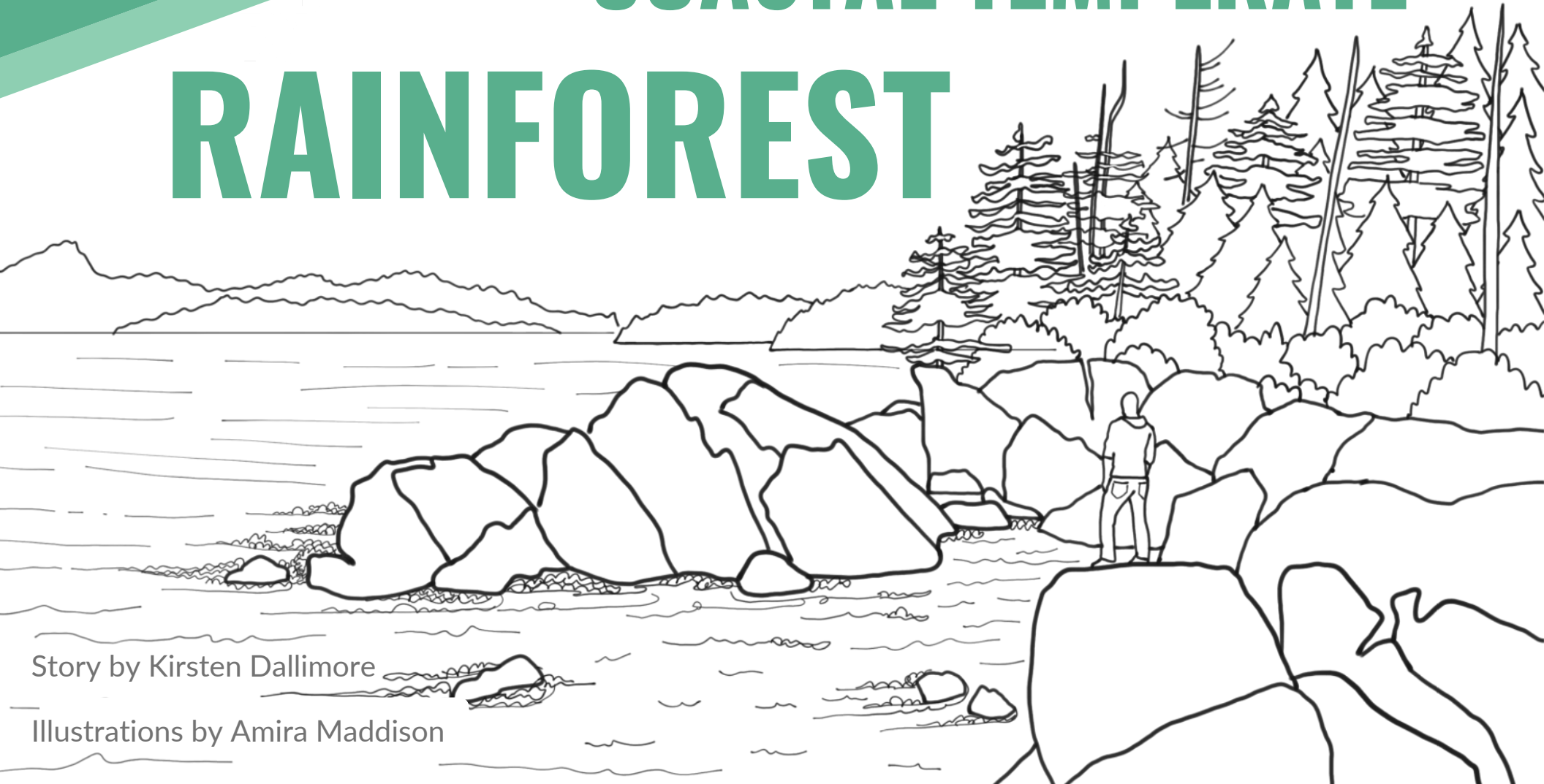




SIERRA  
CLUB BC

A  
JOURNEY  
THROUGH THE

# COASTAL TEMPERATE RAINFOREST



Story by Kirsten Dallimore

Illustrations by Amira Maddison

# RAINFOREST VISUALIZATION ACTIVITY

## HOW BEST TO EXPERIENCE THIS ACTIVITY

This is a storytelling exercise using visualization techniques to support your learning about the Coastal Temperate Rainforest. This story will take you on a journey through the rainforest that uses your imagination to engage your senses. Based on where you live in BC and/or due to present circumstances, you may not actually be able to go out and visit the temperate rainforest during this time. Therefore, we encourage you to use this visualization activity to experience the different sights, textures and sounds of the fascinating forest.

**Suggested age range: Grades 1-5**

**Materials required:** A quiet place to enjoy the story and another person

**Time required:** 15-20 minutes

To start, you will need to find a quiet and comfortable place to enjoy the story. You will also require another member of your household to read the story out loud to you to guide you through this visualization. The other option is that YOU read aloud the story to other members of your household and guide THEM through this visualization activity. We encourage those that are not reading to do the actions and make the sounds in the story as one person reads to help bring the forest experience to life.

Either way, let's start our trip through the rainforest together!

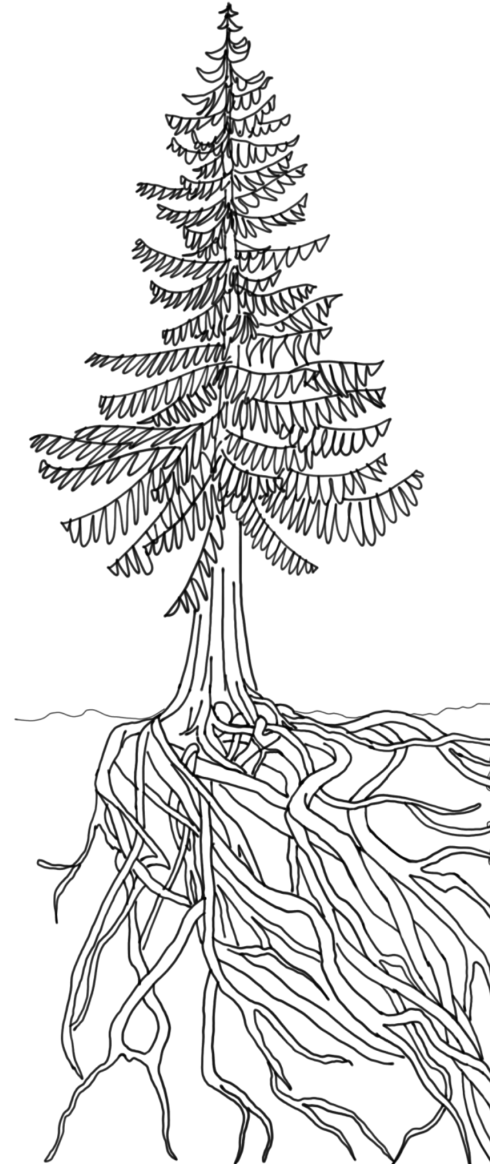
# WELCOME TO THE COASTAL TEMPERATE RAINFOREST

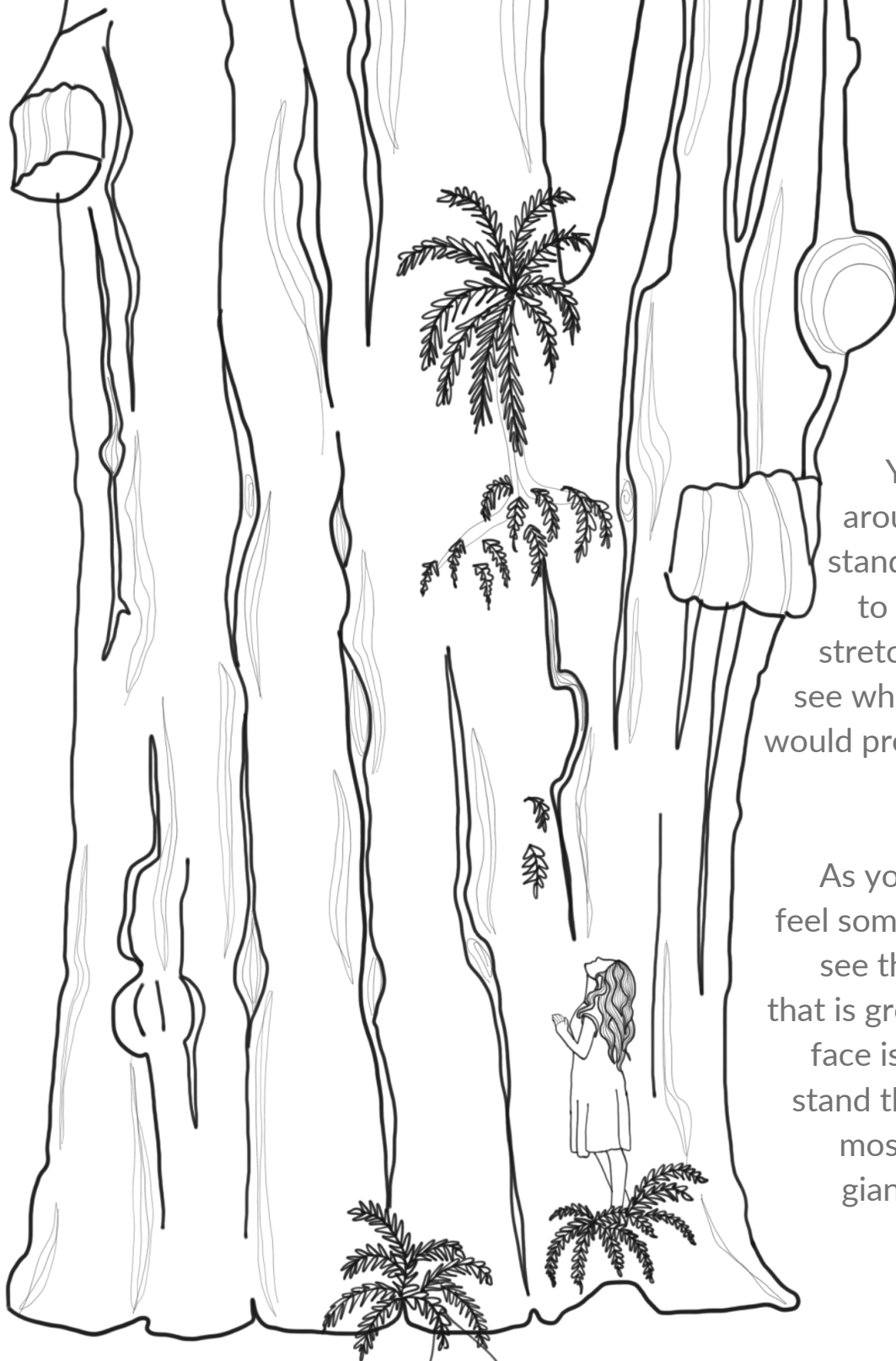
Close your eyes and imagine that you are on an adventure, a real journey. You are stepping into BC's coastal temperate rainforest for the very first time.

The first thing that you notice is the way that it smells. It's damp. In fact, you can tell that it has been raining recently because the air smells fresh, crisp and clear. You notice many different shades of green ranging from light to dark all around you.

As you walk along the path you start looking up at the trees and see that there are many large branches hanging over the trail. It feels like being in a cathedral, mighty and ancient. The trees are tall and solid, like statues standing to attention.

The needles on some of these branches are flat and quite soft to touch. You reach over to a branch and gently hold a few needles and then you decide to take a big breath in to smell them. The smell is very sweet — at first it smells citrusy like an orange. You're not sure what kind of tree you are looking at, but you know that it looks and even smells very familiar to you. You know this type of tree like an old friend, you know you have encountered it many times before in your life.



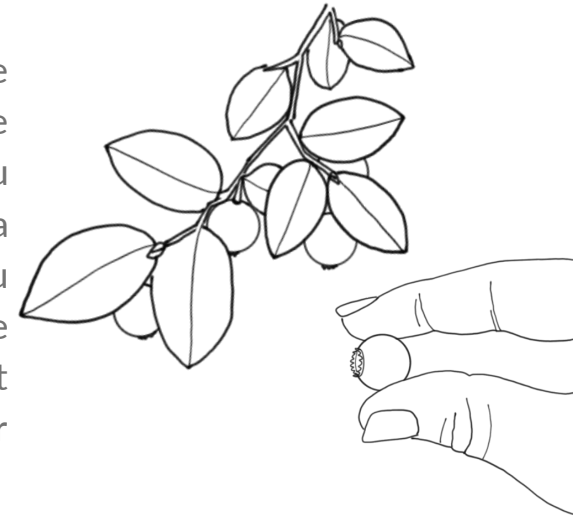


Because of its size, you sense that this tree must have been standing in the same spot for a very long time. You start wondering, "how old could this tree be?" Is this tree as old as you? Your parents? Your grandparents? Or is it even older than anyone you have ever met?

You are curious to see if you can reach your arms around the entire base of the tree. You go over to it, stand underneath its canopy and reach out your arms to give it a big, giant hug. Your arms and fingers are stretched as far as they can go around. You look up to see where your hands are on the bark and realize that it would probably take at least 5 more people reaching their arms out to make it around this entire tree.

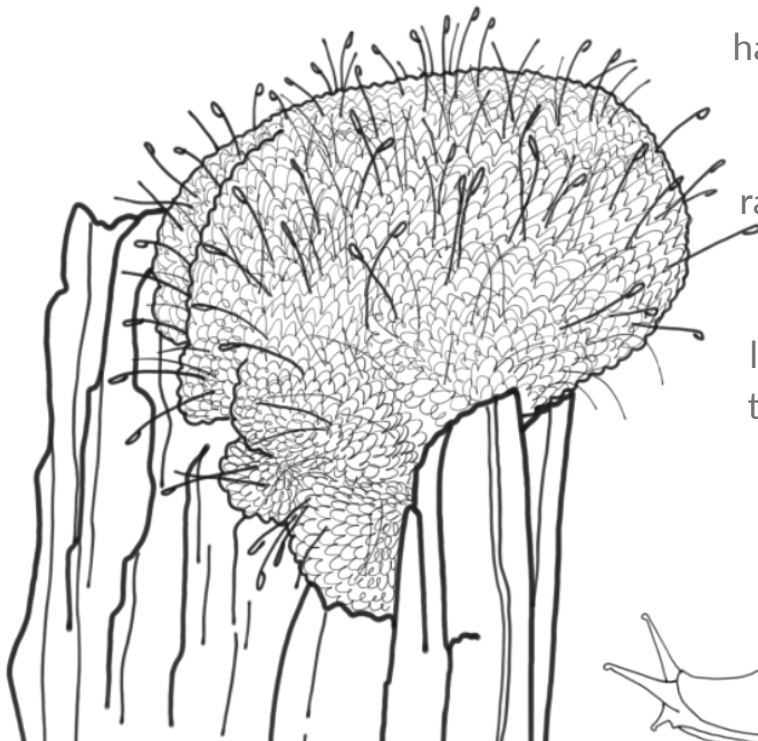
As you stand right up against the bark of the tree, you feel something soft and puffy on your cheek. You look to see that your face is up against some dark green moss that is growing on the tree trunk. At first, it feels like your face is pushed up against a very soft pillow. But as you stand there longer hugging the tree, you realize that the moss has held on to the moisture from the rain like a giant sponge and now it feels very wet on your face!

You continue your journey, walking along the path. You start to notice the plants. Some plants have large green leathery leaves, while others have fronds that look like swords sticking up. Looking over to a nurse log you can't help but notice some little, bright red berries. They are growing on a very delicate plant that is coming out of the top of an old rotten log. You start to wonder...are these berries edible? Could I pick one? You choose not to eat them, because you are not sure if they are in fact edible. But you do decide to pick just one berry off the bush and squish it with your fingers.



When you look down you notice you have red juice dripping down your arm. You reach down to the ground to wipe your hand off in the thick and soft squishy moss. When you are down on the ground wiping your hand off, you see a banana slug that is in the shade of some leaves. The banana slug loves the rainforest because of the decaying plant matter it can munch on. Slugs mainly feed at night and on wet, cloudy days. During the day, they retreat to dark, moist sites under plants, decaying leaves and other objects in the forest. You don't want to disturb the slug, so you step back away from it, careful not to step on it.

You carry on along the trail, lightly placing your feet. Your heel touches the ground first, then your toe, one foot at a time. The ground feels spongy and you bounce a little. This is because of all the decaying plant matter.

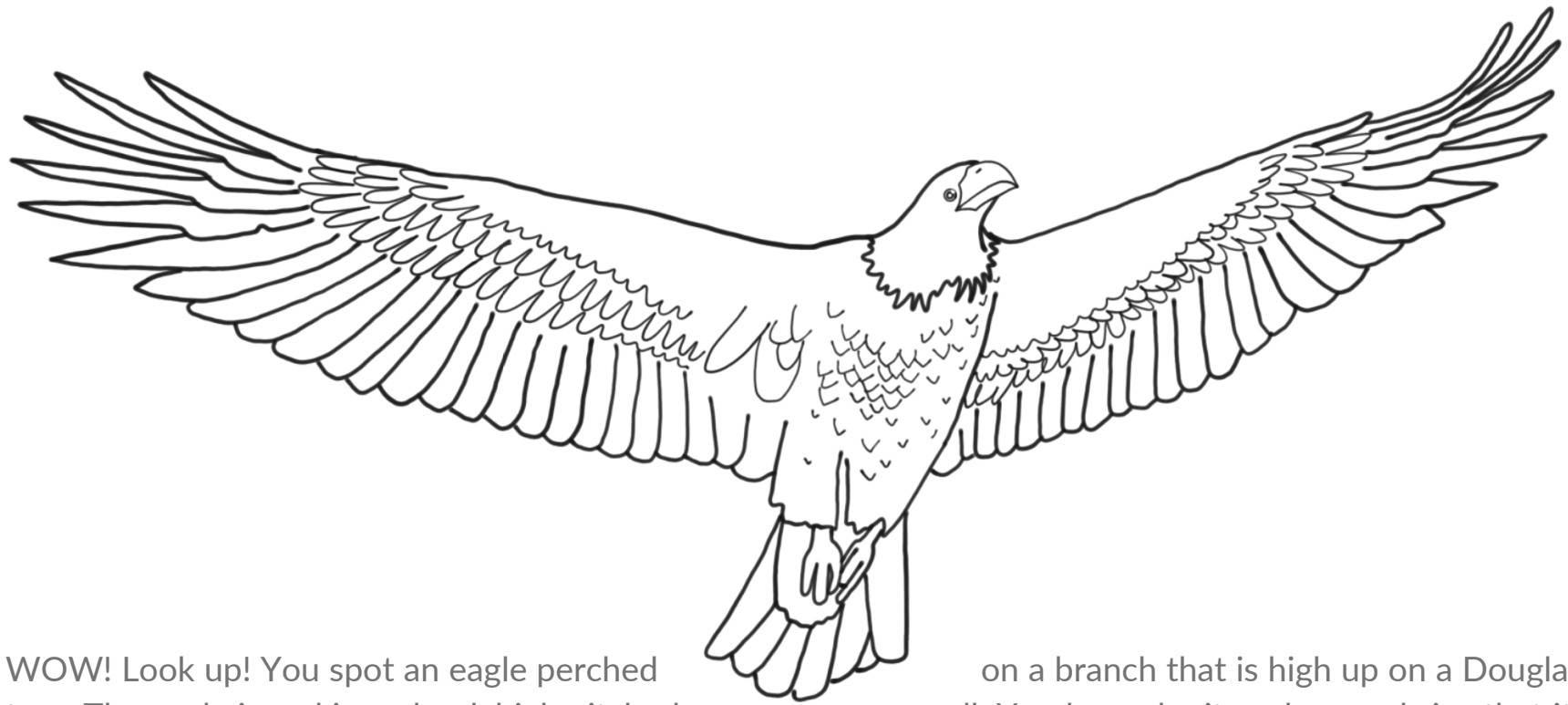


The sounds of the forest are magical. The sound of the rain on the trees is starting to get heavier. At first it sounds like someone is snapping their fingers [*snap your fingers slowly*]. Then it gets louder and sounds more like a clapping sound [*clap your hands slowly*]. Now you can feel the rain soaking through your clothes. The sound is heavier, like someone is beating a drum very quickly. [*Slap your legs-quickly & loudly*].

You pick up the pace, walking faster and faster, and taking shelter in the branches of trees. Your hair is wet and water drips down your nose. As you move through the forest, you can hear the waves from the ocean crashing in the distance, and the sounds become stronger and stronger. At last you come to a light opening at the edge of the forest.

Now you are standing on the edge of a cliff overlooking the ocean. This is where you can really hear the roar of the waves crashing against the rocks and the shore. It's very loud out there and you feel inside of you an urgency to call out a big "HELLO WORLD!!!"





WOW! Look up! You spot an eagle perched on a branch that is high up on a Douglas Fir tree. The eagle is making a loud, high pitched call. You know by its colour and size that it is a bald eagle. The eagles' head and tail are bright white which contrasts to its dark brown body and wings.

The powerful eagle extends its wings and takes off to fly. You imagine becoming the eagle. You stretch your arms out and imagine that you're flying over top of the trees and water. Your wingspan is close to 200 cm, that's 2 big metre sticks put together! Your favorite food to catch is salmon, but as an eagle you also like to hunt for small mammals. With your incredible eyes, you can zoom in on objects that are far away, as if you are looking at the world through a magnify glass. As you soar, what do you see below you?

A big drop of water falls on your forehead and you suddenly remember where you are, not above the forest soaring down, but back to being yourself (a person) on your rainforest walk. The rain has begun to quiet down so you decide to sit down on a rock and take in the magnificent view of where the forest meets the ocean. As you listen to the waves crashing and swirling down below, you peacefully drift back to the present. You slowly open your eyes and, once again, you're safely home from your adventure in the rainforest."

# DRAW YOUR EXPERIENCE

Create an illustration of what you experienced on your rainforest journey today.  
Be sure to include many details to capture the textures, sounds and colours of your experience.



Share with us! Send a photo or scan of your illustration to: [education@sierraclub.bc.ca](mailto:education@sierraclub.bc.ca) or share a picture on Instagram and tag @SierraClubBC and #SierraClubBCed or post a photo of it on the Google Classroom.



# FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

How were you able to relate to this story?

What stood out to you the most on the journey?

What senses did you use throughout the journey?

Are there other living beings you might have seen along the trail that weren't mentioned?

Try recreating the sounds of the rainfall with other members of your household!

## ACTIVITY: SIT SPOT

To continue the practice of developing your awareness and using your senses we suggest doing a nature connection practice called a Sit Spot. Visit [sierraclub.bc.ca/online-classroom/](https://sierraclub.bc.ca/online-classroom/) for a video about how to do a Sit Spot, written instructions and two options for journaling about your experiences.

# LEARN MORE ABOUT THE COASTAL TEMPERATE RAINFOREST

Check out our packages on the Old Growth Forest and the Coastal Temperate Rainforest at [sierraclub.bc.ca/online-classroom/](http://sierraclub.bc.ca/online-classroom/)

## FUN FACTS ABOUT THE BEINGS IN THE STORY:

### WESTERN RED CEDAR

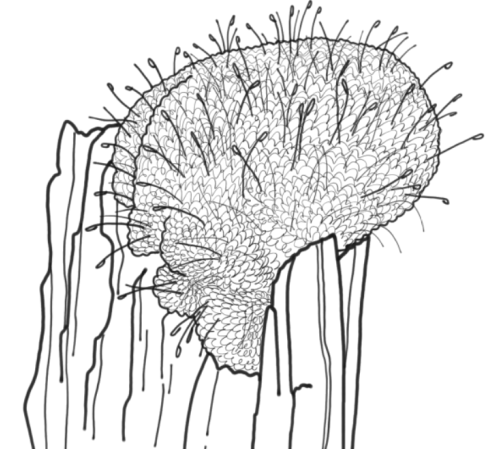
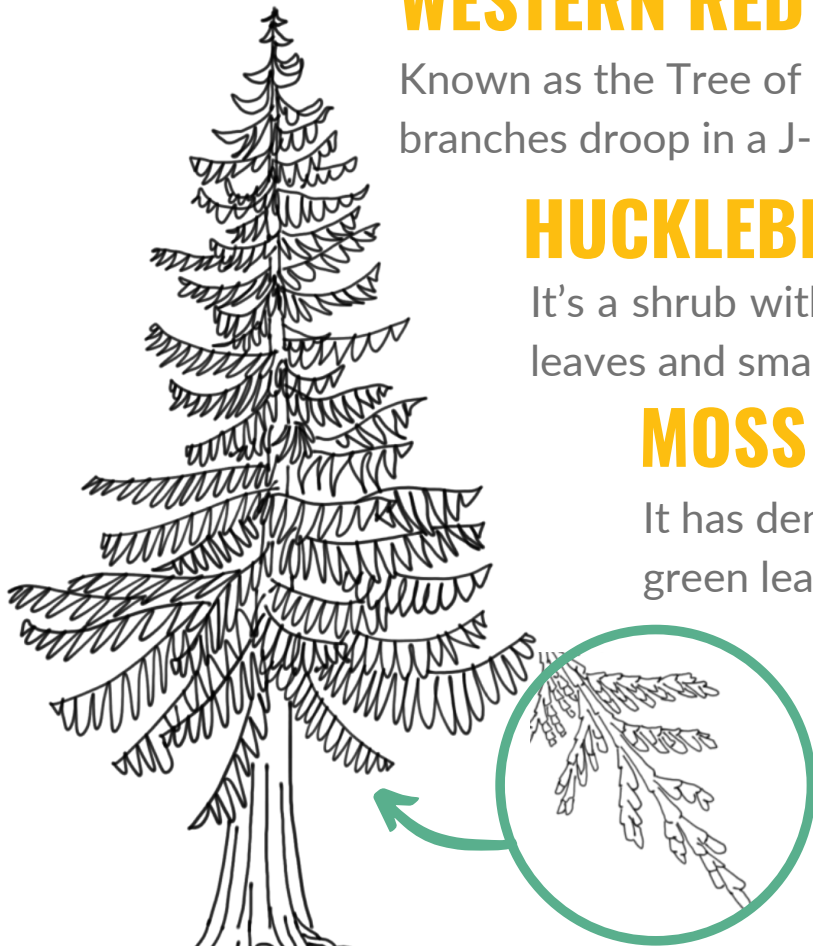
Known as the Tree of life by the Coast Salish peoples, its branches droop in a J-shape and it has fibrous, stringy bark.

### HUCKLEBERRY

It's a shrub with small, bright, oval shaped leaves and small, red, edible berries.

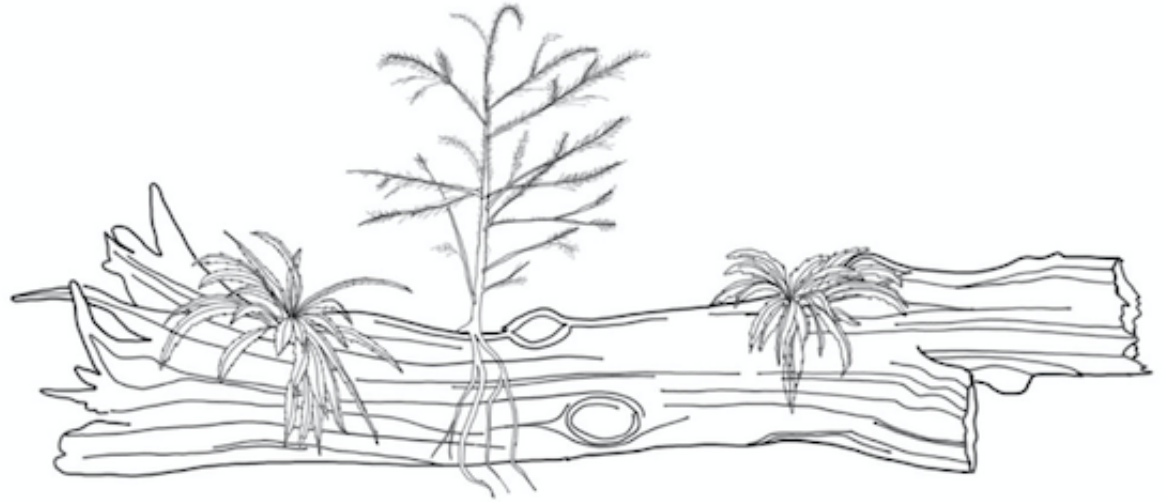
### MOSS

It has dense olive green to dark green leaves that grow on logs, humus (decayed plant and animal matter) and lower tree trunks.



## NURSE LOG

They are trees that have fallen or been cut and are left to decay in the forest. These logs are extremely nutrient-rich and provide a great habitat for other plants to grow.



## BANANA SLUG

Native to B.C., they range in colour from white to black with yellow to tan hues. These slugs sometimes have black blotches on its stomach. They are nature's garbage collector and recycler that consumes and breaks down dead and decaying matter.



## BALD EAGLE

Birds of prey commonly found across B.C. The adults have a white head and tail, and large yellow bill. Young juveniles under 4 years old have dark brown bodies. Bald Eagles build huge stick nests in trees that they re-use year after year. They are one of the largest birds in North America. Salmon is a key food for them, but they also hunt small mammals such as squirrels and rabbits, gulls and waterfowl.

