What is a tropical rainforest?

The name "**tropical rainforest**" already explains a lot – it is a forest where it rains a lot and that is located in the tropics. The tropics are the countries close to the equator. For this reason, it is very humid and also very warm in tropical rainforests throughout the entire year.

Tropical rainforests are found in **South America**, **Africa, Asia**, and **Australia**. Tropical rainforests are home to the most species of plants and animals in the world. It is said that rainforests have the greatest **variety of species**. About 90 percent of all known species are found there.

The tropical rainforest's structure is often compared with the **stories** of a house. Most plants and animals live on the middle story, because that's where the most sunlight is. On the forest floor, or on the first floor, it is nearly dark. That's why the plants there have especially large leaves. Many insects also live there. The attic is formed by the **giant trees**, which can grow up to 60 meters tall. Tropical rainforests are very important not only to the plants, animals, and people who live there, but also to the Earth's climate. This is because these forests store a lot of **water** and produce a lot of **oxygen**, which we need to breathe. And as a side effect, they consume harmful carbon dioxide, which we people produce in great quantities and which harms our climate.

Unfortunately, many people do not see how important the tropical rainforests are. They cut down the trees and sell the wood. Or they burn the trees down and then use the bare areas for growing crops or raising cattle. As a result, tropical rainforests are disappearing.

Assignment:

Which countries have tropical rainforests? Use a green pen or pencil to color in the boxes with the right country names.

Canada	Brazil	China	Egypt
Australia	Italy	Thailand	Cameroon

Information Sheet

For fast students: You know that parrots have very colorful feathers. Now you can design your own color pattern. Find the parrots in the mandala and color them in. (Of course, you may also color in everything else in the mandala.)