

WHEN MY DAD WENT TO THE JUNGLE



A COMPANION GUIDE
FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

TITLE: When My Dad Went to the Jungle

AUTHOR / ILLUSTRATOR: Gusti, illustrated by Anne Decis

GENRE: Picture book

THEMES: Amazonia, nature, habitats, cultural diversity, biodiversity, conservation, environment, Indigenous peoples

SUITABLE FOR: Ages 4-10, Kindergarten-Grade 5

GUIDED READING LEVEL: N

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

W.3.2,2a,2b,2c,2d,3,4,7,8,10

L.3.3,4,4a,4b,4c,5,5a,5b,5c,6

RF.3.3,3b,3c,3d,4,4a,4c

SL.3.1,1c,1d,2,3,4,6

RL.3.1,2,3,4,5,6,7,10

NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS:

3-LS1-From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

3-LS2-Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics

3-ESS3-Earth and Human Activity



SUMMARY

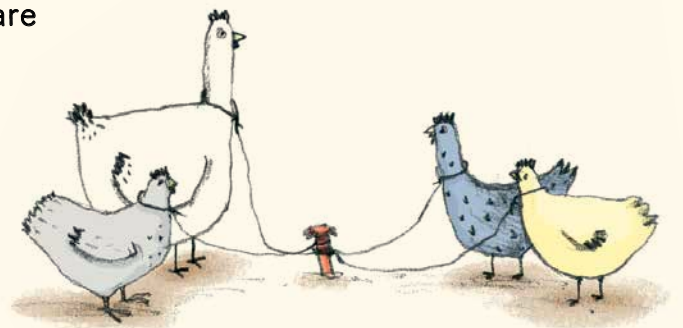
In this original, uplifting book from one of Argentina's most acclaimed children's writers, a young boy thinks about his dad's stories of the Amazon rainforest. As he does, he can't help but compare it to his own life. When you visit the rainforest, he learns, you should ask the Sápara peoples for permission and be respectful, just like when you visit your neighbor in the city. Smoked fish is delicious in the rainforest—but hard to make in your bedroom. The rainforest is like a great big house for plants, animals, and spirits, but it's disappearing, little by little. Filling his journal with imaginative drawings and words, the boy decides what he would do if he visited the rainforest: invite the spirits for churros and hot cocoa!

Inspired by the author's volunteer efforts to assist the Sápara people in protecting an endangered bird, the harpy eagle, *When My Dad Went to the Jungle* portrays a young boy exploring big ideas about the natural world. He realizes that, even though life for the Sápara people is very different from his own, a little bit of the rainforest lives inside all of us. If we let it grow, then we will always respect the lands we walk, gather, and play on.

This is a funny, touching introduction to the world of one of our most important ecosystems and the people and animals who live there.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

These discussion questions and activities are designed to support the goal of helping students explore *When My Dad Went to the Jungle*, the themes presented in the book, and their own creativity.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you find the Amazon River on a map of the world?
2. Why is the Amazon jungle important to the world?
3. Who, or what, lives in the Amazon?
4. What is the relationship between the original inhabitants of Amazonia and its well-being today?
5. Do you live in a place where the original inhabitants—First Peoples, Native Americans— live? Can you describe how they are helping to protect the world they live in?
6. The people of the jungle gather together to make a minga—to do an activity all together. With Theo's dad, they made a gigantic canoe out of a tree. Have you ever been part of a big group activity? Share with the class what happened and what you thought about the experience.
7. Why are the harpy eagles in danger of disappearing?
8. How are the survival of the harpy eagles and the survival of the jungle connected?
9. Why are cows being brought to the jungle? Why are the cows being raised there? What is the connection between us and the cows and the jungle?
10. Why is the Amazonian jungle being cut down?
11. Why is it important to preserve Amazonia, even if we don't live there?
12. If you went to the Amazon, what would you like to do?



BEFORE READING

The following questions and activities build the context and introduce the topics of the book, and establish prior knowledge and interest.

1. Before reading *When My Dad Went to the Jungle*, look at the front and back covers. Discuss with the class what you think the book will be about.
2. Discuss with the class what you know about Amazonia (or the Amazon jungle). Write down some words that you would use to describe the Amazon. (Or, the teacher can write them on a chalkboard or whiteboard.)



LANGUAGE ARTS: VOCABULARY REVIEW

(SUITABLE FOR PRESCHOOL TO GRADE 2)

Preview and discuss the following vocabulary that might be new to the students:

exaggerate	preserve	piranha	indiscriminate
permission	horrible	Amazonia	endangered
respectful	delicious	imitate	ecosystem
gigantic	blowgun	convince	atmosphere
attentive	larvae	disappear	protector
incredible	experiment	churro	

LANGUAGE ARTS: VOCABULARY REVIEW

(SUITABLE FOR GRADE 2 AND UP)

Unscramble the letters in the parentheses to complete the following sentences with words used in *When My Dad Went to the Jungle*:

1. The teacher gave us a _____ form for the class trip and told us to take it home. (snmieopsir)
2. My foot looked _____ when I compared it to the ant. (inagtcig)
3. At the end of the party, we ate some _____ cake. (oliisdecu)
4. Using a _____, he shot the dart across the field. (ubwgnol)
5. The _____ of butterflies are called caterpillars. (alaevr)
6. The monster had long sharp teeth, like a _____. (hparani)
7. I tried to _____ the funny expressions of the monkeys. (ettiami)
8. The rainforest will _____ if we keep cutting down the trees. (sradpeipa)
9. To make _____, fry them for two minutes on each side. (rucrsoh)
10. The _____ of Amazonia includes the harpy eagles, trees, river, and all the other plants and animals, including humans! (ymesesoct)
11. The smoke disappeared into the _____. (rtsepahoem)



Answers are at the end of the guide.

DURING READING

DRINKING LIKE THE SÁPARA (INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING)

This activity is suited for children aged seven and up. Theo's dad tells him that the Sápara drink from a special hollow branch and use it like a straw. In this activity, you'll experiment with different materials to make your own drinking straw. What do you think would make a good straw?

Materials

Students are encouraged to try a variety of whatever materials are available (as long as they are clean). This scientific inquiry is meant to be open-ended so that students can discover which materials and methods will result in the best straws. However, here are some suggestions for materials that the teacher or group leader can provide:

- Clean paper, wax paper, or parchment paper
- Clean dandelion stems
- Clean papaya leaf stems
- Clean hollow grass (or dried stalk of grain, if available)
- Any uncooked hollow pasta, like bucatini, penne (for a short straw), or long corkscrew pasta (for a fun straw).
- Sections of thin, clean bamboo (if available)



Other materials that could be useful:

- Cylinders of different diameters for shaping straws, like chopsticks, pencils, skewers, or thin doweling. Aim to include some cylinders that might be too thin and some that might be too thick.
- Scissors to cut materials
- Tape to secure straws
- One cup or water bottle per group
- Water



Method

1. Divide the class into groups of two or three.
2. Before starting this experiment, each group can discuss which materials they think will make the best straw.
3. Each group can choose a variety of materials they want to use. Encourage each group to choose more than one material, and more than one cylinder.
4. Each group can experiment with different ways of making straws, using the materials and cylinder they have chosen. They can test their straws by drinking water from their cups or water bottles. Allow plenty of time for trial and error.
5. After, discuss with the class which straws worked the best. Which material lasted the longest? Which material was the strongest? Which cylinder was too thick? Too thin? Just right?



AFTER READING

These activities inspire continued reflection and response, bring conclusion to the experience of reading, and stimulate further possible extensions.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE: A FIELD GUIDE TO AMAZONIA

This exercise is suitable for children aged eight and up. In this exercise, the class will create a field guide to a selection of animals in Amazonia. Each student will research one animal and create a two-page profile of that animal. Then all the sheets can then be combined to make a class book. Or, the individual pages can be displayed on a bulletin board.

Another option is for students to create a single PowerPoint page about their animal—and the pages can then be combined into a slide show.

Students are encouraged to do independent research to find an animal they would like to profile. However, here is a list of suggestions to help you get started:

Amazon river dolphin	Green anaconda	Ocelot
Assassin bug	Harpy eagle	Poison dart frog
Black caiman	Hoatzin	Puma
Botfly	Hyacinth macaw	Pygmy marmoset
Bullet ant	Jaguar	South American tapir
Capybara	Jaguarundi (or eyra cat)	Squirrel monkey
Giant armadillo	Jewel caterpillar	Tarantula
Giant river otter	King vulture	Three-toed sloth
Giant South American river turtle (or Arrau turtle)	Leafcutter ant	Toco toucan
	Longhorn beetle	Yasuni round-eared bat

Instructions for Students

1. Before you write your animal profile, decide which animal you'd like to research.
2. Next, look for information about your animal in an encyclopedia, book, on the Internet, or in any other resources you have.
3. Then write down the headings for your profile, including:

Animal name

Scientific name

Distinguishing features

Life span

Habitat

Interesting facts

Diet

Sources/citations



4. Under each heading, write down some notes on that topic.
5. Next, use your notes to write a couple of sentences under each heading. Remember, this is a rough draft, so don't worry if you make mistakes.
6. Then choose a picture of your animal. You can draw pictures or cut out a copy of pictures you find in your research. For a digital brochure, insert pictures into your file.
7. For a paper brochure, write out your good copy on a clean sheet of paper. Design your own profile page, or use the template at the end of this guide. Then add color.
8. For a digital guide, such as a PowerPoint presentation, type your good copy.

ANIMAL NAME

SCIENTIFIC NAME

IMAGE

DISTINGUISHING
FEATURES

HABITAT



IMAGE



LIFESPAN




DIET



IMAGE



INTERESTING FACTS



SOURCES/CITATIONS



ANSWER KEY FOR LANGUAGE ARTS: VOCABULARY REVIEW

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. permission | 4. blowgun | 7. imitate | 10. ecosystem |
| 2. gigantic | 5. larvae | 8. disappear | 11. atmosphere |
| 3. delicious | 6. piranha | 9. churros | |

