



Be the best that we can be.



# EBJ Knowledge Organiser History Year 3

## Spring

What is happening to our rainforests?



### How the rainforest has changed over time?

Rainforests cover only 6% of the Earth but they are home to 50% of all plant and animal species.

There are over 7 billion people on the planet. This number keeps growing and, by 2100, there could be 11.2 billion people. All of these people need food so land is cleared for farming. Forests are cleared permanently for animal grazing, which provides meat. Land is also used to grow crops, such as sugar cane and palm oil. Huge areas of forest are cut down to grow soya, which is used to feed cattle and pigs.

The rainforest is home to a unique variety of tree species. Trees are useful and valuable. Among other things, they are used for paper, building and firewood. Hardwoods, such as teak or mahogany, are strong and so are perfect for building and for making furniture.

Huge areas of rainforest are destroyed in order to grow oil palm trees. This means animals and other plants lose their natural habitats.

**Soil erosion:** Tree roots help hold the soil together and prevents it from 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 impact on climate. Trees store carbon dioxide. When they are cut down, the gas is released and builds up in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is a known greenhouse gas and contributes to global warming.

### The Amazon

- ✓ 5.5 million square km (previously covered a much larger area)
- ✓ Parts in Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana
- ✓ 2.5 million insect **species**
- ✓ 40,000+ plant **species**
- ✓ 3,000 edible fruits
- ✓ 2,000+ **species** of birds and mammals
- ✓ 2 million tourists per year
- ✓ 170 different languages spoken
- ✓ 250 000 **native tribes** currently live there



### What can be done?

People can find out more by supporting organisations that combat deforestation. These groups include the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Rainforest Trust. Changing your diet by eating less meat and finding out where your food is coming from can be one of the best things you can do for our planet. Many shops and supermarkets now label products that have palm oil in them, allowing customers to choose different products or select items that are made from sustainable palm oil



### Deforestation

#### Trees are cut down:

- to create fields for farming cattle and growing crops,
- to produce timber and wood pulp to make furniture and paper,
- to create space for housing.

#### Positive Impact:

Jobs are created in logging and transporting timber and manufacturing products.

- Selling land raises money for local people.

#### Negative Impact:

- People's homes are destroyed.
- Animals and plants may become extinct through habitat loss.
  - Plants that may have been useful could be lost.

#### Causes of Deforestation



### Books about Rainforests



### Key Vocabulary

**Rainforest** - a dense forest, usually found in tropical areas with high rainfall.

**Deforestation** - The action of clearing or cutting down a vast area of trees.

**Climate** - The usual weather conditions, averaged over many years.