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## 2: Rainforest Writers

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### Based on the Puerto Rico quarter reverse

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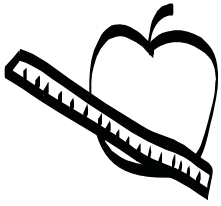
#### OBJECTIVE

Students will identify the characteristics of a tropical rainforest. Students will use reading skills and the letter writing process to display and deepen their understanding.



#### MATERIALS

- 1 overhead projector (optional)
- 1 overhead transparency (or photocopy) of the following:
  - “Puerto Rico Quarter Reverse” page
  - “Tropical Rainforest Topics” worksheet
  - “Unique El Yunque” page
  - “Unique El Yunque” worksheet
  - “Unique El Yunque” key
  - “Friendly Forest Letter” worksheet
- Copies of the following:
  - “Tropical Rainforest Topics” worksheet
  - “Unique El Yunque” page
  - “Unique El Yunque” worksheet
  - “Unique El Yunque” key
  - “Forest Friendly Letter” worksheet
- 1 class map of the United States
- 1 copy of a text that includes general information about Puerto Rico, such as:
  - *Puerto Rico (True Books-Geography)* by Elaine Landau
  - *Puerto Rico (Ticket To)* by Jo Ann Milivojevic
  - *A–Z Puerto Rico* by Jeff Reynolds
  - *U.S. Atlas for Young People* by Tom Smith
- 1 copy of a text that gives information about rainforests, such as:
  - *Rainforests: An Activity Guide for Ages 6–9* by Nancy F. Castaldo
  - *A Walk in the Rainforest* by Kristin Joy Pratt
  - *Tropical Rainforest* by Donald M. Silver
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue or paste



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# Rainforest Writers

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## PREPARATIONS

- Make an overhead transparency (or photocopy) of the following:
  - “Puerto Rico Quarter Reverse” page
  - “Tropical Rainforest Topics” worksheet
  - “Unique El Yunque” page
  - “Unique El Yunque” worksheet
  - “Friendly Forest Letter” worksheet
- Make copies of the following:
  - “Tropical Rainforest Topics” worksheet (one per student)
  - “Unique El Yunque” page (one per student)
  - “Unique El Yunque” worksheet (one per student)
  - “Forest Friendly Letter” worksheet (one per student)
- Locate a text that gives information about Puerto Rico (see examples under “Materials”).
- Locate a text that gives information about rainforests (see examples under “Materials”).



## GROUPINGS

- Whole group
- Individual work



## CLASS TIME

Three 30- to 45-minute sessions



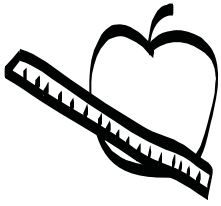
## CONNECTIONS

- Social Studies
- Science



## TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- |              |                   |                  |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------|
| • Quarter    | • Obverse (front) | • Reverse (back) |
| • Territory  | • Island          | • Endangered     |
| • Rainforest |                   |                  |



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# Rainforest Writers

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## BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Students should have a basic knowledge of:

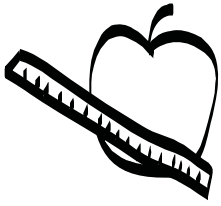
- The writing process
- Main idea and details
- Flora and fauna



## STEPS

### Session 1

1. Describe the 50 State Quarters® Program and the District of Columbia and U.S. Territories Quarters Program for background information, if necessary, using the example of your own state's or territory's quarter. Then display the "Puerto Rico quarter reverse" overhead transparency or photocopy. Locate Puerto Rico on a classroom map. Note its position in relation to your school's location.
2. When defining "US territory" (lowercase "t") for your students, the United States Mint recognizes and uses the Department of the Interior's definitions found at [www.doi.gov/oia/Islandpages/political\\_types.htm](http://www.doi.gov/oia/Islandpages/political_types.htm).
3. Ask the students to examine the coin image and tell you what they see. List their responses on chart paper. Explain to the students that the guard tower represents the stone walls and forts built long ago in Puerto Rico as protection from attacks. Explain that the flower in the design is the Puerto Rico hibiscus, the national flower of Puerto Rico, which can be found growing in forests in Puerto Rico.
4. Ask the students to share what they may already know about Puerto Rico. List their responses on chart paper.
5. Introduce the students to the selected text about Puerto Rico. During the brief reading, add information about Puerto Rico to the chart as it is presented.
6. After the reading, review the charted information about Puerto Rico. Note any mention of Puerto Rico's rainforests, flora, or fauna. Tell the students that Puerto Rico is home to El Yunque (el YOON-kay) National Forest, a tropical rainforest.
7. Introduce the students to the selected text about rainforests. As a group, preview the text. Display the "Tropical Rainforest Topics" overhead transparency. Briefly review the directions so the students will be prepared to complete the worksheet after listening to the selected text. During the reading, attend to any unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts.
8. Make sure to discuss the unique features of rainforests, specifically of tropical rainforests.
9. Distribute a "Tropical Rainforest Topics" worksheet to each of the students. Allow the students time to complete the worksheet.



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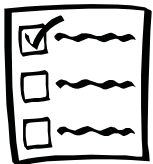
# Rainforest Writers

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10. Explain to the students that in the next session they will be learning about two unique animals found in El Yunque National Forest.

## Sessions 2 and 3

1. Display the transparency of the Puerto Rico quarter reverse. Review with the students the material collected about Puerto Rico in the previous session.
2. Review the “Tropical Rainforest Topics” worksheet and the information about rainforests covered in the previous session. Ask the students what animals might live in a rainforest. Record student ideas on an overhead transparency or on chart paper.
3. Explain to the students that they will be reading about two unique animals that live in El Yunque National Forest.
4. Distribute a “Unique El Yunque” page and a “Unique El Yunque” worksheet to each student. Display and preview the “Unique El Yunque” worksheet overhead transparency.
5. Display the “Unique El Yunque” page overhead transparency. As class, read about the two unique animals that live in the El Yunque National Forest. While reading, have the students answer the questions on the worksheet.
6. After reading the “Unique El Yunque” page, have the students share what they have written on the worksheet.
7. Distribute a “Forest Friendly Letter” worksheet to each of the students and review the directions. Display the “Forest Friendly Letter” overhead transparency as an example and review the writing process and components of a letter with the students. Have the students complete the worksheet by writing a friendly letter about El Yunque National Forest.
8. Allow the students time to complete the “Forest Friendly Letter” worksheet. Have the students cut out their friendly letter and paste it onto colorful construction paper. Display the letters around the room.



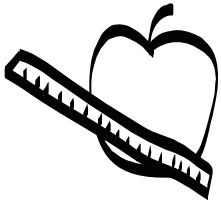
## ASSESSMENT

Use the students’ class participation, worksheets, and final products to evaluate whether they have met the lesson objectives.



## ENRICHMENTS/EXTENSIONS

- Learn more about El Yunque National Forest at [www.fs.fed.us/r8/caribbean/kids-page/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/caribbean/kids-page/index.shtml).
- Create a classroom rainforest complete with flora and fauna.
- Visit a nearby nature preserve or rainforest exhibit at the local zoo.



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# Rainforest Writers

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## DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING OPTIONS

- Allow students to work in pairs to complete the reading guides.
- Provide a scripted friendly letter format for students.
- Allow students to dictate their written responses.



## CONNECTION TO [WWW.USMINT.GOV/KIDS](http://WWW.USMINT.GOV/KIDS)

- Have students learn more about another tropical island in the United States through the Hawaii quarter lesson plan for grades 2 and 3 at [www.usmint.gov/kids/teachers/lessonPlans/50sq/2008/0203-5.pdf](http://www.usmint.gov/kids/teachers/lessonPlans/50sq/2008/0203-5.pdf).
- Have students learn more about conservation and endangered animals by visiting the District of Columbia and United States Territories quarters lesson plans for grades 2 and 3 at [www.usmint.gov/kids/teachers/lessonPlans](http://www.usmint.gov/kids/teachers/lessonPlans).



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Tropical Rainforest Topics



**Directions:** Write some details that you have learned about tropical rainforests—forests that have a large amount of rainfall and are located near the Equator. Write your details in complete sentences. Then draw an illustration for each detail.

DETAILS	ILLUSTRATIONS
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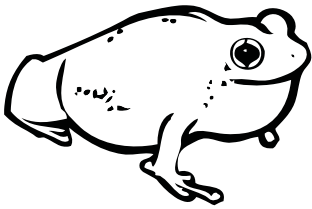
Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Unique El Yunque

**C**lose to the eastern tip of the island of Puerto Rico lies El Yunque (YOON-keh) National Forest. This mountainous forest is the only tropical rainforest in the United States National Forest System.



El Yunque National Forest is home to thousands of plants and hundreds of small animals, many of which are not found anywhere else on the planet. Two of El Yunque's unique and special animals are the whistling coquí (koh-KEE) and the Puerto Rican parrot.



The whistling coquí is a frog that is native to Puerto Rico. This frog is usually grey or brown and less than one inch long. The whistling coquí is nocturnal, which means that it comes out at night and sleeps during the day. The whistling coquí earned its name because of the special song it sings, which is one long rising whistle followed by up to three clicks.

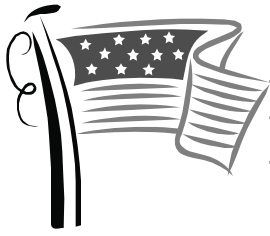
The Puerto Rican parrot also lives in El Yunque. The Puerto Rican parrot is bright green with a red forehead. This parrot eats seeds and fruits that grow in El Yunque. The Puerto Rican parrot



is an endangered species. A program is under way that could help to increase the population of these birds.

Each year, about 600,000 people visit El Yunque from all over the world to enjoy the unique plants and animals of the rainforest of Puerto Rico.





Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Unique El Yunque

## Reading Guide

1. Where is El Yunque National Forest?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What type of forest is El Yunque?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Who are the two unique animals that live in El Yunque?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What does the word "nocturnal" mean?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What sound does the whistling cocquí make?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What does the Puerto Rican parrot eat?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Why is there a special program to help the Puerto Rican parrot?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Where do visitors to El Yunque National Forest come from?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Why do people visit El Yunque National Forest?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What fun and interesting fact did you learn about El Yunque National Forest?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# Unique El Yunque

## Key

1. Where is El Yunque National Forest?

On the island of Puerto Rico

2. What type of forest is El Yunque?

A tropical rainforest

3. Who are the two unique animals that live in El Yunque?

The Puerto Rican parrot and the whistling coquí frog.

4. What does the word "nocturnal" mean?

To be awake or come out at night and sleep during the day.

5. What sound does the whistling cocquí make?

A long rising whistle followed by up to three short clicks.

6. What does the Puerto Rican parrot eat?

Seeds and fruits that grow in El Yunque

7. Why is there a special program to help the Puerto Rican parrot?

The Puerto Rican parrot is an endangered species

8. Where do visitors to El Yunque National Forest come from?

All over the world

9. Why do people visit El Yunque National Forest?

To see the unique plants and animals of the rainforest.

10. What fun and interesting fact did you learn about El Yunque National Forest?

(Varies)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Friendly Letter

**Directions:** Write a letter to a friend or family member. Share with them the fun and interesting things you have learned about Puerto Rico and El Yunque National Forest. Follow the writing process and include the date, an introduction, key ideas, and a closing.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,



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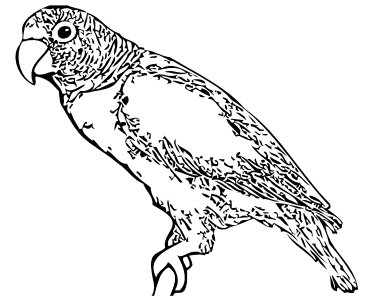
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Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_



## EXAMPLE LETTER

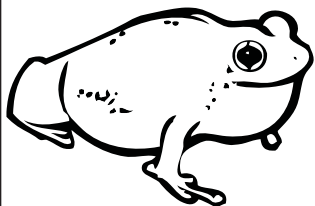
Dear Class,

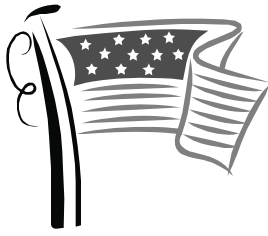
I am writing to tell you about a wonderful place I just visited. This place is located on the island of Puerto Rico and is called El Yunque National Forest.

El Yunque National Forest is a tropical rainforest. El Yunque has some very special plants and animals like the whistling cocquí frog and the Puerto Rican parrot. I had lots of fun learning about them.

I hope it won't be long before I get to visit Puerto Rico again and enjoy more of its unique features. I hope that you can visit Puerto Rico soon as well.

Sincerely,  
Ms. Teacher





# Puerto Rico Quarter Reverse

