

7

THE GREAT TREE

Warm Up

Do you know why trees and plants are very important for our environment?

Write any five benefits to the environment around the picture of the tree given below.



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All things in nature are interdependent



It was early morning in the forest. Birds chirped happily on the branches, while animals called out to one another. Busy bees buzzed around the flowers, filling the air with their humming song. The whole forest seemed alive with sounds and colours.

A man walked slowly along a narrow forest path. After some time, he came to a stop before a giant, ancient tree. The tree was enormous—it stretched high above all the other trees, and its wide branches spread out like a huge umbrella.

The man tightened his grip on his axe and raised it high. Thwack! Thwack! The sharp blade struck the trunk. But the tree's wood was thick and strong, and it was not easy to cut. Still, the man kept chopping. Thwack! Thwack!

As the morning went on, the sun rose higher and higher. Its heat grew fiercer until it felt like fire in the sky. The man's arms grew heavy, and sweat dripped down his face. He was tired, but the giant tree still stood tall and proud.



He sat down to rest under the great tree and soon fell asleep under its shade. The cool breeze in the forest comforted him.

A parrot lived in the tree. Seeing the gash in the tree trunk, the parrot flew down close to the sleeping man and said in his ear ,
“Sir, this tree has been our home for generations. Do not chop it down.”

Then a bee buzzed in the sleeping man’s ear, “Sir, my hive is on this tree. I fly from tree to tree, flower to flower, scattering pollen, which allows the trees to make fruits and seeds. This forest has grown because of pollinators like me.”

A monkey jumped down from the tree and told the sleeping man, “Do you ever stop at one tree? One by one, you’ll cut them all. The roots of these great trees hold the soil in place. Without trees, the soil will get washed away in the heavy rains. Then nothing can grow, and over time, the forest will become a desert.”

A small insect dropped down near the sleeping man and whispered in his ear, “Sir, so many of us will become homeless if you chop down this great tree.”

A porcupine scurried up to the man and told him, “Sir, did you know that we animals and humans need oxygen in order to live? And trees produce oxygen!”

A snake came to the sleeping man and said, “Sir, my children and I live on this tree. You are chopping down this tree without thinking about the future. Please think of your own children, who will live in a world without trees tomorrow.”

Finally, a tiny sparrow told the man, “Human beings cannot live without the trees and the animals. If you destroy us, your future will be destroyed. That is because we are all interdependent. We need each other. So, consider all of nature as your own family, and live happily with nature.”

All the animals said together, “Sir, when you wake up, think about what we have said.”

The man finally woke up. He picked up his axe and stood up. He was about to strike the tree, but stopped. He noticed a circle of animals around him, with tears in their eyes, watching him silently.

The man thought for a second. He put his axe down and walked away, out of the forest.

WORD WALL

Generation: All the people born and living at around about the same time, regarded collectively

Gash: Wound

Pollen: It is a fine powder produced by flowers.

Interdependent: Dependent upon one another

Think and Answer

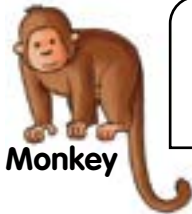
I. Write briefly the messages of these animals under their picture.



Parrot



Bee



Monkey



Insect



Porcupine



Snake



Sparrow

II. Tick the correct answer.

1. What is the most important thing the tree gives which both humans and animals need to live?
 - (a) wood
 - (b) oxygen
 - (c) fruits

2. What does 'interdependent' mean?
 - (a) not needing each other to live
 - (b) fighting with each other to live
 - (c) needing each other to live

3. How should our relationship with nature be?
 - (a) consider nature as our family
 - (b) consider nature as our enemies
 - (c) consider nature as a factory

III. Give two examples of interdependence in nature given in the story.

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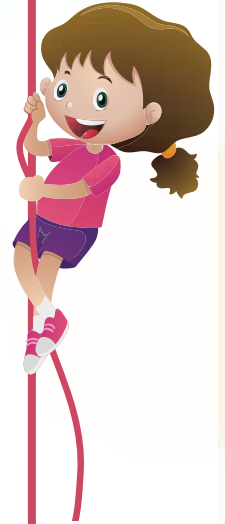
All plants and animals are interdependent on each other as well as their environment. Science has shown these connections. We still do not know all the connections that exist between human beings, animals, plants and the environment we live in. New ones are being discovered every other day.

Since we all are connected, what affects one will affect the others. So, let us take care of our natural environment and all the creatures that live in it.

Activity A: Who am I?

Here are descriptions of some parts of our environment and how they are of use to others. Identify them and write the answer.

1. I give heat and light to the whole world. There can be no life without me. I rise in the morning and set in the evening. Who am I?
2. I eat mulberry leaves. I spin a cocoon of fine strong and shiny fibre, which is used for making silk clothes. Who am I?
3. I quench your thirst. No living being can survive without me. I flow in rivers. Who am I?
4. I eat green grass. I am found in white, black and brown colours. I am known for producing milk. My dung is also very useful. Who am I?
5. I am known as the king of the forest. I hunt other animals and eat them; Thus I help in maintaining the balance of creatures in nature. Who am I?
6. I am one of the most important components of nature. I purify the environment and make my own food. Living beings depend on me for their food, shelter and oxygen. Who am I?
7. I live in water and purify it. Many animals and humans eat me. I am found in different colours. I have scaly skin and gills. Who am I?
8. I lay eggs that humans and other animals eat. I swim in water and live on land as well. I quack. Who am I?



Activity B: Useful or Harmful?



Our actions can be useful or harmful to the environment and the creatures that live in it. Here are some actions that we human beings do, not knowing the effect they have on our environment.

Which actions are right and which ones are wrong? Why? Discuss with your teacher and write the answers.

1. A few boys go to the beach for a walk. They see some tourists throwing plastic bottles and wrappers on the shore. The boys pick them up in a bag, which they always carry with them whenever they go for a walk on the beach. They even tell the people at the beach that they should keep the water resources clean. Whose action is right—the tourists' or the boys'? Why?

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2. There is a bee hive in a tree. A few boys are throwing stones at it and disturbing the bees. A man passing by tells them to stop as they are hurting the bees. Besides, the bees are very useful for plants. Who is right—the boys or the man? Why?

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3. A businessman wants to open a factory near a village. He orders all the trees to be cut and all the ponds and lakes in that area to be covered. People from the village are against this action. Who is right—the businessman or the villagers? Why?

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Let's Remember

All parts of nature are dependent on each other. Human beings are dependent on others to be alive. So, we should take care of every part of nature.

My Space

What I liked most about this lesson:

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I learnt that

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Here are some activities you can do with your family to care for and protect the environment.

1. *Tree plantation: Your family can celebrate birthdays by planting saplings and taking care of them.*
2. *Cleaning the rivers and beaches: Clean the rivers or beaches with family members on weekends.*
3. *Care for animals: Discuss with your family members how you can help animals and birds that are injured or need help.*