaker: Possible responses: Açaí palm: found throughout flooded lowland forests; Açaí berries are considered a “superfruit” found in many drinks and supplements in the U.S. Wood (andiroba tree): many tree species contribute to flooring, furniture, and other wood products; this has caused major deforestation in the region Mangroves of Marajó: mangroves like the mix of salty ocean water and river freshwater on Marajó Island</p> <p>Learned from other sources (include the name or link of the source): Answers will vary.</p>	

