

# What is a PICTURE?

By drawing a picture of the rainforest hopefully you'll be able to appreciate its complexity. You'll find pictures of the rainforest everywhere – from children's books (have a look at the fantastic book *Where the Forest meets the Sea*) to more serious 'scientific' books (like *Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest*). You could spend many months learning to draw like an expert, but really the purpose of this activity is to get you to think about the detail and the connections in the rainforest. Use the information below to help you draw your picture:

## 1. Your picture should show SCALE:

- It is common to think of the different levels of the rainforest. Your picture should show the canopy, the understorey and the rainforest floor. It should also attempt to show how elements like water and the weather impact on the rainforest.
- For each different level of the rainforest, include examples of plants or animals that are unique to that level. For instance, you could show a *Musky-rat Kangaroo* foraging on the ground.

## 2. Your picture should show a lot of DETAIL:

- Your picture should include the *micro scale*. You want to convey a sense of the complexity of the rainforest. Include things in your picture that the average person might not notice. It could be an example of *cauliflory* on a tree trunk, or the half-eaten fruit of a Quandong.

## 3. Your picture should show LIFE:

- Your audience needs to get a sense that the forest is a living thing. Include mammals, insects and birds, even humans so that your audience gets a sense that the rainforest is home to many things.

## 4. Your picture should show COLOUR:

- The rainforest is probably one of the most colourful ecosystems. Show the colour of the rainforest. Use colours that many people might not associate with the rainforest such as the brilliant red of the *Water Apple* fruit, or the small white leaves of new rainforest trees.

## 5. Your picture should show RELATIONSHIPS:

- Make sure that your audience gets a sense of the relationships that exist in the rainforest. For instance, your Southern Cassowary might be eating the red fruit of a Sati-nash, or an Amethystine Python might be resting in the hollow of a dead tree.

## Hints

- Spend some time in the rainforest simply observing. Un-focus and re-focus your eyes as a way to pick up on the little details of the rainforest you might usually ignore.