

The Danger of Deforestation

twinkl

Think about It

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

Paper
aeroplanes?

Books?

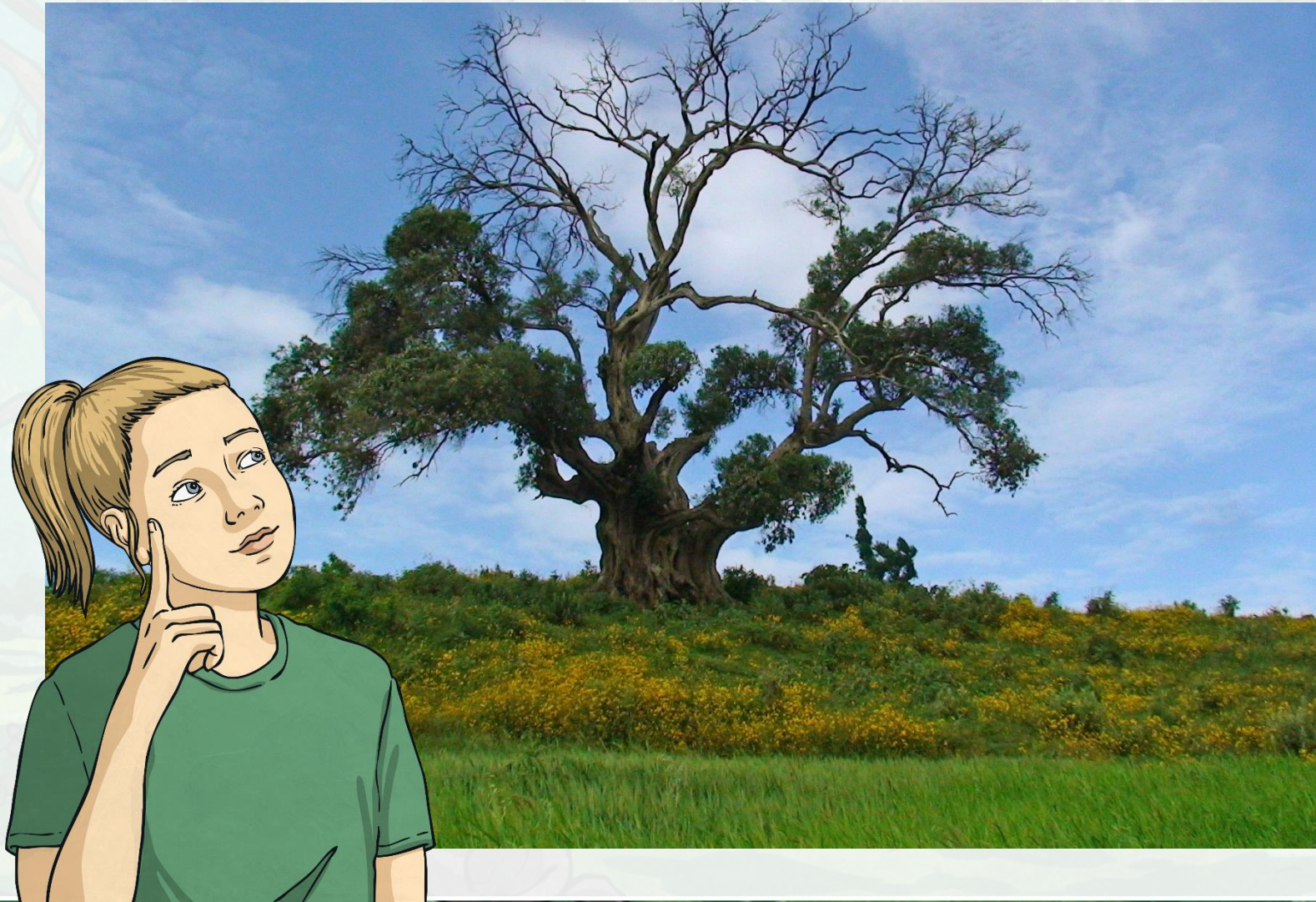
Bow and
arrow?

Furniture?

Firewood?

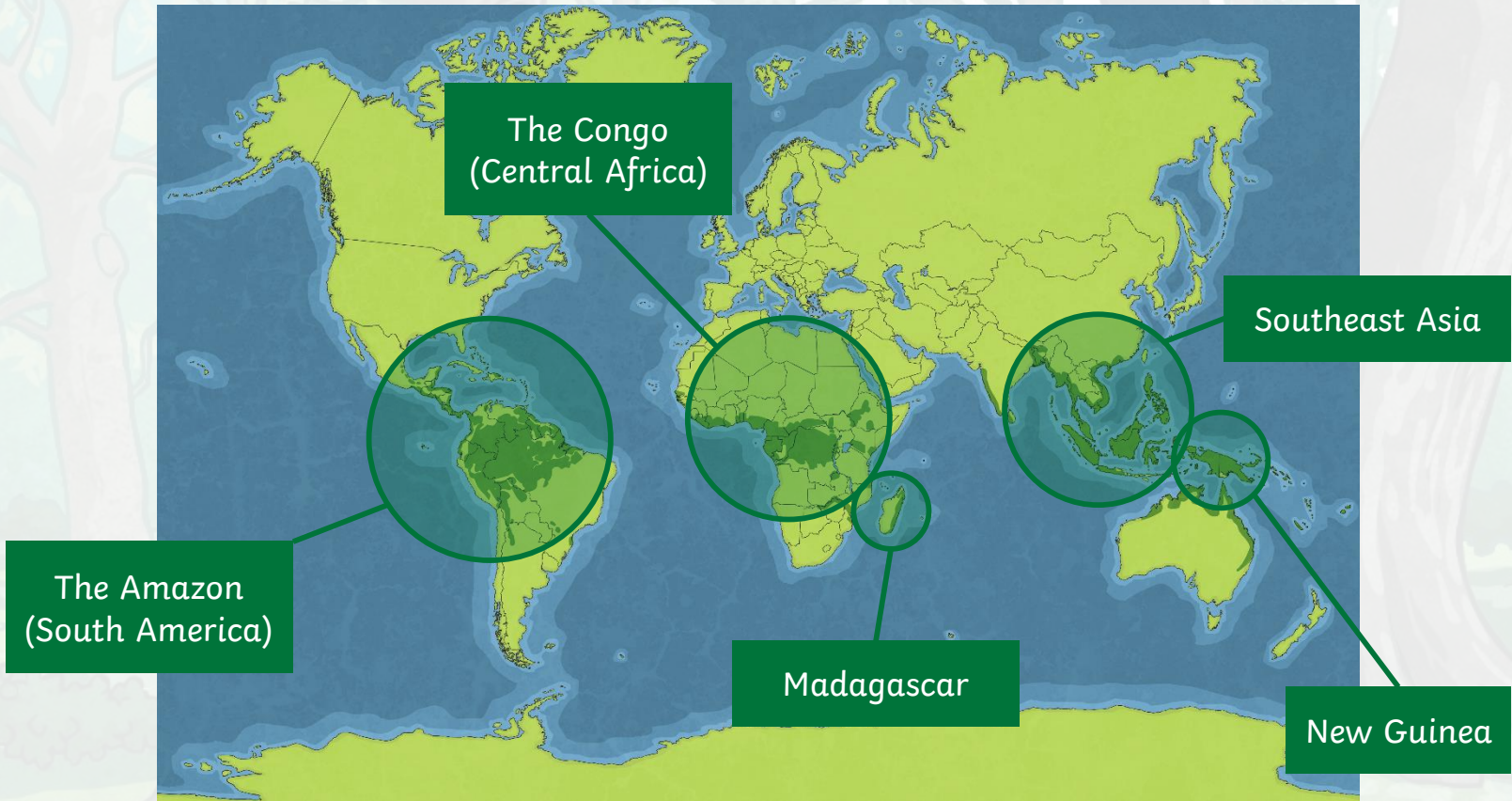


What about a tree or perhaps a forest?



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?

Rainforests are often known as the 'lungs of the Earth'. The trees absorb harmful carbon dioxide and produce 20% of the oxygen in Earth's atmosphere.



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.

25% of medicines come from plants found in the rainforest.



Forest Fact

The rainforests are disappearing.



Do you know why the rainforests are disappearing?

What Is Deforestation?

Deforestation occurs when trees are cut down across a wide area which is then permanently cleared for another use.



Did You Know...?

Every 20 minutes, an area of rainforest the size of 20 football pitches is cut down. If this rate continues, there will be no rainforests in 100 years.

Why Are the Rainforests 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.





There are over 7 billion people on the planet.
This number keeps growing.
By 2100, there could be 11.2 billion people!



All of these people need food so land is
cleared for farming.



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.

Forest is cleared permanently for:

- **Cattle grazing:** this provides meat for restaurant chains and supermarkets.
- **Crops:** such as sugar cane and palm oil.

What Are the Effects of Deforestation?

Lack of biodiversity: The number of different species becomes smaller.

Soil erosion: Tree roots help hold the soil and prevent it being washed away. Without trees, the soil is washed into rivers and streams, blocking them, causing flooding and contaminated drinking water.



Climate change: Scientists believe deforestation has a worldwide effect on climate. Trees store carbon dioxide. When they are cut down, carbon dioxide builds up in the atmosphere and is known as a greenhouse gas which causes global warming.

Droughts: Trees are an important part of the water cycle. Without them, there will be a lack of rain.

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



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