

Amazon Basin– a hotspot of biodiversity

SCRIPT FOR THE ROLE PLAY

Characters in order of appearance:

1. Narrator
2. Young boy
3. Old man
4. Tree-cutter (who clears land by cutting down trees)
5. Fire-setter (clears land by setting fire to trees)
6. Tapir (identifying characteristic-sniffing around the ground, looking for ants)
7. Jaguar (identifying characteristic- big cat, majestic walk, fearsome nature)
8. Toucan (identifying characteristic – large beak, noisy, flapping wings)
9. Anaconda, (identifying characteristic – very large snake, slithering on the floor, hissing sound)
10. Sloth (identifying characteristic – moves extremely slow)
11. Monkey (identifying characteristic – chattering, jumping around, high energy)
12. Tree 1
13. Tree 2
14. Tree 3

(Stage – The trees are on one part of the stage. Narrator walks on stage)

Narrator- Far away in another continent on the other side of the world, it is morning in the Amazon jungle.

The birds and animals have awakened and so have human beings.

Let us take a glimpse into a morning in the rainforest.

(Young boy and old man walk on stage, on the side away from the trees, and pause)

Young boy—Grandfather, can we go to the forest? We can pick some fruits and berries.

Old man-- Yes, we can go, and if we are lucky we may see some wild animals. Stay close to me, some of them are dangerous.

Young boy -- We should not allow any dangerous animals in the forest, grandfather. They should all be removed.

Old man-- Why? Do they not have a right to be in the rainforest? The forests were not created only for human beings. In fact, animals, birds, insects and plants have more rights than us. This is their only home.

Young boy – *(pauses to show that he is thinking)* Yes, that's true, grandfather. We can build houses and stay in them and create villages and cities.

Old man -- *(puts his finger to his lips)* Talk softly now. We have entered the forest and should not frighten the animals away.

(They gather fruits and berries. Tapir enters the scene, starts digging in the ground)

Old man -- *(Points out to animal)* Look, there is a tapir. He is looking for ants in that anthill.

(As the boy looks at the tapir, the old man checks their baskets)

Let us go home. We have collected enough fruits and berries, and your mother will be waiting for us.....On the way, I will show you many interesting plants and other animals. It may rain, so let's hurry.

(Young boy looks up)

Young boy--Grandfather, how do you know it's going to rain? I can't even see the sky because of the thick leafy canopy.

Old man - That is how it is in these rainforests. Rainfall is very sudden and also very heavy. It is this heavy rain that creates these thick forests and gives shelter to so many animals, birds and insects. Now let's go quickly.

(Young boy and old man keep walking until they go off the stage)

(Jaguar walks past the tapir)

Tapir-Oh Jaguar, look at those two-legged creatures.

Jaguar- They won't harm us. Now run along, Tapir. You are lucky I am too sleepy to hunt you. GRRRRR.

(Tapir runs away)

(Jaguar meets the anaconda)

Jaguar – Hey, move over Anaconda, I want to sleep.

Anaconda - HISSSSSSSS-go away Jaguar, I've swallowed a deer and can't move. Look at that sloth—the slowest creature in the world, I have been waiting for him to move on so that I can sleep on the branch.

Sloth *(moving very slowly)*-am going at top speed, Anaconda. Go climb another tree.

(Pauses) I can't even hear myself speak with these noisy birds and those jumping monkeys. Can't they stay on one tree?

(Monkey comes in, jumping about, pauses and looks into the distance)

Monkey- Look, there are more of those 2-legged ones entering our forest.

(Pause and machine sounds start)

(Toucan comes on stage)

Toucan—I was flying over the forest. Those human creatures are bad. They have come here after cutting the trees in another part of the forest. They are destroying our home!

(Tree-cutter and Fire-setter enter stage. All animals come on stage, sit silently away from the trees and watch what's happening)

Tree-cutter-- I'll cut this one. With this machine we can cut trees in very little time. *(Sound of mechanical saw in the background. Tree-cutter cuts both trees which fall one by one)*

Fire-setter- Yes, your machine is super-efficient. But my way is much better. Come with me and see how I do it. I am going to set fire to the forest and it will be super-quick. What efficiency, we can clear thousands of acres of forest in a very short time.

(Tree-cutter does a thumbs-up, and both go off stage).

(The animals also go near the fallen trees and sit down, showing sadness).

PAUSE

(Student comes on stage, addresses the class directly)

Narrator—In the name of progress man is destroying forests, and the animals that live in them.

But think, maybe we can change.

Tell me, what will happen if we reduce cutting trees, and plant new ones instead?
(Interactive session-students from the audience answer these questions. Narrator can continue after receiving 4 or 5 answers)

Forests will grow back.
(The trees come upright)
And the animals and birds will return.
(The animals and birds get up and do a thumbs-up sign)

We cannot underestimate the importance of forests.
Our very survival depends on them.
They give us the air we breathe and create moisture banks by absorbing rainwater. They also control greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon dioxide, and keep temperatures down.
They give us livelihood and medicines.
Tropical rainforests teem with life; plants, animals, birds and insects, live there. And human beings too.