

SPECIAL LIFE FORMS

Many special life forms exist in tropical rainforests that are not found in any other plant community.

Q. 1 On the pages following, describe and draw four (4) special life forms, including at least one from each of the following three groups:

Group A

- Strangler fig

Group B

- Robust woody vine or liana
- Lawyer vine (wait-awhile)

Group C

- Epiphytic orchid
- Epiphytic elk-horn fern
- Epiphytic birds-nest fern

In your description, focus on any adaptations these plants show in their

- Structure
- Method of obtaining nutrients
- Leaf shape

Climbing method (if applicable)

Q. 2 Complete the table below for life forms observed during the day.

buttress roots on trees	
stilt roots on trees	
drip tips on leaves	
walking-stick palms, feather leaved, stem > 2 metres	
palm trees with feather leaves	
palm trees with single stem	
palm trees with many stems (shrub like)	
lawyer vine (calamus Sp.)	
tree ferns. ste, <0.5 metres high	
strangler fig	
vines with feather palm leaves	
vines with thorns/prickles/hooks	
robust woody Lianes, stem >5cm diameter	
slender woody Lianes, stem 1-5cm diameter	
thin, wiry vines, stem diameter < 1cm	
epiphytic orchids	
staghorns	
elk-horn	
birds-nest ferns	
hanging ferns	
climbing ferns	
native ginger	
mosses	
lichens	
fungi	
liverworts	
ground ferns	
herbs with soft, wide leaves (eg banana ginger)	
herbs with long, narrow leaves (grasses)	
herbs with long, strap leaves (eg lillies)	

SPECIAL LIFE FORMS - Record Sheet

Name:	Diagrams:
Description: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

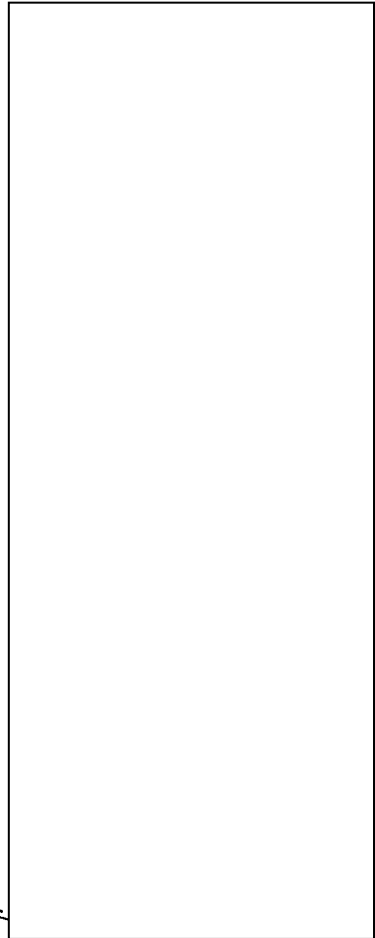
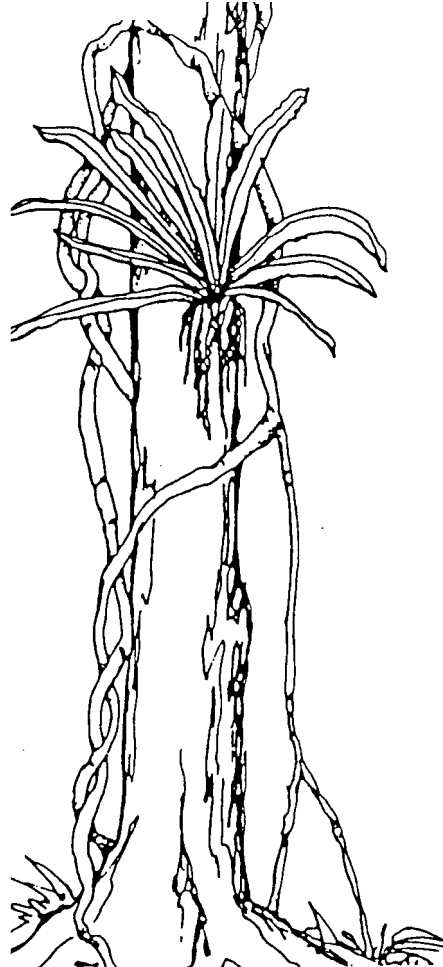
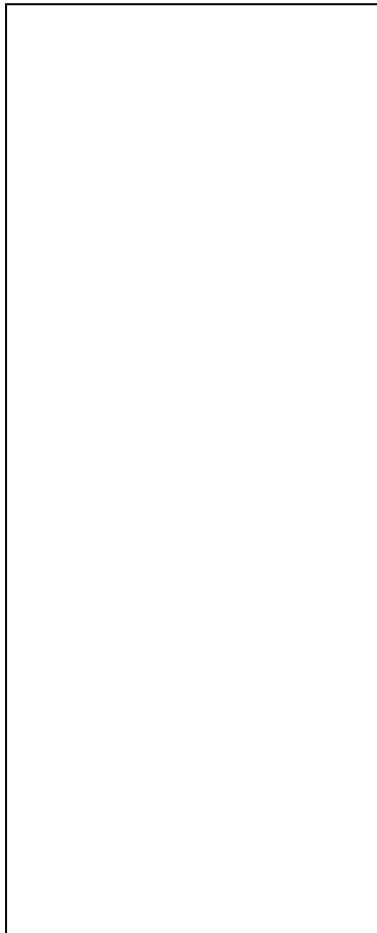
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ACTIVITY 6 CONTINUED

Q.3

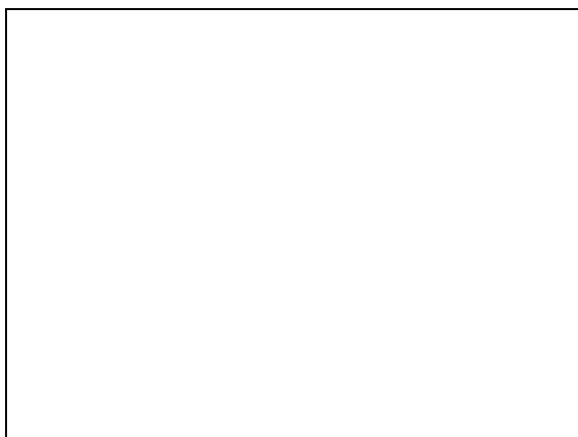
A. Vines

After you have carefully used your senses of sight and touch to study how vines cling to trees, do two detailed drawings of any useful structures you can find on vines.



Describe how the structures you have drawn are useful.

B. Epiphytes



Name: _____

Location: _____

Special Features: _____

How is the special feature an adaptation?

ACTIVITY 6 CONTINUED



Answer the following questions.

1. What function do buttress roots serve? Explain your answer using the information contained in the "Background" notes.

2. Write a short paragraph explaining how the different types of climbers reach the canopy. Give examples.

3. Epiphytes are not parasites yet are found growing on other plants, particularly trees. What function does this living habit serve? Explain using examples.

4. Epiphyte plants suffer some disadvantages due to their habit of growth. What problems do you think they may encounter, and how are these problems overcome?

5. Describe the life cycle of a strangler fig.

SKETCH THIS LIFE CYCLE

