

The Dangers of Deforestation

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Think About It

What do you think about when you look at these pictures?

Paper
aeroplanes?

Books?

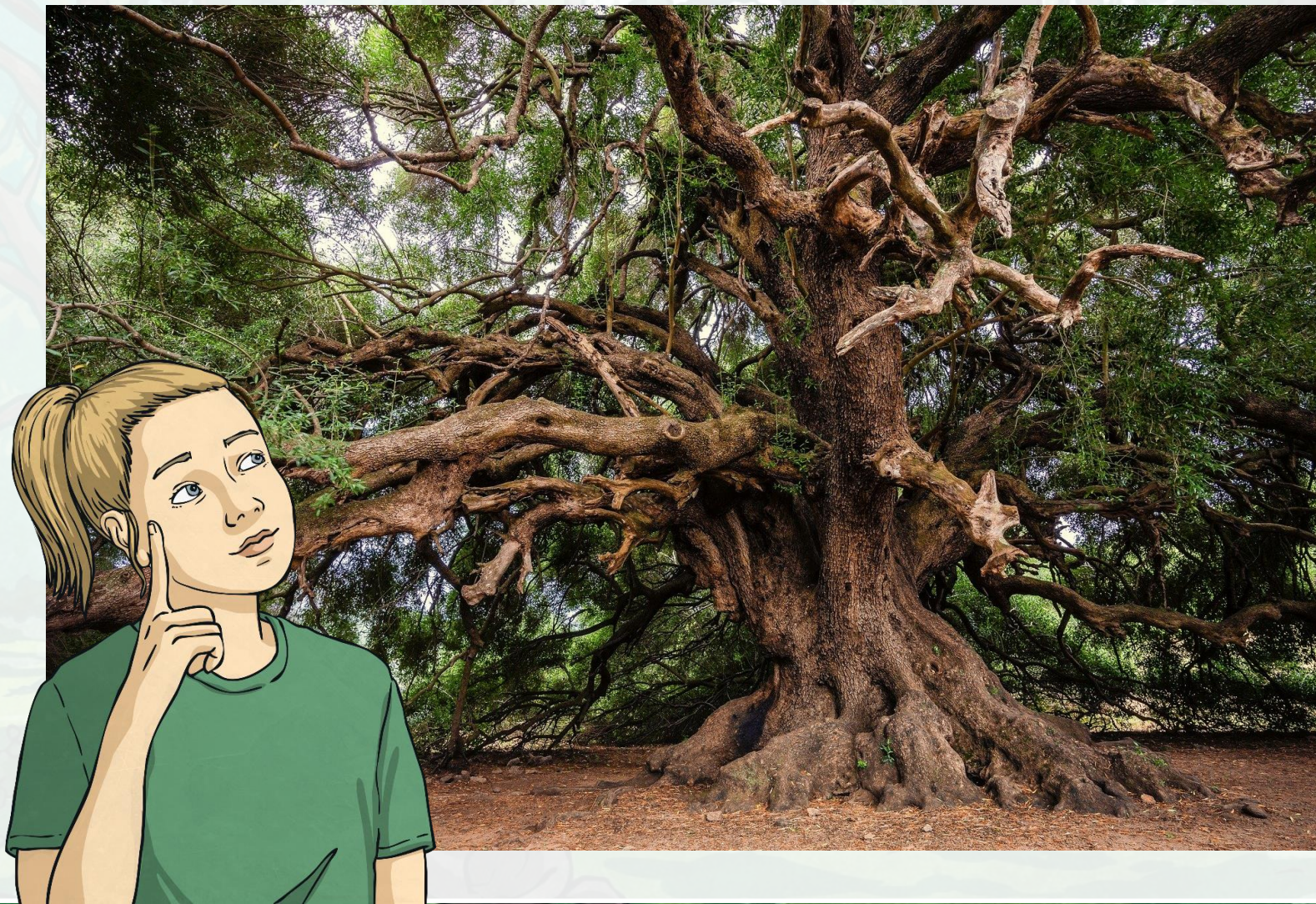
Bow and
arrow?

Furniture?

Firewood?

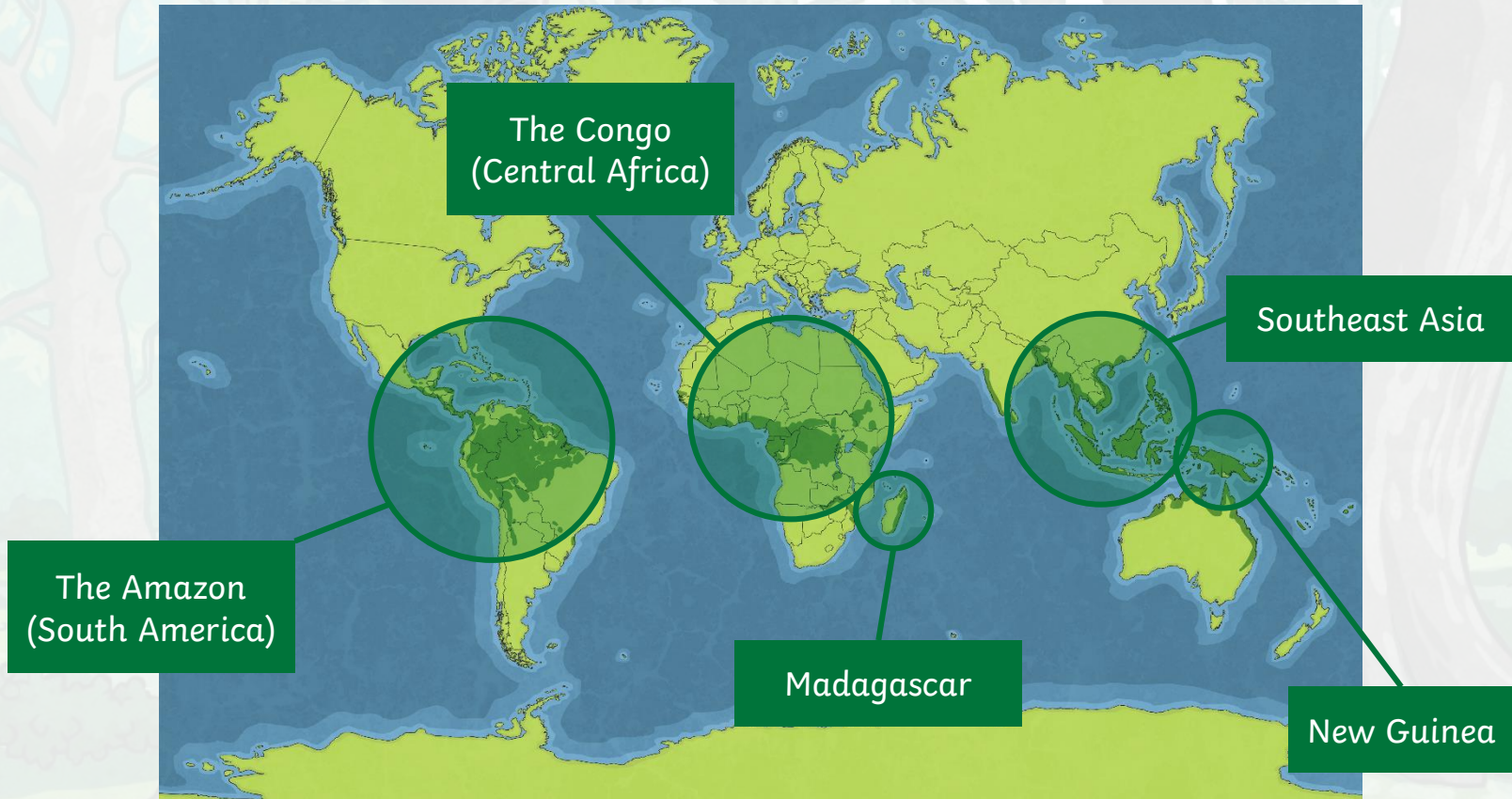


What about a tree or perhaps a forest?



Forest Fact

Around 30% of the Earth is covered by trees.



Why Are Rainforests So Important?

Rainforests cover only 6% of the Earth but they are home to 50% of all plant and animal species. In just four square miles, you might find...

1,500 flowering plants



400 species of birds



750 species of trees



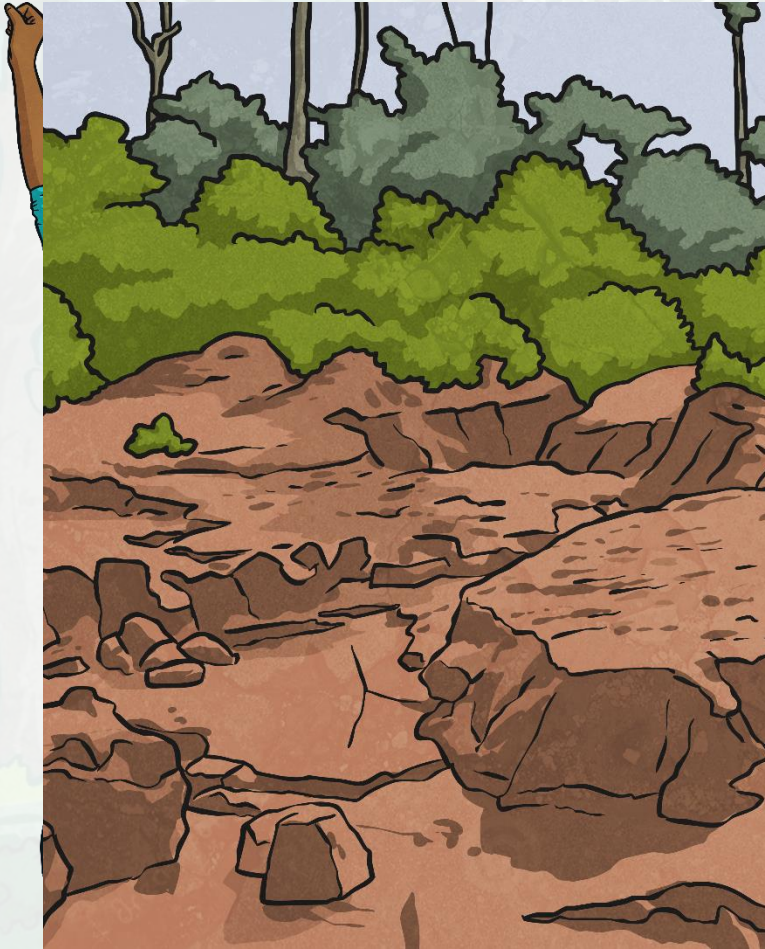
150 species of butterflies



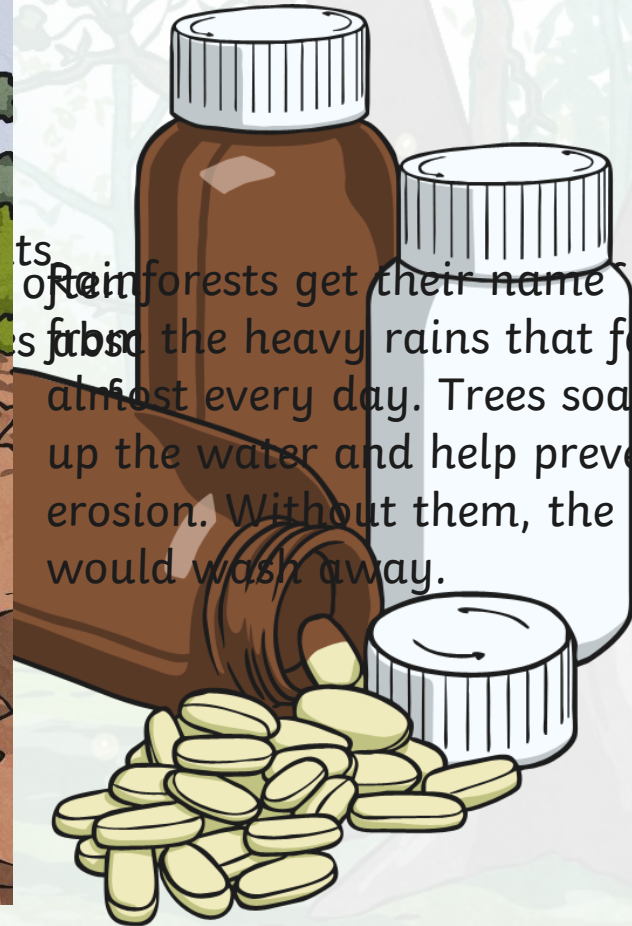
...and much more!



Why Are Rainforests So Important?



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Rainforests get their name from the heavy rains that fall almost every day. Trees soak up the water and help prevent erosion. Without them, the soil would wash away.



Forest Fact

The rainforests are disappearing.



What Is Deforestation?

Deforestation occurs when trees are cut down across a wide area. This land is then used for another purpose.



Did You Know...?

Every minute, an area of rainforest the size of a football pitch is cut down. If this rate continues, there will be no rainforests in 100 years.



There are over 7 billion people on the planet. This number keeps growing and, by 2100, there could be 11.2 billion people. All of these people need food so land is cleared for farming. Forests are cleared permanently for animal grazing, which provides meat. Land is also used to grow crops, such as sugar cane and palm oil. Huge areas of forest are cut down to grow soya, which is used to feed cattle and pigs.

Why Are the Rainforests Being Cut Down?



Trees are useful and valuable. Among other things, they are used for paper, building and firewood.

Do you know what we use trees for?

The rainforest is home to a unique variety of tree species. Hardwoods, such as teak or mahogany, are strong and so are perfect for building and for making furniture. However, these trees are slow growing and are not easy to replace.





Subsistence Farming

Known as slash and burn, families cut down small parts of the forest and burn it to improve the soil and make room for cattle.

It is small scale and the forest can regenerate but with more people taking more land, this chance of recovery is slower. Up to 48% of all deforestation is caused by subsistence farming.



Commercial Farming

This is farming that happens on a large scale. It is led by companies who need to produce on a much bigger scale to provide food and products for the wider world.

Palm Oil

Palm oil comes from the fruit of oil palm trees. Palm oil is edible and is found in lots of food. It is used in a huge range of products, such as toothpaste, deodorant, make-up, shampoo and lipstick. Palm oil can also be used as animal feed and as a biofuel for machines.

Huge areas of rainforest are destroyed in order to grow oil palm trees. This means animals and other plants lose their natural habitats.



Fruit of the oil palm tree

What Are the Effects of Deforestation?



Soil erosion: The removal of different species and prevents it from being washed away. Without trees, the soil is washed into rivers and streams, blocking them.

Climate change: Scientists believe deforestation has a worldwide impact on climate. Trees store carbon dioxide. When they are cut

Droughts: Gases are released and built up in the atmosphere. Without carbon dioxide, there will be a lack of rain.

greenhouse gas and contributes to global warming.

Habitat loss: Animals and plants lose their home so some may become endangered or extinct.

What Are the Effects of Deforestation?

Land loss: Deforestation also means that **Indigenous** tribes are losing their homes.

Many of these groups are known as 'uncontacted tribes', which means they have had no contact with the outside world. They rely on the forest to hunt animals and gather food. Deforestation means they have less food and may have to move to other areas.



Indigenous – Original people from a certain area.

What Can Be Done?

There are many things that can be done to combat deforestation:

- ~~People can find diet by eating less meat and fish and eating more vegetables and fruits. This is a good idea. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Rainforest Trust are two organizations that are working to protect the rainforest. By sourcing locally grown produce, you will be helping to cut down the need for mass agricultural farming and the transportation of food.~~
- Choosing paper and wood that come from a sustainable source. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) tick shows that items are made of materials from part of a forest management scheme or recycled sources.
- Many shops and supermarkets now label products that have palm oil in them, allowing customers to choose different products or select items that are made from sustainable palm oil.



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