

Forests & Tree Habitats

Treetop Nestways with Nookling

Learning target

Explain how conditions vary within a forest.



Before you begin

Use the reference page and discussion prompts on their own, or open the optional browser adventure. No earlier lesson or physical kit is required.

For online play: use an internet-connected current browser with local storage enabled. Read the three-part Gemling briefing, answer the quick check, and apply the evidence at three checkpoints. Retry feedback supports review; results are not a secure test or gradebook.

Use for teacher-led review, science centers or partner practice. Independent readers may need support with the vocabulary below. The design target is grades 3-5; choose support based on the learner.

Vocabulary and concepts to discuss

Canopy and forest floor; light; shelter; organisms sharing space

Open Treetop Nestways - direct lesson link

Scan the QR code or use the clickable link. This guide is usable offline; the adventure runs on an external educational website.



Forests & Tree Habitats - key ideas

1. The first clues

Forests contain layers and varied spaces, including canopy branches and the forest floor. Light and moisture may differ between them.

2. How the clues connect

Organisms use different forest resources. Some feed or shelter in trees; others use soil, fallen wood and leaf litter.

3. Our evidence record

Our record places a sunlit leaf-feeding animal in the canopy and a damp-leaf-litter animal on the floor. The matches use resource and condition evidence, not a rule that every animal stays in one layer.

Keep the science accurate

A habitat includes food, water, air and space, not only a nest. Use representative habitats without memorizing every biome.

Apply the evidence

Use a specific observation from this lesson to explain one choice. Point to a clue, then connect that clue to a scientific idea.

Curriculum reference: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/dci-arrangement/3-Is4-biological-evolution-unity-and-diversity>

Talk through the evidence

1. Which layer often receives more direct light?

Expected answer: The canopy

Reasoning: Forests contain layers and varied spaces, including canopy branches and the forest floor. Light and moisture may differ between them.

2. Where does the leaf-litter animal fit our record?

Expected answer: Forest floor

Reasoning: Our record places a sunlit leaf-feeding animal in the canopy and a damp-leaf-litter animal on the floor. The matches use resource and condition evidence, not a rule that every animal stays in one layer.

3. What can fallen wood provide?

Expected answer: Shelter and resources

Reasoning: Organisms use different forest resources. Some feed or shelter in trees; others use soil, fallen wood and leaf litter.

4. Does every forest animal remain in one layer forever?

Expected answer: No

Reasoning: Forests contain layers and varied spaces, including canopy branches and the forest floor. Light and moisture may differ between them.

Guide the discussion

Ask learners to name the evidence that supports their answer. If an answer differs, revisit the matching key idea on page 2 and invite a revised explanation.

Online rewards: this lesson grants one fixed digital Expedition Discovery. Five saved digital Gemling friends become available only after all six distinct subject lessons are complete, in any order. Digital rewards do not establish physical ownership.