

All in a Rainforest Day

Introducing young children to non-fiction reading opens their eyes to the world around them. *All in a Rainforest Day*, a visually stunning hardcover book published by EdTechLens Publishing, encourages literacy skills while it introduces children to the life sciences through a guided tour of a typical day in a rainforest. The 32-page book includes vivid photography and science-related vocabulary geared toward children in pre-school through third grade.

All in a Rainforest Day is written by Ellen Senisi, author and photographer of children's photo-essay books and founder of EdTechLens, which produces digital life sciences curriculum for grades K-5. The book is photo-illustrated by Thomas Marent, a

Wearable ASL Translation Technology


Roozbeh Jafari, associate professor for the Department of Biomedical Engineering at Texas A&M University, is leading the development of a tool for American Sign Language (ASL) translation. While previous attempts at automatic ASL translation have largely relied on cameras and visual tracking technology, Jafari's project tracks muscle movement and external motion. "The sensor is based on EMG, or electromyogram, technology," Jafari said. "Combined with the external motion sensors, which show us the overall hand movement, the EMG allows us to discriminate between gestures [with a] fine grain of interpretation [in which] motion sensors give us the overall sense, and muscle activities give us information about the fine-grained intent."

The prototype was revealed this past June but still has a way to go. It currently recognizes only 40 ASL signs and transmits them to a computer via Bluetooth. The goal is to eliminate the need for a separate device by including a computer in the wearable technology and to refine the system's sensitivity, allowing for more natural conversation.

Jafari's ASL translation system is still in development and does not yet have a name, but it has significant implications for the future of ASL and motion-sensor technology. "When you think about it, you can use this for many other applications," he said. "Think about your house... you might have a smart house, but right now to turn on and off all your devices, you need to go to your mobile phone, each app, and then use them. What if you could control your house with hand gestures communicating with each of your devices?"


renowned rainforest photographer. The book engages children in learning about the animals, plants, and climate found in the world's tropical rainforests. It encourages children to read by using attention-grabbing visuals and age-appropriate text while introducing new vocabulary in the sciences. The photographs capture the sweeping landscapes of the rainforest. *All in a*

Rainforest Day also includes a glossary of the rainforest vocabulary used in the book, the identification of the species photographed, and a list of the rainforest locations pictured. *All in a Rainforest Day* can be used to supplement EdTechLens' digital curriculum package, Rainforest Journey, or it can be used as a standalone introduction to the rainforest for young readers.




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