

# Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Details & Examples

Read the short story and answer each question.



## Giant Helpers of the Forest

Deep in the rainforests of Central Africa and Southeast Asia, large animals called forest elephants do more than just walk through the trees—they shape the entire ecosystem.

As forest elephants travel, they knock over small trees and branches. While this might look destructive, it actually helps the forest grow. The open spaces let sunlight reach the ground, which helps smaller plants and young trees sprout.

Elephants also eat many kinds of fruits. As they walk, they drop seeds through their dung. These seeds grow into new trees far from where the fruits first grew. Scientists call elephants "seed spreaders" because they help forests stay healthy and full of life.

Even their footprints matter. When it rains, their deep tracks fill with water, creating tiny ponds for insects and frogs.

Without forest elephants, some plants would stop growing. Some animals would lose their homes. The forest wouldn't look—or work—the same way.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Giant Helpers of the Forest

1. Why do forest elephants help young plants grow?

- A. They eat the small trees so the forest disappears
- B. They open space for sunlight by moving through the forest
- C. They knock down trees to build nests
- D. They carry young plants in their trunks

2. What does the text say about how elephants spread seeds?

- A. They plant seeds with their trunks
- B. They roll seeds in the dirt
- C. They drop seeds through their dung as they walk
- D. They blow seeds into ponds

3. Fill in the blank:

Elephants are called \_\_\_\_\_ because they help new plants grow far away by carrying seeds in their waste.

4. What are two ways forest elephants help the rainforest stay healthy? Use examples from the text.

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5. What could happen to the forest if the elephants disappeared? Use details to support your answer.

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# Parent and Teacher Guide

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**Guide Reading Level:** P

**Lexile Level:** 645L-795L

**Grade Level:** 4th Grade, Beginning of the Year

**Genre:** Informational nonfiction

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## Introducing the Text

*“Today we’ll learn about an animal that does a lot more than just live in the forest—it helps the forest grow. As we read, look for facts that explain how forest elephants change the land and help other living things. We’ll also make inferences about what would happen if elephants weren’t there.”*

**Vocabulary:** ecosystem, dung, sprout, tracks, seed spreader

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## Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you already know about elephants?
  2. What kinds of animals help the places they live in?
  3. Have you ever seen tracks or signs of animals outdoors?
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## During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What happens when elephants knock over trees?
  2. Why do scientists call elephants "seed spreaders"?
  3. How do elephants help even small creatures like frogs and insects?
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## After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What details in the text tell us how elephants shape the forest?
  2. What might you see in a picture of the forest if elephants lived there?
  3. How would the forest change if elephants weren’t part of the ecosystem?
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## Activity Idea

Have students create a cause-and-effect chart using art supplies or a digital slide. Each cause (e.g., “Elephants knock down trees”) should be paired with an effect (e.g., “Sunlight helps new plants grow”). Then, use these pairings to prepare for the wordless illustration by identifying what could be shown visually.

