Rainforest Experience

The Rainforest Experience allows pupils to spend time in our tropical Glasshouses exploring ideas around rainforest habitats. Why do the plants grow the way they do? How are the plants arranged in different layers? Which useful every-day plants start their existence in the Rainforest? Pupils will:

• Have a chance to talk about their research into Rainforests
• Learn about the different layers of the Rainforest
• Visit the Palm House to look at Rainforest Plant adaptations and tropical plants with economic uses.
• Visit the tropical Lily House and spend time sketching plants that belong to the different Rainforest layers.
• Have a chance to think about why Rainforests are important to us even when we live on the opposite side of the planet to them.
• Helpers and teachers are asked to be prepared to support pupils and to participate in the activities as much as possible.

Learning outcomes:

• Pupils will find out about the different layers for the Rainforest.
• Pupils will see that plants grow in different ways, trees, climbers, epiphytes etc.
• Pupils will gain an appreciation that economic plants originate from rainforest and tropical plants.
• Have a chance to sketch real tropical plants.

Pre visit activities:

Have a discussion about your upcoming visit:
What do pupils think that a botanic garden is? Does a botanic garden just collect plants from this country or from around the World? What would they expect to see whilst they are there?

Now look at the Virtual Tour on the Botanic Garden website.
http://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/Virtual%20Tour/obg-virtual-tour.html

Compile a Rainforest fact file
Where are they found around the World? Who lives in them? What plants and animals are found there?
What would it feel like to be in a real Rainforest?
Why are they under threat?
Post visit activities:

Wish you were here...
Present an assembly to the rest of your school and tell them about the surprising things you saw in the Glasshouses. What did the plants look like in the different Houses? What was your favourite plant? Remember to tell the whole school why we need to look after the different plants in the World.

Turn your school into a jungle!
Take the drawings from your visit, cut them out and turn a corridor in you school into a jungle. Make sure you cover the walls with climbers, creepers, huge leaves and tropical fruits.

What can I do?
We can all help to save precious rainforests, even if they are 1000’s of miles away from us. Ask pupils to sign up to the Plants for the Planet web site http://www.plantsfortheplanet.com/ and pledge to help support all plant life.

Get your class to research the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and draw its logo. http://www.fsc.org/ See if they can find a web site that sells FSC pencils and paper. Also look for the Fairtrade Foundation logo and find out about the foods we buy that grow in a rainforest habitat along with the people who grow them. http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/producers/default.aspx

Resources:

Find out more about different biomes of the World at Missouri Botanical Gardens: http://www.mbgnet.net/index.html

Find out more Rainforests around the World:
The Rainforest Foundation http://www.rainforestfoundationuk.org/index