

# A Trillion Tropical Leaves

The Amazon river's a mighty beast  
that meanders and powers and weaves;  
its fingers and veins flowing into the heart  
of a trillion tropical leaves.

It sits in the land of the samba and dance,  
South American countries count nine:  
There's Brazil and Peru, Colombia too,  
then Bolivia waits next in line.

The rainforest's huge; the biggest on Earth  
with millions of creatures and trees.  
Great Britain could fit in there 26 times,  
or 42 Englands with ease!

There're caimans and sloths, and ocelots too,  
piranhas and things that can bite;  
tarantulas, crocodiles, spiders and snakes,  
and jaguars spotted and bright.

And what do we do to this Eden on Earth?  
This land of such beauty and awe?  
We slash and we burn and we chop it all down,  
then we slash and we burn it some more.

The Amazon Rainforest's crying for help,  
ecosystems are naturally linked,  
it's dying, it's hurt; shall we chop down some more  
until all of Earth's life is extinct?



1. Write down six animals that the poem mentions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_



2. What does it mean by  
'its fingers and veins flowing into the heart of a trillion tropical leaves'?

\_\_\_\_\_



3. Look at the words at the end of the lines in the poem. Some of them rhyme.  
Find and write the word in the poem that rhymes with each of these:

nine →  bite →   
extinct →  more →



4. Read the final verse. In your own words, summarise what's happening in the verse and  
what the poem is actually saying:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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1. Write down six animals that the poem mentions:

**Any six from: caimans, sloths, ocelots, piranhas, tarantulas, crocodiles, spiders, snakes, jaguars**

2. What does it mean by 'its fingers and veins flowing into the heart of a trillion tropical leaves'?

**One mark for understanding literal image of the Amazon river: E.g. 'The way the river and its offshoots curve and bend makes it look like fingers and veins.'**

**One mark for understanding the figurative language. E.g. 'The fingers and veins flowing into the heart is a metaphor: the river is the life-blood of the Amazon; the rainforest is its metaphorical heart.'**

**One mark for recognition of a trillion tropical leaves being a description of the rainforest/the many trees that make up the rainforest.**

3. Look at the words at the end of the lines in the poem. Some of them rhyme. Find and write the word in the poem that rhymes with each of these:

nine	<b>line</b>	bite	<b>bright</b>
extinct	<b>linked</b>	more	<b>awe</b>

4. Read the final verse. In your own words, summarise what's happening in the verse and what the poem is actually saying:

**Three marks in total, from:**

- **The Amazon Rainforest is in trouble/danger.**
- **The Amazon Rainforest is dying/being chopped/burnt down.**
- **If it was human, it would be crying out for help.**
- **The ecosystems/animals/habitats in the Amazon need each other (are linked).**
- **Without the ecosystems/animals/habitats, the rainforest will die/suffer.**
- **The poem is asking what should we do about it/that we should help.**
- **The poem is being ironic/sarcastic when it asks: 'shall we chop down some more until all of Earth's life's extinct?'**
- **The poem uses 'extinct' to shock the reader to think about what is happening / shock the reader into action.**