



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 5: Module 2A: Unit 2: Lesson 3**

## **Supporting an Opinion: Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)**



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.  
Exempt third-party content is indicated by the footer: © (name of copyright holder). Used by permission and not subject to Creative Commons license.



Supporting an Opinion:

Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)

Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

- I can determine the main idea(s) of an informational text based on key details. (RI.5.2)
- I can summarize an informational text. (RI.5.2)
- I can explain important relationships between people, events, and ideas in a historical, scientific, or technical text using specific details in the text. (RI.5.3)
- I can write an opinion piece that supports a point of view with reasons and information. (W.5.1)
- I can make inferences using quotes from the text. (RI.5.1)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can explain why the canopy is a difficult place to research.
- I can identify the skills needed by scientists in order to study the rainforest canopy.
- I can determine the meaning of new words from context in *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World*.
- I can write an opinion about being a rainforest scientist that is supported by reasons from the text.
- I can infer what skills Meg Lowman must have in order to be a rainforest scientist.

Ongoing Assessment

- Journal (Meg Lowman KWL chart, Close Read Note-catcher, glossaries)



Supporting an Opinion:

Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)

Agenda	Teaching Notes
<p>1. <b>Opening</b></p> <p>A. Reviewing Homework and Engaging the Reader (5 minutes)</p> <p>B. Introducing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</p> <p>2. <b>Work Time</b></p> <p>A. Read-aloud and Main Idea: What Skills Do Scientists in the Rainforest Need? (20 minutes)</p> <p>B. Key Vocabulary to Deepen Understanding (15 minutes)</p> <p>C. Synthesis Writing (10 minutes)</p> <p>3. <b>Closing and Assessment</b></p> <p>A. Debrief (5 minutes)</p> <p>4. <b>Homework</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In advance: Read pages 9–10 of <i>The Most Beautiful Roof in the World</i>.</li> <li>• During the Group Read (Work Time, Part A), students are assigned two sentences of the text to read alone. In advance, identify the sentences that each student will be assigned.</li> <li>• Review: Close Reading Note-catcher.</li> <li>• Most lessons in this unit include a portion of Work Time devoted to Key Vocabulary to Deepen Understanding. Students revisit their thinking about new words in various ways. This helps all students solidify their understanding of new concepts and of how to figure out words in context.</li> <li>• Throughout Unit 2, students attend carefully to the key excerpts from this beautifully written text. During this initial exposure, lessons focus more on comprehending the text and building content knowledge about Meg Lowman’s research. There is some, though more limited, focus on considering author’s craft. In Unit 3, students will revisit key passages from this text to consider word choice, nuance, and author’s craft. This helps prepare students to write their own field journals.</li> </ul>

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>explain, identify, opinion, skills, supported, ascending, wonder, chattering, “powerhouse,” biomass (9), frontier, fearless, skillful, cliffs, pioneer (10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Most Beautiful Roof in the World</i> (book; one per student)</li> <li>• Close Reading Note-catcher (one per student)</li> <li>• Document camera</li> <li>• Meg Lowman, Rainforest Scientist KWL anchor chart (from Lesson 1)</li> </ul>



Supporting an Opinion:

Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)

Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Reviewing Homework and Engaging the Reader (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to take out their homework from Lesson 2.</li> <li>• Invite them to share with a partner: one interesting detail they added to the L column of their Meg Lowman, Rainforest Scientist KWL in their journals and one new word (and its definition) that they added to one of their two glossaries.</li> <li>• Ask a few students to share out what they learned from their partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELL language acquisition is facilitated by interacting with native speakers of English who provide models of language.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Introducing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the learning targets: “I can explain why the canopy is a difficult place to research,” and “I can identify the skills needed by scientists in order to study the rainforest canopy.”</li> <li>• Ask students to recall and share out the meaning of the words <i>explain</i> (describe; give details; clarify) and <i>identify</i> (name; discover; recognize).</li> <li>• Ask students to share out the meaning of <i>skills</i>. Listen for responses such as: “abilities; expertise; ability to do something well; gained through experience or training.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide nonlinguistic symbols to assist struggling readers in making connections with vocabulary (e.g., cluster of trees with an arrow pointing to the very top for <i>canopy</i>, a person in a lab coat for <i>scientist</i>, a person looking through a magnifying glass for <i>study</i>). These symbols can be used throughout the year. Specifically, they can be used in directions and learning targets.</li> </ul>



Supporting an Opinion:

Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)

Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Read Aloud and Main Idea: What Skills Do Scientists in the Rainforest Need? (20 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As usual, ask students to locate their copies of <i>The Most Beautiful Roof in the World</i> and join their groups. Distribute the <b>Close Reading Note-catcher</b> and display using a document camera. Focus students on the first section “Immerse Yourself! First Read.” Say to students: “As I read aloud, follow along silently and record any words or phrases from the text that stand out, or that you think are important, in the left column of your Note-catcher.”</li> <li>Orient students to page 9, the phrase “For a human being...” Read pages 9–10 aloud as students follow along (through “These men and women are pioneers”).</li> <li>Give students time to jot down key words/phrases in the left-hand column of their Note-catchers. Then ask them to share with their group.</li> <li>Then ask students to complete the right-hand column: Write a short statement about the meaning of pages 9–10.</li> <li>Ask several students to share out. Listen for comments such as: “how dangerous the canopy is to explore; the canopy holds the largest amount of rainforest life; technology has helped scientists explore the canopy; scientists need special skills to explore the canopy.”</li> <li>Orient students to the second part of the Close Read Note-catcher, “Dive Deeper: Second Read.” Focus students’ attention on the text in the box: the learning targets and the Strategy Focus. Remind students that pictures are a text feature that can offer valuable clues about the information in the text and help them figure out difficult words and/or phrases.</li> <li>Within each small group, assign each student a different section of text to read:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Section 1: page 9, sentences 1–3 (“For a human being ...” through “... chatterings of monkeys.”)</li> <li>* Section 2: page 9, sentences 4–7 (“They knew that the canopy ...” through “... exploration was easier.”)</li> <li>* Section 3: page 10, sentences 1–2 (“The rainforest canopy ...” through “... gravity, ants, and thorns.”)</li> <li>* Section 4: Paragraph 10, sentences 3–5 (“Such scientists, however ...” through “... feel their way up to the brightly lit canopy.”)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide ELLs bilingual word-for-word translation dictionaries or online translation sources such as Google Translate to assist with comprehension. ELLs should be familiar with how to use glossaries or dictionaries.</li> <li>Students needing additional supports may benefit from a partially filled-in Close Reading Note-catcher.</li> <li>Consider providing smaller chunks of text (sometimes just a sentence) for struggling readers. Teachers can check in on students’ thinking as they write or speak about their text.</li> <li>Provide anchor charts for processes, such as: How to Share with My Group Members. This would include question words with nonlinguistic representations (e.g., a person reading a book for <i>read</i>, two people talking for <i>share</i>, a person writing for <i>write</i>) and a sentence frame (e.g., “Some words that seemed important to me were ...”).</li> </ul>



Supporting an Opinion:

Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)

Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give directions:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. In the left-hand column of your Note-catcher, record any specific evidence from the text that addresses the two learning targets.</li><li>2. In the right column, write a brief explanation about why you think each piece of evidence helps you meet the target.</li></ol></li><li>• Clarify any instructions and model if necessary.</li><li>• Give students approximately 5 minutes to read their short section of the text and fill in their Note-catchers.</li><li>• Focus students' attention whole group. Remind students of the Listening Criteria rubric (from Lesson 1), focusing on the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Taking notes about important ideas and details that help to answer the questions</li><li>* Waiting until the speaker is finished before making comments or asking questions</li></ul></li><li>• Ask students to share with their group members about what evidence they each found to answer the question(s), and explain why they chose each piece of text. Circulate to offer feedback to individuals and groups about how well group members are meeting these two listening criteria.</li><li>• As time allows, ask several students to share out the evidence (text and/or visual features) that helped them meet the targets.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>



Supporting an Opinion:

Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)

Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. Key Vocabulary to Deepen Understanding (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the learning target: “I can determine the meaning of new words in <i>The Most Beautiful Roof in the World</i>.” Ask a few students to remind the class what they have been doing toward this target in the past few lessons.</li> <li>• Remind the class of the Word Sort activity completed in Lesson 1 and ask a couple of students to share out what a Word Sort is.</li> <li>• Ask students to turn to a new page in their journals, and draw a line down the middle to split it into a left- and right-hand column. At the top of the left column, ask students to write: Words That Describe the Canopy. At the top of the right-hand column, they should write: Words That Describe Rainforest Scientists.</li> <li>• Display the following words (without the definitions/synonyms): <i>ascending, chatterings, wonder, “powerhouse,” pioneer, frontier, skillful, cliffs, biomass, fearless</i>.</li> <li>• Give students 5 minutes to work with their group to determine which words should go into each category. Encourage students to look back on pages 9–10 of their books for context clues, and/or to use the visual features on these pages to help them determine what difficult/unknown words may mean. Remind students to justify to their group why they believe a specific word should go in a certain category.</li> <li>• Circulate to support and/or clarify as needed.</li> <li>• After about 5 minutes, ask several students to share out the meaning of each word, listening for ideas like:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <i>ascending</i>: climbing upward (academic)</li> <li>* <i>chatterings</i>: sounds that monkeys make; animal noises (scientific)</li> <li>* <i>wonder</i>: curiosity; desire to learn about the unknown (academic)</li> <li>* <i>“powerhouse”</i>: where most things happen; central; important (academic)</li> <li>* <i>pioneer</i>: the first person to explore a place; leading the way (academic)</li> <li>* <i>frontier</i>: edge; border; unexplored land (academic)</li> <li>* <i>skillful</i>: expert; practiced; clever (academic)</li> <li>* <i>cliffs</i>: steep drop-offs; overhangs (scientific)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider giving fewer words to struggling readers to work with (just 4 or 5 words).</li> <li>• Provide visual representations of the words for students to sort along with the vocabulary words themselves.</li> <li>• Increase interactions with vocabulary in context. This increases rate of vocabulary acquisition for students.</li> </ul>



Supporting an Opinion:

Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)

Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <i>biomass</i>: the living things of the rainforest (scientific)</li> <li>* <i>fearless</i>: unafraid; not scared; brave (academic)</li> <li>• Give students a few minutes to work with group members to move words into a different category, based on new understanding(s).</li> <li>• If time permits, ask students to take 1 minute to look back at pages 9–10 and choose 1 or 2 more words from the text to add to either category. Ask a few students to share out new words they chose to add to a category, and to explain why they think the word should be added.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>C. Synthesis Writing (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the learning target: “I can write an opinion about being a rainforest scientist that is supported by reasons from the text.”</li> <li>• Ask several students to share out what they remember about the word <i>opinion</i> (personal belief; judgment; view; perspective). Then ask students what it means to <i>support</i> an opinion with “reasons from the text.” Listen for students to say: “Use specific words/phrases from the book that provide evidence for my opinion,” or similar ideas.</li> <li>• Ask students to begin a new page in their journals and independently respond to the following prompt:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “Share your opinion about whether or not you think it would be difficult to be a rainforest scientist. Support your opinion with at least two details from the text.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Give students 5 minutes to write, and then ask them to Pair-Share what they wrote. Invite several students to share out whole class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider allowing students who struggle with language to dictate their writing to a partner or teacher.</li> <li>• Consider allowing students to draw their observations, ideas, or notes when appropriate. This allows all students to participate in a meaningful way.</li> </ul>



Supporting an Opinion:

Why is the Rainforest Canopy a Difficult Place to Research? (Pages 9–10)

Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Debrief (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus students' attention on the <b>Meg Lowman, Rainforest Scientist KWL anchor chart</b>, and say: "Even though pages 9 and 10 do not mention Meg Lowman specifically, what can you infer about her based on what we read about the canopy and rainforest scientists today? What in the text makes you think so?"</li> <li>Invite students to share out ideas, listening for inferences such as: "She is a pioneer; she must be strong/fearless/physically fit/smart/hardworking," etc. Record students' thinking in the L column of the KWL. Students should record ideas on the KWL in their journals as well.</li> <li>Read through each of the learning targets, pausing after each for students to show a thumbs-up if they feel they mastered the target, a thumbs-sideways if they feel they've partially mastered the target, or a thumbs-down if they're still working on mastering the target.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For students needing additional supports producing language, consider offering a sentence frame or starter or a cloze sentence to assist with language production and provide the structure required.</li> </ul>
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This homework has three parts:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reread pages 9–10 to someone (or yourself) at home. Be prepared to share about Meg Lowman as a scientist with a partner tomorrow.</li> <li>Read your synthesis statement to that same person (or yourself).</li> <li>Choose three academic and two scientific vocabulary words discussed in today's lesson to add to your glossaries in your journal. Choose from this list: explain, identify, opinion, skills, supported; ascending, wonder, chatterings, "powerhouse," biomass (9), frontier, fearless, skillful, cliffs, pioneer (10).</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audio recordings of text can aid students in comprehension. Students can pause and replay confusing portions while they follow along with the text.</li> <li>For students who may have difficulty determining important words to add to their glossaries, consider prioritizing the following words for them: <i>explain, identify, opinion</i> (academic); <i>cliffs, biomass</i> (scientific).</li> </ul>



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# Grade 5: Module 2A: Unit 2: Lesson 3

## Supporting Materials



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.  
Exempt third-party content is indicated by the footer: © (name of copyright holder). Used by permission and not subject to Creative Commons license.



Close Reading Note-catcher

**Immerse Yourself! First Read Note-catcher**

<b>Words or phrases that stand out or seem important</b>	<b>Based on the words and phrases... My initial thoughts about the meaning of this section of the text</b>

**Dive Deeper Second Read Note-catcher**

**Learning Targets:**

I can explain why the canopy is a difficult place to research.

I can identify the skills needed by scientists in order to study the rainforest canopy.

**Strategy Focus:** I can use visual features to contribute to my understanding of the text.

<b>Evidence from the text</b>	<b>My thinking</b>