

Rainforest Deforestation

Rainforests are a very important part of our planet, giving us oxygen, absorbing carbon dioxide and giving a home to 50% of the animal and plant species of the planet. Not to mention the medicines and cures that are made from the plants that grow there.

Deforestation

Deforestation is the name given to the destruction of the rainforests and this is being done by burning them down, chopping down the trees or flooding the areas. This is happening so fast that an area the size of twenty football pitches is being destroyed every minute! If this carries on at this speed, it will take less than a hundred years to destroy all the rainforests on Earth.



Fact File in Numbers

- 20% of the world's oxygen is produced in the Amazon forest.
- 28,000 species of animals are expected to become extinct in the next 25 years due to deforestation.
- 50% of the tropical rainforests that we had have already gone.
- Palm oil production has doubled over the last decade

Why are they being destroyed?

The biggest reason for clearing the rainforests is to make space for producing food, including cattle to be farmed for cheap beef and also growing large crops, such as soya beans and palm oil. In addition, other causes of deforestation, which are also related to making money include: chopping down and using the wood from the forest; building roads for mining metals, gold or diamonds; flooding areas to make dams to generate electricity and also digging for oil.

How can they be saved?

You could help by raising money for a deforestation charity. Also, you could think about the reasons that the forests are being destroyed and how you could help. For example, the cheap beef farmed in the areas that used to be rainforest land is often used in fast food chains. Could you avoid eating fast food from these outlets? You could also check on your supermarket food labels - was it farmed in an area where deforestation is taking place? You could also use rainforest friendly wood so you know it is not a product of deforestation. Finally remember, paper comes from trees so any paper saving you can do, as well as recycling, will help the environment.



Questions about Rainforest Deforestation

1. Name a reason not to destroy rainforests given in the introductory paragraph.

2. Name **one** of the three ways given that a rainforest can be destroyed.

3. In the final paragraph, what type of adjective is 'rainforest-friendly'?

4. In the fact file, what does the author say will happen in the next quarter of a century?

5. Why does saving paper help the rainforests?

6. Why has the author used an exclamation mark in the 'Deforestation' paragraph?

7. In the third paragraph the author refers to palm oil as a 'valuable commodity', what is a 'valuable commodity'?

8. What is the main reason that deforestation is happening?

9. In the 'How can they be saved?' paragraph, why do you think that the author has asked questions?

Questions about Rainforest Deforestation

Answers

1 Name a reason not to destroy rainforests given in the introductory paragraph.

Any from: medicines, cure for cancer, 50% of animal and plant species live there, gives out oxygen, absorbs carbon dioxide.

2. Name one of the three ways given that a rainforest can be destroyed.

Any from: burning, chopping down, flooding.

3. In the final paragraph, what type of adjective is 'rainforest-friendly'?

A compound adjective

4. In the fact file, what does the author say will happen in the next quarter of a century?

(28,000) species of animals will become extinct (the text says twenty-five years).

5. Why does saving paper help the rainforests?

Paper is made from wood (making it also causes more carbon footprint).

6. Why has the author used an exclamation mark in the 'Deforestation' paragraph?

The rate of destruction is surprising (discuss this).

7. In the third paragraph the author refers to palm oil as a 'valuable commodity', what is a 'valuable commodity'?

Something that is worth a lot/ something that is very useful / something that is good to trade with because everyone wants it.

8. What is the main reason that deforestation is happening?

Food: Cheap beef, or agricultural crops including soya or palm oil.

9. In the 'How can they be saved?' paragraph, why do you think that the author has asked questions?

To make you ask yourself questions.