



The Great Kapok Tree

by Lynne Cherry

Teacher's Guide

Written By Kathy Sammis

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Synopsis

Two men walk into a rain forest. The larger man points to a great kapok tree and then leaves. The smaller young man begins chopping at the tree with his ax, but the wood is very hard and the forest is very hot and humid. Soon the man grows tired, lies down at the foot of the great tree, and falls asleep.

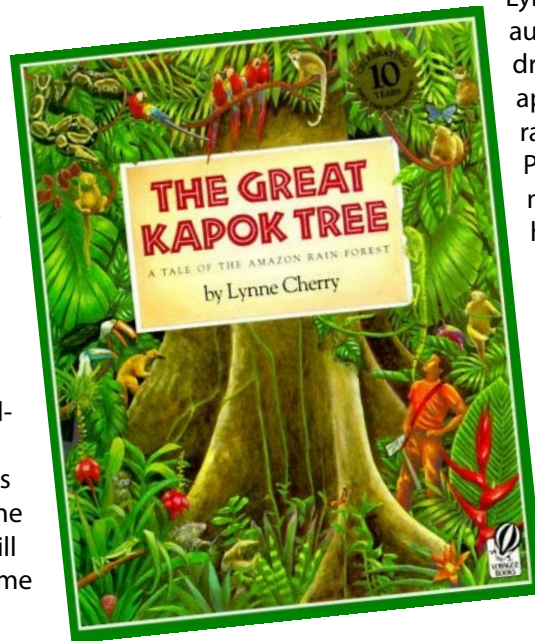
As he sleeps, the creatures that inhabit the kapok tree—rendered in vivid detail—creep down to him, one by one, and whisper in his ear the various important reasons why he should not cut down this tree. A boa constrictor hisses that this tree is the home of himself and all his ancestors. A bee buzzes that its hive is in the tree and that its pollinating activities are crucial for the forest. A troupe of monkeys chatters that when, one after the other, all the trees are chopped down, the soil will wash away and the forest will become desert. Tropical birds squawk of the charred remnants left when people burn the forests to clear land for farming. A small tree frog pipes that many creatures will be left homeless if the man chops down this kapok tree. A jaguar (who looks as though he might consider lunging on the sleeper as an alternative to persuasion) growls that the tree is home to many creatures that provide him with meals. Tree porcupines whisper that the tree produces life-sustaining oxygen. Anteaters point out that the sleeper must consider the future consequences of his actions; will his children live in a world without trees? The three-toed sloth appeals for preservation of the rain forest simply for its beauty.

Finally, an Indian child who lives in the forest murmurs, "Senhor, when you awake, please look upon us all with new eyes." The young man awakens with a start to see around him the rain forest child and all the creatures

who depend on the great kapok tree, staring at him. He now sees the creatures as wondrous and rare, the forest as fragrant and incredibly beautiful. He picks up his ax, swings back his arm as if to chop, turns to look at the child and the creatures, hesitates—and then drops the ax and walks out of the rain forest.

Author Sketch

Lynne Cherry is an award-winning author-illustrator of more than 30 children's books that express her deep appreciation and concern for the natural world. She was born in 1952 in Philadelphia. Growing up, she spent many hours in the woods around her home observing nature first hand and in detail. After graduating from Philadelphia's Tyler School of Art in 1973, she worked for several years as a designer at several publishing houses in New York City. In 1975, Cherry struck out on her own as a freelance illustrator, frequently drawing on her childhood immersion in the natural world as background for her work.



The first book she illustrated was *Coconut: The Tree of Life*, a children's book published in 1976, for which she traveled to Fiji and lived in a native village in order to make her artwork authentic. A number of other book illustrations followed through the 1970s and 1980s, many with nature themes, including projects for the National Wildlife Federation. Cherry published her first self-written, self-illustrated children's book, *Who Sick Today?*, in 1988. *The Great Kapok Tree* appeared in 1990, followed by other nature/ecology-themed picture books focusing on protection of the environment and taking personal action to make an ecological difference.

In addition to her children's books, Cherry does illustrations for many magazines, newspapers, and advertisers. She is a social and environmental activist as well—for example, lobbying for solar power research, doing artwork for the Conservation Law Foundation, and co-

founding/directing the Orion Center for Children's Environmental Literature (OCCEL), a nonprofit program committed to creating and publishing books that help raise children's awareness of the environment.



Critic's Corner

Cherry traveled to the Brazilian rain forest to research carefully the illustrations for *The Great Kapok Tree*. She even had scientists from the World Wildlife Federation go over the art-work to be sure it was correct in all details. The result is a book that critics admired, noting that Cherry succeeds in her intent of personalizing the issue by taking it "one jaguar, one tree, one anteater" at a time. *School Library Journal* wrote, "Cherry's rich colored-pencil and watercolor drawings fairly buzz with life. She totally engages readers' attention and senses through vivid detail, dramatic perspective, and lifelike accuracy...[G]ives young readers a glimpse of and a feeling for an environment vastly different from their own." *Publishers Weekly* characterized the book as "breathtakingly beautiful" and "wondrous and rare." *Booklist* admired Cherry's "vibrant colors, intricate details, and dramatic perspectives" and said of the text, "The writing is simple and clear, yet makes a serious point about humans' destructive ways. . . A real eye-opener." *Horn Book* noted the book's "lush paintings" and "stunning endpapers." While *Horn Book* and *The New York Times Book Review* found the story "heavy-handed," *Horn Book* concluded that "the information on this timely ecological subject makes the book an important one."

Timeline

One day	Two men approach the kapok tree. The smaller, younger one starts to chop at the tree with his ax.
soon	The ax man falls asleep.
next	The creatures who live in and around the kapok tree whisper to the sleeping man all the reasons why he should not cut down the tree.
then	The man wakes up, appreciates the rain forest, drops his ax, and leaves the rain forest.

Selected Other Works

by Lynne Cherry

For children—self-illustrated

- Who's Sick Today?* (1988)
- Archie, Follow Me* (1990)
- A River Ran Wild* (1992)
- The Armadillo from Amarillo* (1994)
- The Dragon and the Unicorn* (1995)
- Flute's Journey: The Life of a Wood Thrush* (1997)
- The Shaman Apprentice: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest* (with Mark Plotkin, 1998)

For children—illustrator

- Coconut: The Tree of Life*, by Carolyn Meyer (1976)
- What's the Time, Starling? A First Look at Nature Clocks*, by Solveig Paulson Russell (1977)
- Hidden Messages*, by Dorothy Van Woerkom (1979)
- Emir's Education in the Proper Use of Magical Powers*, by Jan Roberts (1979)
- Ranger Rick's Holiday Book*, National Wildlife Federation (1980)
- If I Were in Charge of the World, and Other Worries*, by Judith Viorst (1981)
- The Snail's Spell*, by Joanne Ryder (1982)
- What Has Ten Legs and Eats Cornflakes? A Pet Book*, by Ron Roy (1982)
- Houghton-Mifflin English Book, Grade Two* (1982)
- Rabbit Travels*, by John McCormack (1983)
- Ranger Rick's Story Book*, National Wildlife Federation (1983)
- Harriet and William and the Terrible Creature*, by Valerie Scho Carey (1985)
- When I'm Sleepy*, by Jane Howard (1985)
- Big and Small, Short and Tall*, by Ron Roy (1986)
- Chipmunk Song*, by Joanne Ryder (1987)
- Help Us Save Series (Grizzly Bear, Orangutan, Seal, Snow Leopard)*, by Lucia Monfried (1987)
- Where Butterflies Grow*, by Joanne Ryder (1989)

Bibliography

- Booklist*, March 15, 1990, p. 1443; Sept. 15, 1993, p. 168; July 1996, p. 1834.
- Contemporary Authors*, Vol. 167. Detroit: Gale Research, 1999.
- Horn Book*, May/June 1990, p. 321.
- The New York Times Book Review*, May 20, 1990, p. 47.
- People Weekly*, April 30, 1990, p. 41.
- Publishers Weekly*, February 23, 1990, pp. 126, 217; Sept. 14, 1992, p. 29.
- School Library Journal*, May 1990, p. 82; October 1993, p.

67; April 1996, p. 82; June 1996, p. 87.

Something About the Author Vols. 34 & 99. Detroit: Gale Research, 1984, 1999.

Wilson Library Journal, January 1991, pp. 106-07.

"Lynn Cherry website," <<http://www.lynncherry.com/>>

General Objectives

1. To use discussion questions to recall details, interpret characters and events, read or listen critically, and respond creatively to the story and its illustrations
2. To expand vocabulary through context clues and word study
3. To expand responses to a book by completing a variety of related activities, some in other areas of the curriculum
4. To exercise artistic, craft, and dramatic skills to help interpret reading

Specific Objectives

1. To understand why the men have come to the rain forest, what the smaller man's job is, and why he stops doing it
2. To explore and understand the message each living creature gives the sleeping man about why it is a bad thing to cut down the kapok tree
3. To gain an understanding about issues surrounding the preservation of the world's forests and their inhabitants
4. To become familiar with the habitat, flora, and fauna of the Amazon rain forest
5. To identify the various specific living creatures shown in the book's illustrations
6. To think about the story as reality or dream, or elements of both

The Importance of Setting

The single setting is one specific spot in Brazil's Amazon rain forest. A young man stands and then sleeps at the base of a great kapok tree, surrounded by the lush rain forest vegetation and visited by the many creatures that inhabit the tree and depend on it for life. The illustrations show in meticulous detail the varied vegetation and fascinating creatures that populate this tiny individual slice of the rain forest environment. The endpaper map places the Amazon rain forest in its context among all rain forests worldwide.

Cross-Curricular Sources

Fantasy Nature Stories

Judy Allen, *Whale*

Manlio Argueta, *Magic Dogs of the Volcanoes: Los Perros Mágicos de los Volcanoes*

Graeme Base, *The Sign of the Seahorse: A Tale of Greed and High Adventure in Two Acts*

Marni McGee, *Forest Child*

Eric Rohmann, *The Cinder-Eyed Cats*

Chris Van Allsburg, *Jumanji*

Jan Wahl, *Once When the World Was Green*

Nature and Science Picture Books

David A. Anderson, *The Rebellion of Humans: An African Spiritual Journey*

Molly Bang, *Common Ground: The Water Earth, and Air We Share*

Barbara Bash, *Tree of Life: The World of the African Baobab*

Joann J. Burch, *Chico Mendes: Defender of the Rain Forest*

Lark Carrier, *A Tree's Tale*

Helen Coucher, *Rain Forest*

Donald J. Crump, ed., *Explore a Tropical Rain Forest*

Kathy Darling, *Rain Forest Babies*

Arthur Dorros, *Rain Forest Secrets*

Eknath Easwaran, *The Monkey and the Mango: Stories of My Granny*

Richard Edwards, *Ten Tall Oaktrees*

Kristine L. Franklin, *When the Monkeys Came Back*

Debra Frasier, *On the Day You Were Born*

Jean Craighead George, *One Day in the Tropical Rain Forest*

Gail Gibbons, *Nature Green Umbrella: Tropical Rain Forest*

Judith Heide Gilliland, *River*

Don Lessem, *Inside the Amazing Amazon*

Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*

Jan B. Waboose, *Morning on the Lake*

Diane Willow, *At Home in the Rain Forest*

Jane Yolen, *Welcome to the Green House*

CD-ROM

Exploring Where and Why: Grade 2 Communities Here and There (Nystrom)

Field Trip to the Rain Forest Deluxe (Sunburst Communications)

The Magic School Bus Explores the World of Animals (Microsoft)

Zurk's Rainforest Lab (Soleil Software)

Internet

"Amazon Interactive":

<www.eduweb.com/amazon.html> "National

Geographic Kids”:

www.nationalgeographic.com/lcids/

“The Rain Forest—Amazon Rain Forest Adventure”:

tjunior.thinkquest.org/5393/

“Rainforest Action Network” www.ran.org/

“Great Kapok Tree Teacher Cyberguide,”

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/kapok/kapok-tg.htm>

“Great Kapok Tree Free Study Unit,” http://www.home-schoolshare.com/great_kapok_tree.php

Video/DVD

Animal Safari: A Learning Journey—Animals of the Amazon (Coyote Creer)

Critter Hunt Series (SVE/Churchill Media)

Get to Know Lynne Cherry (Harcourt Brace)

The Great Kapok Tree (McGraw Hill and Paul Boyd-Batstone)

The Magic Bird: An African Folktale (Chip Taylor Communications)

Plants Around the World (100% Educational Videos)

Themes and Motifs

In discussing the book, help students understand that the story deals with these main issues and situations.

Themes

- ecological importance of preserving the rain forests
- interconnectedness of all living things
- need for individual action to protect the environment
- conservation of all natural resources
- deforestation

Motifs

- rain forest flora and fauna
- kapok trees
- Brazil and Amazon region
- dream vs. reality

Meaning Study

Discuss with students the meaning of the words from the story in the following sentences.

1. The Great Kapok Tree

(The kapok is a large tropical deciduous tree with a wide-spreading crown and projecting buttresses at the base of the trunk, as shown in the book's illustrations. Its seedpods contain cottony cellulose fibers

that are used for stuffing and clothing insulation [although synthetic fibers are more commonly used for these purposes today], and its seeds yield an oil used in manufacturing soap.)

2. Senhor

(This is Portuguese for “Sir” or “Mister.” Students may be more familiar with the Spanish form, Señor. Since this book is set in the Amazon rain forest of Portuguese-speaking Brazil, the talking creatures use the Portuguese form of the word.)

3. “It is my home, where generations of my ancestors have lived.”

(A generation of a family consists of the people who are roughly in the same age group—current children and teens would be one generation, their parents a second generation, and the grandparents a third generation. An ancestor is someone who came before a particular person by at least several generations. The boa constrictor is telling the sleeping man that many generations of this snake family have lived in this kapok tree; it is their ancestral home.)

4. “In this way I pollinate the trees and flowers.”

(In the process of pollination, bees and butterflies spread pollen—a yellowish powder—from one flowering plant to others. The pollen fertilizes the female cells so they will form seeds. So, as the bee points out to the sleeping man, by spreading pollen, these insects play a crucial role in keeping the rainforest alive and flourishing.)

5. “They set fires to clear the underbrush.”

(The underbrush of a forest or woods is made up of bushes and other plants that grow beneath the big trees. The underbrush provides critical habitat for many creatures. The toucan is telling the sleeping man that after settlers cut down the big trees, they continue by burning off all the underbrush, so that nothing at all remains of the rain forest but scorched earth.)

6. His spotted coat blended into the dappled light and shadows of the understory.

(The light that filters through beneath the tall trees in a forest or woods is dappled—that is, it is spotty and patchy, giving an uneven effect of light, color and shade. Like the dappled light, the jaguar's coat is sprinkled with irregular patches of dark fur so the animal's coat is dappled just like the understory light and shadows. This is an example of natural camouflage.)

7. “And, Senhor, do you know what the trees produce? Oxygen!”

(The tree porcupines are pointing out the crucial role of photosynthesis, in which leafy plants remove car-

bon dioxide from the atmosphere and replace it with life-sustaining oxygen. This is another important reason why the rain forest's trees are needed and should not be cut down.)

8. "On what would you feast your eyes?" "Please look upon us all with new eyes."
(Another way of saying this would be, "If nothing beautiful is left here, what would you feast your eyes on?" Both of these comments are figures of speech, not meant to be taken literally. You "feast your eyes" when you have a wealth of wonderful things to look at. You look "with new eyes" when you suddenly see something in a different way and understand it in a new way.)

Comprehension Study

Discuss the following questions with your students. You could ask students in higher grades to write their answers to the questions in their own words.

1. Look at the picture on the cover of the book, before you read or listen to the story. From the picture, what do you think this story will be about? What will happen? Why is the man standing there by the tree? As you read or listen to the story, see if what you wrote or told about the picture was accurate.
(Students who notice that the man has an ax hanging from his waist may guess that the man plans to cut down the tree.)
2. The author of this book, Lynne Cherry, visited the Amazon rain forest of Brazil while she was planning her story and artwork. How do you think this trip would have helped her?
(The illustrations in the book are very lifelike and detailed, and they are, in fact, very accurate. Cherry saw, studied, sketched, and took pictures of the rain-forest habitat and its inhabitants, and that is why she was able to create such detailed and lifelike illustrations for the book. Note that in her acknowledgments, Cherry thanks "Carlos Miller the native Brazilian who posed as the woodcutter.")
3. As you read or listen, look carefully at each page. Which creatures do you find on each page? (Many of the creatures are shown and named on the map pages at the beginning and end of the book.)
(Students could list the creatures page by page.)
4. When the jaguar speaks to the sleeping man, the story says, "Because his spotted coat blended into the dappled light and shadows of the understory, no one had noticed him." Did you notice the jaguar in any earlier pictures? Which ones?
(The jaguar appears on the map page, the title page, and the first and second pages of the story.)
5. Why is the younger man with the ax in the rain forest? Why does he stop chopping the tree?
(A larger man has brought the smaller man, who carries an ax, to the rainforest and now points at this great kapok tree, evidently ordering the smaller man to cut down the tree. The smaller man starts striking at one of the tree base out-growths, but the wood is very hard and the rain forest is very hot and humid. Soon the ax-man gets tired and sits down to rest. He quickly falls asleep.)
6. What happens while the ax-man sleeps? What happens when he wakes up?
(While the man is asleep, an assortment of creatures that live in the kapok tree creep up to him and whisper into his ear the various reasons why he should not cut down the tree. When the man wakes up, he sees all the creatures around him, and he looks at the rain forest habitat with new eyes. He picks up his ax and starts to swing again, hesitates, then drops the ax and walks out of the rain forest.)
7. What related messages about the kapok tree do the boa constrictor, the tree frog, and the jaguar give to the sleeping man?
(They all point out that the tree is home to many creatures. The boa constrictor tells the man that many generations of his line of snakes have lived in the tree, which makes it a "tree of miracles" for this snake and future members of his family. The tree frog adds that many creatures live in the kapok tree, and they will all be homeless if the man cuts down the tree. The jaguar also points out that many creatures call the tree home, growling, "If you cut it down, where will I find my dinner?")
8. What related messages about kapok trees and the rain forest do the monkeys and the toucan give to the sleeping man?
(They explain what happens to the rain forest once people start cutting down the trees. The monkeys chatter that when the roots of the great cut-down trees die, nothing will hold the soil in place when the heavy rains come. "The forest will become a desert." The toucan describes what the birds who fly over the rain forest have seen: after the trees are chopped down, people settling on the land set fires to clear the underbrush, and soon the forest disappears entirely.)
9. What message does the bee give to the sleeping man?

(The bee points out that bees pollinate the trees and flowers all through the rain forest. "You see, all living things depend on one another " because without pollination, plants would not be able to set seeds and reproduce.)

10. What message do the tree porcupines give to the sleeping man?

(They point out that leafy plants take carbon dioxide out of the air and give oxygen back to the air in return. All animals and humans need oxygen to live. If people cut down all the trees, there will be no source of oxygen, which supports life.)

11. What related messages do the anteater and the sloth give to the sleeping man?

(They appeal to the man to think of the future and not destroy the beauty of nature for future generations. The anteater says the big man who wants the beautiful tree chopped down should think of his own children, "who to-morrow must live in a world without trees." The sloth murmurs that the man will have nothing to feast his eyes on if he destroys the beauty of the rain forest; he will live in a bleak and ugly environment.)

12. What message does the Yanomamo boy give to the sleeping man?

(The boy sums up all the messages when he says, "Senhor when you awake, please look upon us all with new eyes." The boy wants the man to look at the rainforest in a different way based on all the knowledge the creatures have whispered to him as he has slept. The boy asks the man to see the trees of the rainforest as important living things that sustain many other lives and preserve a unique and beautiful habitat.)

13. The author, Lynne Cherry, has said about this book, "It could be that the whole thing is a dream. Or it could be that it really happened." What do you think—dream or reality? How could it be real?

Across the Curriculum

Invite students to complete any of these activities that are suitable for their grade and interest level.

Music

Play some recordings of traditional music of the people of the Amazon rain forest region.

Science

1. Choose one layer of the rain forest, such as the canopy or one of the understory layers, to report

on. Explain things such as what type of vegetation grows here, how much light you find here, and what creatures live here. Add visual elements to your report.

2. Draw some Venn diagrams comparing different creatures of the rain forest mentioned in this book.
3. Create an illustrated report on the kapok tree and the useful products people get from this tree. Since people get useful products from the kapok tree, why do other people want to cut these trees down?
4. Choose one of the creatures mentioned or shown in the book to report on in detail. Be sure to include visual elements in your report and explain how and where this creature fits in to the rain forest habitat and ecology.
5. In addition to creatures, the illustrations in this book show many rain forest plants. Do some research on the Internet and/or in books and identify some of the plants you see in this book.
6. Look again at the pages that show many rain forest butterflies. Identify the different butterflies you see. Then find out if any of these butterflies migrate back and forth from the rain forest to the United States and/or Canada.
7. Explain the process of pollination in a visual format. Or, show the process called photosynthesis, by which leafy plants convert carbon dioxide to oxygen.

Social Studies and Ecology

1. Find out what uses people make of the Amazon rain forest's resources.
2. Find out about tree-cutting problems and controversies in the United States, especially any that involve areas near where you live.
3. Report on one or more native peoples like the Yanomamo who live in the Amazon rain forest. Is their way of life threatened? If so, what is being done about this?
4. This book is "dedicated to the memory of Chico Mendes, who gave his life in order to preserve a part of the rain forest." Who was Chico Mendes? What happened to him? Find the answers to these questions, and share what you find with classmates.

Health

Make a chart showing rain forest products and their uses in medicine. How does rain forest destruction threaten people's health and the progress of medical research?

Art

1. Create a floor-to-ceiling representation of a giant kapok tree and the rain forest vegetation around it. Create or cut out pictures of the creatures that inhabit the various layers of this slice of the rain forest, being sure to include the creatures that appear in this book. Glue the pictures to the appropriate parts of your kapok tree/rain forest representation.
2. As a class project, make a set of posters urging people to save the rain forests. Each poster should have its own catchy and effective slogan.
3. Create some lifelike illustrations of creatures that live in your environment.

Language Arts

1. Write a letter or a postcard or an e-mail to a newspaper or a politician about a rain forest issue.
2. In the book, the boa constrictor slithers and hisses, the monkeys scamper and chatter, the toucan flies and squawks, and so on. Describe some other living creatures moving and making sounds in words that are very descriptive of each particular creature.
3. Read or listen to other books by Lynne Cherry. In what ways are any of these books like *The Great Kapok Tree*?

Geography

1. Create a poster map of the Amazon River and the Amazon rain forest.
2. Create a world map that shows the current size of the world's rain forests. Compare your map with the map in *The Great Kapok Tree*. Have more of the world's rain forests disappeared since 1990, the year *The Great Kapok Tree* was published?

Mathematics

Find out how much of the world's rain forests have disappeared in 10-year intervals from 1970 to 1980 to 1990 to 2000. Use the figures you find to create charts showing the loss visually.

Student Involvement Activities

1. With classmates, dramatize the story told in the book. Create costumes of some sort that suggest each creature who speaks to the sleeping man. You could also add more dialogue of your own to each

scene.

2. Learn about an environmental issue that particularly interests and concerns you. Then look into and think about things you could do as an individual to affect this issue in a positive way.
3. Along with your classmates, bring a rain forest fruit into class—for example, a mango, guava, papaya, or coconut. Then have a taste-testing, with you and each of your class-mates recording which fruit tasted best to you. Which is the class favorite?
4. If you were going to hike into a rain forest, you'd probably like to bring along some trail mix to snack on, especially trail mix with dried fruit included. Look at different trail mix recipes and make some to share with classmates.
5. Be a kapok detective. Check product labels to see how many you can find that include kapok. Hint: Kapok is used for stuffing, padding, and clothing insulation.
6. List the things in your home, yard/neighborhood, and school that are made of wood. Compare lists with class-mates. Do you have a large list? How would we get along without these wood-based products?
7. Lie down someplace safe but natural outdoors. Pay attention to what you are experiencing through all your senses, especially the senses other than sight. What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you feel?
8. Investigate a tree that lives near where you do. How is this tree important to your local ecology and environment? What uses do people make of this tree other than as a landscape/natural feature?
9. Find appropriate places in your community to display your save-the-rain-forest posters.

Alternate Assessment

Depending on student ability level, you could have students write their responses to one of these assessment vehicles or simply discuss their response with you, individually or in a group setting.

1. Using color copies of the creatures shown around the book's map pages, identify each creature that you are able to in the pages of the book.
2. Create a chart of the different creatures that speak to the sleeping man. Next to the name of each creature, record the message about the kapok tree and/or the rain forest ecology that the creature tells the man.

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3. Tell in your own words what happens in this story:
why the man starts chopping at the kapok tree,
why he stops, what the animals tell him, and what
happens after the man wakes up.

Vocabulary Test

(12 points)

Read each sentence. Below the sentence, find the answer that could be used in place of the word in boldface (dark) type. Write the letter of the answer in the blank in front of the sentence.

_____ 1. Now all was quiet as the creatures watched the two men.

- (a) plants
- (b) animals
- (c) angels

_____ 2. Before the man knew it, the heat and hum of the forest had lulled him to sleep.

- (a) calmed
- (b) startled
- (c) made angry

_____ 3. The boa constrictor looked at the gash the ax had made in the tree.

- (a) blister
- (b) fire
- (c) deep long cut

_____ 4. "The roots of these great trees will wither and die."

- (a) bloom
- (b) dry up
- (c) grow tall

_____ 5. Strange and beautiful plants seemed to dangle in the air.

- (a) grow up
- (b) burst
- (c) hang down

_____ 6. The man smelled the fragrant perfume of their flowers.

- (a) sweet smelling
- (b) bad smelling
- (c) good to eat

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Matching (10 points)

Read each description. Find the name on the right that matches the description. Write the letter of the name in the space in front of the description.

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| _____ 1 . A snake who talks about ancestors. | a. larger man |
| _____ 2. A man who orders that the kapok tree be cut down. | b. toucan |
| _____ 3. A slow-moving creature with three toes. | c. boa constrictor |
| _____ 4. A very small green creature. | d. tree frog |
| _____ 5 . A squawky bird. | e. sloth |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the ending you chose in the space in front of each sentence.

- _____ 1 . This story is set in the rain forest of the
(a) Nile. (b) Amazon. (c) Orinoco.
- _____ 2. The man plans to cut down the kapok tree with his
(a) chain saw. (b) chemicals. (c) ax.
- _____ 3. The creatures who pollinate the rain forest's flowers are the
(a) bees. (b) anteaters. (c) frogs.
- _____ 4. The top of the rain forest is called the
(a) canopy. (b) understory. (c) herb layer.
- _____ 5. The rain forest animals who chatter and howl and swing are the
(a) sloths. (b) monkeys. (c) butterflies.
- _____ 6. The Portuguese word for "Mister" or "Sir" is
(a) Señor. (b) Monsieur. (c) Senhor.
- _____ 7. This rain forest creature eats many other rain forest animals:
(a) jaguar. (b) monkey. (c) bee.
- _____ 8. The anteater says you must think about future
(a) wars. (b) songs. (c) children.
- _____ 9. The human person who tells the sleeping ax-man is to see the rain forest with new eyes
(a) the larger man. (b) an angry farmer. (c) an Indian boy.
10. The understory of the rain forest is
(a) very light. (b) dark. (c) underground.

Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark each sentence with a **T** if it is true or an **F** if any part of it is false.

- _____ 1 . The author of this book also created the book's pictures.
- _____ 2. The creatures of the rain forest welcome the two men who arrive there.
- _____ 3. The two men who come to the rain forest want to help the rain forest to survive.
- _____ 4. The wood of the kapok tree is very hard.
- _____ 5. The sleeping ax-man never wakes up.
- _____ 6. Rain forests exist only in South America.
- _____ 7. Trying to cut down the kapok tree makes the ax-man very tired.
- _____ 8. Chopping down rain forest trees affects future events.
- _____ 9. No human beings live in the rain forest as natives.
- _____ 10. The ax-man leaves his ax behind as he walks out of the rain forest.

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Write or tell your answer to one of these questions to get extra points on your test.

- 1 . Why is the younger man with the ax in the rain forest? What does he start to do, and why does he stop doing it?
2. What are three of the messages the rain forest creatures give to the sleeping man?

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Matching (10 points)

Read each description. Find the name on the right that matches the description. Write the letter of the name in the space in front of the description.

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| _____ 1 . A buzzing insect. | a. smaller man |
| _____ 2. A Yanomamo who is the last one to talk to the sleeping man. | b. monkey |
| _____ 3. A chattering, leaping animal. | c. jaguar |
| _____ 4. A man with an ax who start to cut down the tree. | d. Indian boy |
| _____ 5. A dark-spotted member of the cat family who growls. | e. bee |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the ending you chose in the space in front of each sentence.

1. This story is all about the
- (a) ocean. (b) prairie. (c) rain forest.
- _____ 2. A common rain forest tree is the
- (a) kapok. (b) spruce. (c) oak.
3. The ax-man stops cutting to
- (a) eat lunch. (b) nap. (c) call his boss.
- _____ 4. A boa constrictor is a
- (a) monkey. (b) lizard. (c) snake.
5. Insect creatures with beautiful and colorful wings are
- (a) iguanas. (b) anteaters. (c) butterflies.
- _____ 6. One of the birds of the Amazon rain forest is the
- (a) toucan. (b) ocelot. (c) tapir.
7. The porcupines say leafy plants produce this element that keeps humans and animals alive:
- (a) oxygen. (b) water. (c) soil.
- _____ 8. A very slow rain forest animal is the
- (a) bee. (b) butterfly. (c) sloth.
9. The darker, bottom part of the rain forest is called the
- (a) canopy. (b) understory. (c) emergent layer.
- _____ 10. The rain forest is very
- (a) cool and dry. (b) like a desert. (c) hot and humid.

Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark each sentence with a T if it is true or an F if any part of it is false.

- _____ 1 . The two men who come to the rain forest want to cut down the great kapok tree.
- _____ 2. The smaller man with the ax refuses to make even one cut in the kapok tree.
- _____ 3. Without tree roots, the soil will wash away from the ground of the rain forest.
- _____ 4. A toucan is one of the lizards of the rain forest.
- _____ 5. It's easy to cut down a kapok tree with an ax.
- _____ 6. The ax-man speaks back to the creatures who talk to him.
- _____ 7. The birds and butterflies of the rain forest are very colorful.
- _____ 8. The jaguar eats other rain forest creatures.
- _____ 9. The rain forest creatures talk about the beauty of the rain forest.
- _____ 10. The sleeping man wakes up and goes right back to chopping down the kapok tree.

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Write or tell your answer to one of these questions to get extra points on your test.

- 1 . What happens while the ax-man sleeps? What happens when he wakes up?
2. What are three of the messages the rain forest creatures give to the sleeping man?

Answer Key

VOCABULARY TEST

(16 points)

- 1. b 4. b
- 2. a 5. c
- 3. c 6. a

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (10 points)

- 1. c 4. d
- 2. a 5. b
- 3. e

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- 1. b 6. c
- 2. c 7. a
- 3. a 8. c
- 4. a 9. c
- 5. b 10. b

Part III: True/False (20 points)

- 1. T 6. F
- 2. F 7. T
- 3. F 8. T
- 4. T 9. F
- 5. F 10. T

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (10 points)

- 1. e 4. a
- 2. d 5. c
- 3. b

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

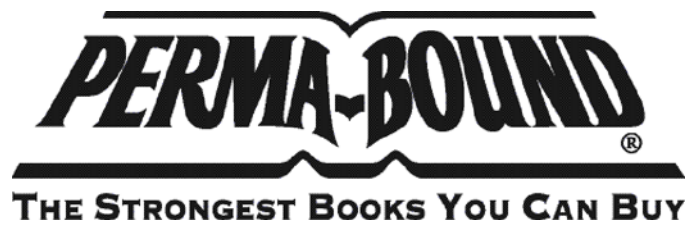
- 1. c 6. a
- 2. a 7. a
- 3. b 8. c
- 4. c 9. b
- 5. c 10. c

Part III: True/False (20 points)

- 1. T 6. F
- 2. F 7. T
- 3. T 8. T
- 4. F 9. T
- 5. F 10. F

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Answers will vary.



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