

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Text Structure

Read the short story and answer each question.



Cutting Down Forests, Changing Our World

Forests cover nearly a third of Earth's land. They provide homes for animals, clean air for people, and even help control the climate. But every year, millions of trees are cut down—a problem known as **deforestation**.

What Causes Deforestation?

One major cause is **logging**, when people cut down trees for wood to build homes or make paper. Another cause is **clearing land** for farming or raising animals. As the population grows, people remove forests to make space for homes, roads, or businesses.

Sometimes, forests are destroyed by **fires**, both natural and man-made. In dry seasons, a single spark can turn into a wildfire. And in some places, people burn trees on purpose to clear land quickly.

What Are the Effects of Deforestation?

Cutting down forests can lead to **soil erosion**, which means the ground becomes weak and plants can't grow well. Without tree roots to hold the soil in place, rain washes it away.

Deforestation also destroys the **habitats** of animals like jaguars, toucans, and orangutans. With fewer places to live, these animals struggle to find food or raise their young.

Finally, losing forests can change Earth's **climate**. Trees absorb carbon dioxide, a gas that traps heat in the air. Fewer trees mean more carbon stays in the atmosphere, warming the planet.

Each cause of deforestation leads to serious effects, showing how human actions can change the natural world in big ways.



Name: _____

Cutting Down Forests, Changing Our World

1. How is this passage organized?

- A. It tells a story in time order
- B. It compares forests in different countries
- C. It explains causes and their effects
- D. It gives instructions on how to plant trees

2. What is one effect of deforestation, according to the text?

- A. More wood is available for building
- B. Animals find better places to live
- C. Soil erosion makes it harder for plants to grow
- D. Fires are less likely to happen

3. Fill in the blank:

When forests are cleared, animals lose their _____ and may struggle to survive.

4. When forests are cleared, animals lose their _____ and may struggle to survive.

5. Why do you think it's important to understand both the causes and effects of a topic like this?



Instructional Guide

Guide Reading Level: R

Lexile Level: 790L-940L

Grade Level: 4th Grade, Middle of the Year

Genre: Informational Nonfiction – Environmental Science

Introducing the Text

“Today’s passage explains what deforestation is, why it happens, and what effects it has on the Earth. As we read, we’ll focus on the cause-and-effect structure the author uses and how that helps us understand the topic more clearly.”

Vocabulary: deforestation, logging, erosion, habitat, climate

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you think forests do for the Earth?
 2. What might happen if a forest is cut down?
 3. Why would people want to clear land?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What are two causes of deforestation mentioned in the passage?
 2. What happens to the soil after trees are removed?
 3. How does deforestation affect animals?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What structure did the author use to organize this information?
 2. How do the causes connect to the effects?
 3. Why might an author choose to write a passage using cause and effect?
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Activity Idea

Ask students to fold a paper in half. On one side, they list causes of deforestation; on the other, they match each cause to its effect. Then have students write one paragraph using transition words like *because*, *so*, *as a result*, or *this leads to* to explain how one cause leads to a specific effect.

