

Name _____ Date _____

The Tallest

Some people can name the tallest building in the world. Some people know the name of the longest river. Do you know the name of the tallest trees?

Redwood trees are the tallest trees on Earth. They can grow as tall as a building with thirty floors. Their bark can be a foot thick. If you joined hands with twenty other children, you might be able to form a complete circle around the base of a redwood. These trees can live to be 2,000 years old!

Redwood trees do not have deep roots. Instead, the roots spread out around the base of the tree. The roots of several trees weave together. This helps them to stand when strong winds blow.

As a redwood tree grows, its lower branches do not get much sun. Because the leaves cannot make food without enough sunlight, the lower branches die.

The leaves on the higher branches keep the tree alive. The highest branches cannot get water from the roots because the roots are too far away. The high branches must get water from the air. The air in the redwoods' habitat is moist. The trees pull water from the air through their spiny leaves.

A redwood tree grows from seeds, like other trees. A redwood tree can also grow in other ways. A very strong wind may topple a redwood. The top of the tree snaps off. A new tree can grow from the stump that is left. In fact, a ring of trees can grow from the stump of a fallen tree.

In the time of dinosaurs, redwood trees grew in many parts of the world. Now they live along the west coast of the United States. Some trees living today could be from the stumps of trees that lived 20,000 years ago!

