



Name: _____

Section: _____

Date: _____

Animal Diversity in the Cloud Forest

The tropical montane cloud forests of Monteverde, Costa Rica are often called a biodiversity hotspot. A biodiversity hotspot is a geographic area that is inhabited by a high number of species, many of which are endemic (organisms that are not found elsewhere on Earth). Scientists and other citizens pay close attention to biodiversity hotspots for several reasons. First, hotspots provide an incredible variety of species to study. The more we study these plants and animals, the better we will understand our planet. Second, understanding hotspot species can have very direct results on human health. For example, the chemical quinine, which is naturally produced in South American cinchona trees, has been widely used as a drug to fight malaria. Third, damage to a hotspot could result in the extinction of many species. When people have limited time and money to protect plants and animals, they focus on hotspots first, where the greatest number of species is at risk.

You are going to become the class expert on one of the many animals in the cloud forest biodiversity hotspot. As the class expert, you will be responsible for creating a page for your class' cloud forest field guide. To complete this project you will need to:

- (1) Select an animal
- (2) Collect information about your animal
- (3) Create an informational page for the field guide
- (4) Present your findings to your classmates
- (5) Compare your animal with those of your classmates

Step 1: Select an animal

There are thousands of animals that live in the cloud forests of Monteverde. Once you select (or are assigned) an animal, write its common name below.

Animal = _____

Step 2: Collect information about your animal

Use books, magazines, online resources, and other sources to gather information about your animal. Use the research page to organize your notes. Be sure to keep track of the bibliographic information for each resource you use.



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Step 3: Create an informational page for the field guide

Fill out the blank field guide page with information about your animal. Be sure to include a picture. Do your best to make the page neat, legible, and professional-looking.

Step 4: Present your findings to your classmates

Meet with a small group of students and tell them about the animal you researched. You may bring your field guide page with you as a reference, but you should plan to speak without reading from your notes. It may help to practice with a friend or family member so that you get a sense of what it is like to talk about your animal from memory.

Step 5: Compare your animal with those of your classmates

Listen carefully to your classmates' presentations and ask them questions if any of the information they share is unclear to you. After listening to each presentation, work as a group to complete the **Animal Diversity Awards** sheet.