

Lesson Plan 2: Disappearing Forests

Look at the ten facts below and answer the questions at the end. You may want to do further research using books, CD-ROMs or the Internet.

Fact One: Rainforests once covered 14% of the earth's land surface; now they cover just 6%. Experts estimate that the last piece of rainforest could be gone in less than 40 years.

Fact Two: One and one-half acres of rainforest are lost every second.

Fact Three: Experts think that we are losing 137 plant, animal and insect species every single day due to rainforests being cut down.

Fact Four: Most rainforests are cut down using chainsaws, bulldozers and fires.

Fact Five: After they are cut down, the wood (timber) is sold and cattle are often grazed on the land.

Fact Six: In Brazil, 90 tribes (groups of people) who once lived in the rainforests have disappeared since the 1900s.

Fact Seven: The Amazon rainforest has been described as the "Lungs of our Planet". Trees and plants produce oxygen that we need to breathe.

Fact Eight: Tropical rainforests have given us: avocados, coconuts, figs, oranges, lemons, grapefruit, bananas, guavas, pineapples, mangos, tomatoes, corn, potatoes, rice, black pepper, cayenne pepper, chocolate, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, sugar cane, turmeric, coffee, vanilla and nuts including Brazil nuts and cashews.

Fact Nine: If the Amazon were a country, it would be the ninth largest in the world.

Fact Ten: The Amazon is found in nine South American countries: Brazil, Columbia, Peru, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia and the three Guyanas.

Questions

1. Why are rainforests being cut down?
2. What types of people cut them down?
3. Name five types of animals that can be found in the Amazon.
4. How many of the foods listed in **Fact Eight** have you tried? How many did you like?
5. What happens to tribes who live in the forests when the trees are cut down?

6. How do you feel about this?
7. What happens to the animals who live in the forest when the trees are cut down?
8. How do you feel about this?
9. Should we try to save the rainforests? Why or why not?
10. How can humans save the rainforests?