



Pre-Reading

Think about the following questions.

1. What are lungs? What is their job?
2. What different environments make up the Earth? One example might be deserts.
3. In what ways are different environments useful or important to the Earth?

Vocabulary Preview

Write the letter of the word or phrase with the same meaning as the underlined word.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. medicines | d. incapable of being counted |
| b. touch; get to | e. don't exist any longer |
| c. remove all things from | f. waste products |

1. ___ Can you reach my cup from where you are?
2. ___ The fire destroyed countless trees in the forest.
3. ___ There are many different kinds of drugs that help fight disease.
4. ___ Every second, thousands of square meters of forests disappear from Earth.
5. ___ Farmers must clear the land before they farm on it.
6. ___ Pollution from cars and factories is contributing to changes in the environment.

Out of Rainforests



Have you ever entered a **tropical rainforest**? It's a special, dark place completely different from anywhere else. A rainforest is a place where the trees grow very tall. Millions of kinds of animals, insects, and plants live in the rainforest. It is hot and **humid** in a rainforest. It rains a lot in the rainforest, but sometimes you don't know it's raining. The trees grow so closely together that rain doesn't always reach the ground.

Rainforests make up only a small part of the Earth's surface, about six percent. They are found in tropical parts of the world. The largest rainforest in the world is the Amazon in South America. The Amazon covers 1.2 billion **acres**, or almost five million **square kilometers**. The second largest rainforest is in Western Africa. There are also rainforests in Central America, Southeast Asia, Northeastern Australia, and the Pacific Islands.

Rainforests provide us with many things. In fact, the Amazon Rainforest is called the "lungs of our planet" because it produces twenty percent of the world's oxygen. One fifth of the world's fresh water is also found in the Amazon Rainforest. Furthermore, one half of the world's **species** of animals, plants, and insects live in the Earth's rainforests. Eighty percent of the food we eat first grew in the rainforest. For example, pineapples, bananas, tomatoes, corn, potatoes, chocolate, coffee, and sugar all came from rainforests. Twenty-five percent of the drugs we take when we are sick are made of plants that grow only in rainforests. Some of these drugs are even used to fight and cure **cancer**. With all the good things we get from rainforests, it's surprising to find that we are destroying our rainforests. In fact, 1.5 acres, or 6,000 **square meters**, of rainforest disappear every second. The forests are being cut down to make fields for cows, to **harvest** the plants, and to clear land for farms. Along with losing countless valuable species, the destruction of rainforests creates many problems worldwide. Destruction of rainforests results in more pollution, less rain, and less oxygen for the world.



Reading Time _____ minutes _____ seconds

349 words

¹ *tropical*: hot and humid

¹ *rainforest*: a dense, evergreen forest with a high annual rainfall

⁴ *humid*: moist; wet

⁹ *acre*: a measure of land (1 acre is approximately 4,000 square meters)

¹⁰ *square kilometers*: km²

¹⁶ *species*: a biological kind

²² *cancer*: a disease of uncontrolled cell growth

²⁴ *square meters*: m²

²⁶ *harvest*: to gather

Choose the best answer.

1. What is the focus of this reading?
 - a. Kinds of forests
 - b. Where rainforests are located
 - c. Facts about rainforests
 - d. How much oxygen rainforests make
2. What do rainforests provide?
 - a. Drugs used to fight and cure cancer
 - b. Oxygen
 - c. Fresh water
 - d. All of the above
3. Why is the Amazon Rainforest called the “lungs of the planet”?
 - a. It helps us breathe.
 - b. It uses much of the world’s oxygen.
 - c. It helps circulation.
 - d. It provides much of our air.
4. Where would you NOT find a rainforest?
 - a. Hawaii
 - b. Canada
 - c. Australia
 - d. Brazil
5. What is the most likely reason why the author is surprised that we are destroying rainforests?
 - a. They are necessary for the health of our planet.
 - b. They are necessary for the fight against cancer.
 - c. It will be too expensive to replant them.
 - d. It will be too difficult to grow food without them.

Idiomatic Expressions

Find these idioms in the reading.

- **make up** [to combine together to form a group, system, result, etc.]
Women **make up** thirty percent of the work force.
- **be made (out) of** [to consist of; to be constituted of]
His shirt **is made of** silk.
- **cut down** [to cut through a tree so it falls to the ground]
He **cut down** a tree so he could use the wood to make a house.

Fill in the blank with one of the above idioms. Change its form if necessary.

1. Every December, my family goes out and _____ a Christmas tree.
2. This soap _____ all natural ingredients.
3. Beef _____ a large part of the typical American’s diet.

Summary

Fill in the blanks with the correct words or phrases.

pollution
oxygen

make up
drugs

disappearing
cut down

Rainforests only 1 _____ six percent of the Earth's surface, but they are very important to us. They provide us with much of the Earth's 2 _____ and fresh water. Also, many of the 3 _____ we use to fight disease are made from rainforest plants. Most of the creatures on the Earth, and foods that we eat, come from the rainforest as well. Unfortunately, rainforests are 4 _____. They are being 5 _____ so that farmers can grow crops or raise cattle. Problems resulting from the destruction of rainforests include more 6 _____, less oxygen, and fewer species of animals.



Listening

Why Should I Care?



Listen to the dialog and choose the best answer.

1. What does the man want?
 - a. To take a shower
 - b. Ten dollars
 - c. To save the rainforest
 - d. Soap and shampoo
2. Why does the woman NOT want to help?
 - a. She's taking a shower.
 - b. She is busy.
 - c. She only has ten dollars.
 - d. She doesn't think it is important.
3. What does the woman decide to do?
 - a. Put on makeup
 - b. Plant more rainforests
 - c. Give ten dollars
 - d. Nothing

Discuss the following questions.

1. Would you like to visit a rainforest? Why or why not?
2. What can the government do to help save rainforests?
3. How can we personally help save rainforests?

Grammar

Expressing Quantity

When we express quantity with fractions or percentages, the verb agrees with the preceding noun or phrase.

One fifth of the world's fresh water (is / are) also found in the Amazon Rainforest.

One half of the world's species of animals, plants, and insects (live / lives) in the Earth's rainforests.

Writing

Write your own short paragraph by answering the questions below.

What I Can Do

(1) How many ways can you help save rainforests? (2) What is the first way? (3) How will it help? (4) What is another way? (5) How will it help? (6) What will happen if we all try these things?

Example

There are a couple of ways that I can help save the rainforests. First, I can use only recycled paper. That way, fewer trees will be cut down. Second, I can write a letter to my government. Then, maybe the government will help save the rainforest, too. If we all try these things, perhaps people will stop cutting down the rainforests.

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

A. Choose the best word or phrase to fill in the blank.

1. ____ people have died in car accidents.
a. Valuable b. Countless c. Frequent d. Particular
2. A small ____ of the Earth's population has access to computers.
a. people b. species c. percent d. acre
3. We may have a ____ of oxygen in the future if all the rainforests are cut down.
a. shortage b. production c. less d. spare
4. That ____ of snake is poisonous. Watch out!
a. species b. percent c. source d. insect
5. The tree's branches are so long that they ____ the ground.
a. reach b. are made of c. cut down d. rise
6. Don't ____ the table yet. I have not finished dinner.
a. disappear b. destroy c. harvest d. clear
7. He sees a doctor twice a month for ____ of his back pain.
a. cure b. drug c. treatment d. destruction

B. Choose the correct form of the word to fill in the blank.

8. That water looks ____.
a. pollution b. polluted c. polluting
9. When did the last dinosaur ____?
a. disappear b. disappearance c. disappeared
10. The ____ is very high today.
a. humid b. humidity c. humidify