

### About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Persuasive Page Count: 16 Word Count: 1,149

#### Book Summary

**More Valuable Than Gold** argues that the gold gained from illegal prospecting and mining in the Amazon rainforest is not worth the deforestation, mercury contamination, and loss of biodiversity it causes. The author also discusses some reasons why people mine illegally and possible solutions. Photographs, maps, and graphs support the text.

### About the Lesson

#### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Visualize

#### Objectives

- Visualize to understand text
- Identify the author's purpose
- Understand and use possessive nouns
- Identify suffixes that change the meanings of nouns

#### Materials

**Green text** indicates resources are available on the website.

- Book—**More Valuable Than Gold** (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Map of South America
- Pictures of trees
- **Visualize, author's purpose, possessive nouns, suffixes worksheets**
- **Discussion cards**



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

#### Vocabulary

\*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](http://VocabularyA-Z.com).

- Content words:

Story critical: **conservation** (n.), **contaminates** (v.), **deforestation** (n.), **mining** (v.), **prospecting** (n.), **rainforest** (n.)

Enrichment: **biodiversity** (n.), **illegal** (adj.), **mercury** (n.), **ore** (n.), **sluices** (n.), **toxic** (adj.)

### Before Reading

#### Build Background

- Ask students to share what they know about rainforests. Ask them if they know where the world's rainforests are located and if they have ever visited a rainforest. Show students a map of South America, and point out the Amazon River and the area surrounding it.
- Show students the front and back covers of the book and read the title. Explain to students that this book tells readers about the Amazon rainforest and how valuable it is. Ask students what they think the title means.
- Record their ideas on the board.

## Preview the Book

### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

### Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Visualize**

- Explain to students that engaged readers often visualize, or create pictures in their mind, while reading. Visualizing is on the basis of what a person already knows about a topic. Explain that one way to visualize is to draw a picture. Read aloud to the end of page 4.
- Model how to visualize using nonfiction text.  
*Think-aloud: Whenever I read a book, I always pause after a few pages to create a picture in my mind of the information I've read. This helps me organize the important information and understand the ideas in the book. For example, on page 4, the book begins by telling readers to imagine walking through a beautiful forest with giant trees, vines, and large, colorful flowers. I stopped to picture that in my mind. The author went on to fill my mind with other images; I thought about big, brightly colored snakes, vivid orange and green frogs, and large insects crawling along the branches. I imagined a group of monkeys flying through the air, making loud, high-pitched sounds.*
- Introduce and explain the **visualize worksheet**. Have students draw what they visualized from page 4 on the worksheet. Invite students to share their drawings.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

### Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Author's purpose**

- Write the following terms on the board: *To Entertain*, *To Inform*, and *To Persuade*. Invite students to define the terms in their own words. Define each of the terms as necessary (*to inform* means *to give someone information about something*, *to entertain* means *to amuse someone*, *to persuade* means *to try to make someone think the same way you do*). Encourage students to give examples of times they might have said or written something to inform, entertain, or persuade others. Point out that writers often have one of these three purposes for writing and sometimes even all of them. Writers provide readers with clues that will help them figure out the author's purpose.
- Introduce and explain the **author's purpose worksheet**. Create a three-row chart on the board, in the same visual layout as the worksheet. Label the left-hand side of each row with the terms: *To Entertain*, *To Inform*, and *To Persuade*. Have students read the book to identify and record different examples in the book that illustrate these purposes. Instruct them to write the page number and example in one of the three boxes when the writing supports one of the purposes.
- *Think-aloud: To understand and remember new information in a book, I can look at how an author states ideas to determine what his or her purpose may be. I can decide if the author's focus is to inform, to entertain, or to persuade. I know that engaged readers do this, so I'm going to identify the author's purpose as I read the book.*

### Introduce the Vocabulary

- As students preview the book, ask them to talk about what they see in the photographs, maps, and graphs. Reinforce the vocabulary words they will encounter in the text.
- Write the following vocabulary words on the board: *deforestation*, *mining*, and *rainforest*. Remind students they can look for context clues in the text and photographs to help them define an unfamiliar word.

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## More Valuable Than Gold

- Give groups of students a large sheet of poster paper with each of the vocabulary words written in the center of a different bubble. Have them write and draw what they know about each word by writing their ideas on spokes coming from the bubble. Remind them to collaborate and share ideas.
- When all groups are finished collaborating, invite them into a class discussion. Create the same design on the board as their posters, and ask volunteers to share their group definition aloud. Create a class definition for each word, using students' prior knowledge.
- Review or explain that the glossary contains a list of vocabulary words and their definitions. Model how students can use the glossary or a dictionary to find a word's meaning. Have them locate the glossary at the back of the book. Invite a volunteer to read the definition for *deforestation* in the glossary. Have students compare the definition with their prior knowledge of the word. Then have them follow along on page 6 as you read the sentence in which the word *deforestation* is found to confirm the meaning of the word.
- Repeat the exercise with the remaining vocabulary words.

### Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about rainforests and gold. Remind them to stop after every few pages to visualize the most important information and draw on their worksheet what they visualized about it.

## **During Reading**

### Student Reading





**Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 5 to the end of page 8. Ask them to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they visualized. Encourage students who finish before everyone else to go back and reread.

- Model visualizing.  
**Think-aloud:** *When I read page 5, I pictured a humungous and ugly hole in the middle of the beautiful green rainforest. I imagined the ground being bare and brown, with dirty equipment scattered all around, but no signs of life otherwise. What I pictured made me sad. The pictures in my mind were very different from what I visualized when reading the first page of the book.*
- Have students share the pictures of what they visualized while reading. Have them explain their drawings aloud.
- Discuss the text and ask students what information they recorded on their author's purpose worksheet. Ask volunteers to give examples of what they recorded. Add examples to the chart on the board as students share (To entertain: page 4, *Imagine walking through a beautiful forest with giant trees.* To inform: page 5, *This is South America's Amazon rainforest; human activities are destroying this rainforest; gold mining is among the most harmful;* page 6, *constant warm temperatures and large amounts of rain allow for amazing biodiversity; people destroy huge areas of the rainforest every year through deforestation.* To persuade: page 5, *Suddenly you come upon a bare area with no plants or animals and an enormous, deep hole, and so on.*).
- Explain to students that they do not need to write each example on their worksheet exactly as the book states. Review the skill of paraphrasing when giving answers.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 11. Have them visualize the information on those pages. Discuss what they visualized. Ask students to use their worksheet to add to their drawings as they visualize the information in the book. Point out that they can also use their drawings to help remember the important facts.
- Discuss the text and ask students what information they recorded on their author's purpose worksheet. Ask volunteers to give examples of what they recorded. Add examples to the chart on the board as students share their information.

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## More Valuable Than Gold

-  Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to visualize as they read and have them continue to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they visualized.
-  Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

### After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

### Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Ask students to explain or show how the strategy of visualizing helped them understand and remember important details in the book.
- **Think-aloud:** *As I continued reading, I pictured men digging thirty feet deep into the ground and then blasting it further with dynamite. I pictured pieces of the soil and roots from old trees flying up into the air as the dynamite exploded. This helped me to remember the details given in this section of the book.*
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the visualize worksheet. If time allows, discuss their answers aloud after students finish.

### Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- Ask students to explain or show how identifying the author's purpose helped them understand and remember different parts of the book. Review the three purposes from the chart on the board (to inform, to entertain, and to persuade).
- Ask students if they were mostly informed, entertained, or persuaded by the book *More Valuable Than Gold*. Explain that while the purpose of this book was to persuade readers, the author also informed readers of many facts about mining and rainforests. Ask students what they think the author was trying to persuade readers of (mining in the rainforest harms the earth and is not worth the gold found there).
- Ask students to read examples of places in the text where they were informed (page 12: *Workers mix the mud with mercury, a toxic metal*, page 13: *This process contaminates the forest; As larger fish eat smaller fish, the amount of mercury in the bodies of the larger fish increases*; and so on).
- Ask students to read examples of places in the text where they were persuaded (page 14: *The best solution to the problem of rainforest destruction may be for governments to improve economic opportunities*, page 15: *Are the jewelry and other things we make from gold really worth damaging the health of the planet and its inhabitants?*). Discuss students' opinions and answers to the question posed by the author.
- **Check for understanding:** Ask students to think of a book they've read recently that taught them something (science book, biography, and so on). Ask them to think of something they've read that was funny, scary, silly, or mysterious (comics, fiction books). Ask students for an example of something they've read that attempted to get them to believe or do something (an advertisement or poster). Write students' responses on the board under the appropriate category.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this story, you learned about deforestation and illegal mining, and its negative effects on the rainforests. Now that you know this information, do you think the rainforests of the Amazon are more valuable than gold?

## Build Skills

### Grammar and Mechanics: Possessive nouns

- Write the following sentence on the board: *This is South America's Amazon rainforest—a place with more kinds of plants and animals than any other.* Read the sentence aloud, pointing to the words *Amazon rainforest*. Ask a volunteer to explain whose Amazon rainforest the sentence is referring to (*South America's*). Explain that the word *America's* shows that the rainforest belongs to South America.
- Review or explain that words like *America's* are called *possessive nouns*. A possessive noun is formed by adding an apostrophe (') or an apostrophe s ('s) to the end of a word to show ownership or possession.
- Direct students to page 7. Have them find the possessive noun on the page (*Earth's*). Ask a volunteer to read aloud the sentence containing the possessive noun *Earth's*. Ask another volunteer to explain what belongs to the Earth (*oxygen*).
- Explain that sometimes there are exceptions to the rule of adding 's to a noun when creating a possessive noun. Write the following sentence on the board: *Animals' abilities to sense dangers are important.*
- Circle the possessive noun (*Animals'*). Explain that the noun is plural, so an apostrophe is added to the end of the word instead. Point out that the word is not pronounced *Animals's*, so only an apostrophe was added to create the possessive plural noun. Ask students what the animals have ownership of in the sentence on the board (*their abilities*).
- Remind students that a contraction using 's is not the same as a possessive. For example, *it's* is a contraction for *it is* and does not show ownership.



**Check for understanding:** Have students circle the possessive nouns in the book and underline the object of the possessive noun.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [possessive nouns worksheet](#). Discuss their answers as a group once everyone has finished.

### Word Work: Suffixes

- Show students a picture or cutout of a tree. Have a student identify the object. Write the word *tree* on the board. Have a volunteer identify to which part of speech this word belongs (*noun*). Remind students that a *noun* is a *person, place, or thing*.
- Show students two trees. Write the word *trees* on the board. Ask students how the meaning of the word *tree* changed (the -s ending on *trees* means more than one tree).
- Write the word *mining* on the board. Ask students what the root word is, and write *mine* next to *mining*. Explain that *mine* is the noun in the sentence: *They dug in the mine*. When the -ing suffix is added to the word *mine*, a verb is created (*mining*), as in the sentence: *They were mining for gold*.
- Review or explain that a *suffix* is a *syllable added to the end of a word to alter or change its meaning*. Some examples of suffixes are -ed, -s, -ness, and -ing. Suffixes can be added to nouns, but they can also be added to other parts of speech such as verbs.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the word *discovered* on the board. Ask students what the root word is, and write *discover* next to *discovered*. Explain that when the suffix -ed is added to the noun *discover*, the new word has a different meaning. Point out that *discovered* refers to something that took place in the past. Ask a volunteer to use each word in a sentence.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [suffixes worksheet](#). Read and discuss the correct answers once all students have finished working independently.

## Build Fluency

### Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

### Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have them discuss the connections they made to the book with someone at home.

## Extend the Reading

### Persuasive Writing Connection

Have students write a persuasive letter to the government of Peru. Have them provide facts from the book to try to convince the government to hire more officers to protect their rainforests and close down illegal mines. Encourage students to include their opinions as to why this is important and to back up their opinions with facts.

Visit [WritingA-Z.com](http://WritingA-Z.com) for a lesson and leveled materials on persuasive writing.

### Social Studies Connection

Create a forum for discussion about why and how mining is destroying the Amazon rainforest. Ask students to share what they think about this information, and if they think deforestation and contamination will be stopped or continue. Interject opposing viewpoints such as miners needing money to support their families or loggers also contributing to deforestation. Ask volunteers to comment. Discuss how Brazil's efforts to improve the education and job skills of poor people will help the issue.

### Skill Review

**Discussion cards** covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

## Assessment

### Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently use the strategy of visualizing to comprehend the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- thoughtfully analyze the author's purpose during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify possessive nouns in text, during discussion, and on a worksheet
- consistently recognize nouns with suffixes in the text; understand during discussion and on a worksheet that the suffixes change the meanings of words

### Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)