

UNIT 10

Global Issues

TV Documentary: *The Ndoki Rain Forest*

PART 1

PREVIEW

- Ask students *Who knows what a “rain forest” is? What do you know about rain forests? What countries do you know of that have rain forests? Do you know of any problems that rain forests face? Do you think rain forests are worth protecting?*

VIEW

Ask students to focus on a different topic each time they view. Some ideas:

- Ask students to listen for the ways the Ndoki Rain Forest is unique compared to other places.
- Ask students to listen for what Michael Fay is doing in the Ndoki Rain Forest.
- Ask students to listen for why poachers hunt wildlife in the Ndoki Rain Forest and what conservationists want to do about it.

If you decide to use the optional Activity Worksheet, ask students to read each activity before viewing.

REVIEW

- Ask the following comprehension questions. Play Part 1, or segments of Part 1, again if necessary.
 - What is unique about the Ndoki Rain Forest? (It’s been untouched by human hands, there are animals and plants that have disappeared from the rest of the planet, the trees grow very tall, and the butterflies are as big as birds.)*
 - How long has Michael Fay been exploring the Ndoki Rain Forest? (eleven years)*
 - Where is he from? (He’s from the United States, New Jersey.)*
 - What is Michael Fay doing in the Ndoki Rain Forest? (He’s trying to protect it and the animals that live in it. He’s helping to turn it into a national preserve.)*
 - Who is he working with to protect the forest? (He’s working with Congo’s government and the Wildlife Conservation Society.)*
 - Why do poachers hunt wildlife there? (It provides income and food.)*
 - What do conservationists hope to do about poaching there? (They want to cut it back, but they don’t think it can be completely stopped.)*

What percentage of Congo’s wildlife is being killed each year by hunters? (about ten percent)
What other danger is there to Congo’s wildlife? (Loss of their environment. The rain forests are disappearing.)

| **LANGUAGE NOTE:** *Poaching* is illegal hunting.

VIDEO SCRIPT

Sam Donaldson: Now, we here at *PrimeTime* have watched John Quinones go to many exotic locations over the years. But we, and you, have never seen anything quite like this. It’s the story of one man devoting his life to preserving the way his fragile fellow creatures live theirs in a land half a world away—a unique and beautiful place on the African continent which humans have yet to plunder.

John Quinones: It is a jungle so remote that parts of it have never been seen by human eyes. Deep in the northern Congo, an enchanted world where butterflies grow as large as birds and trees rise as tall as buildings—a land where time has stood still. It’s called Ndoki—the world’s last virgin rain forest, a million acres untouched by humanity. A Noah’s ark, where animals and plants that have disappeared from the rest of the planet remain undisturbed.

No one knows this hidden world better than Michael Fay, a forty-year-old American from New Jersey. He’s been exploring this malaria-infested jungle step-by-step for eleven years, often wearing nothing more than a pair of shorts and sandals. So what’s a nice guy from New Jersey doing here?

Michael Fay: Hiding . . . Four leopard skins . . .

John Quinones: Perhaps, but he’s also trying to stop the widespread slaughter of endangered species, defending the jungle against well-armed poachers.

Michael Fay: This elephant gun has probably killed hundreds of elephants over the years.

John Quinones: It’s all part of his mission for the New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society. Working with Congo’s government, Fay and a team of his colleagues are turning Ndoki into a national preserve.

Sam Donaldson: In a remote jungle deep in the northern Congo, correspondent John Quinones already has been given a personal guide to its breathtaking beauty. But he’s about to encounter the dark side of a peaceable kingdom.

John Quinones: You're on a deadly safari in the heart of Africa. These hunters are tracking chimpanzee just outside the limits of the Ndoki forest. Be warned that the following scenes are very graphic. The target is hit. It's an adult male. The body parts are taken to market and sold to local butchers as wild game or bushmeat. It provides income to hunters and the families who depend on them. This demand for bushmeat is strong, and though it's illegal, conservationists know that the trade can't be shut down completely. By some estimates, up to 10 percent of Congo's wildlife is being slaughtered every year, including some of Africa's most endangered species, like this baby lowland gorilla found dead in a suitcase. This one is still alive, rescued while on its way to the bushmeat market. But even if the fight to cut back on the bushmeat trade is won, conservationists know that the animals cannot survive without the rain forest. And every day, there is less and less of it. For Michael Fay, saving this forest is not just a battle, it's a war.

ANSWER KEY

- A. *Individual responses may include variations on the following:* It has been left undisturbed by humans. Some parts have never even been seen by humans. It contains animals and plants not seen in other places.
- B. 1. True. 2. False. He's been exploring it for eleven years. 3. False. Poaching or hunting has been killing them. 4. False. He's been working with Congo's government and the Wildlife Conservation Society. 5. False. They don't think it's possible. 6. False. Up to 10 percent is being killed.
- C. *Individual responses may include variations on the following:* 1. They are hunting them for food and to make a living. 2. Ndoki's wildlife need the rain forest to survive, and the rain forest is disappearing.
- D. 1. have never been seen by human eyes
2. grow as large as birds and trees rise as tall as buildings
3. time has stood still
4. untouched by humanity
5. animals and plants that have disappeared from the rest of the planet remain undisturbed
- E. *Answers will vary.*

PART 2

PREVIEW

- Ask students *Do you think the work Michael Fay is doing is important? Do you think it's more important for the Ndoki Rain Forest to be saved as a preserve or to be used as a source of income and food for people?*

VIEW

Ask students to focus on a different topic each time they view. Some ideas:

- Ask students to listen for what dangers to wildlife the report mentions.
- Ask students to listen for what argument Michael Fay makes for why logging should not be allowed in the Ndoki Rain Forest.
- Ask students to listen for why elephants are being hunted in the Ndoki Rain Forest and why it is illegal to do so.

If you decide to use the optional Activity Worksheet, ask students to read each activity before viewing.

REVIEW

- Ask the following comprehension questions. Play Part 2, or segments of Part 2, again if necessary.
 - What specific dangers to wildlife does this part of the report talk about? (logging and poaching)*
 - Who is cutting down huge numbers of trees in Congo's forests? (logging companies) What for? (to export wood to other countries)*
 - How much money does Michael Fay think the tree is worth? (about US\$10,000)*
 - How old does Michael Fay think many trees in the forest are? (over a thousand years old)*
 - How much time would it take to cut this tree down? (about twenty minutes)*
 - What do they see from the airplane? (elephants that have been killed by poachers)*
 - How many dead elephants do they count in all? (about 300)*
 - Where are the biggest markets for ivory from these elephants? (Europe and Japan)*
 - Why is hunting elephants considered illegal in Congo? (Because Congo signed an agreement in 1989 with ninety-nine other countries banning the ivory trade.)*
 - Who is buying the ivory sold in markets in Brazzaville, the capital of Congo? (mainly European tourists)*
 - How much money does Michael Fay say it would cost to protect the Ndoki Rain Forest? (six hundred thousand dollars a year)*
 - What percentage of the world's rain forests have already disappeared? (about 85 percent)*

EXTENSION

Oral work

- Group work. Divide the class into two groups. Assign one group to argue for conserving the Ndoki Rain Forest; assign the other to argue for further development. Then have the class debate the issue.
- Discussion. Discuss how local economic needs might be balanced with the need to conserve natural resources. Ask students to consider, for example, what Congo might do to reduce poaching in the Ndoki Rain Forest while still meeting the needs of the local people for food and income.

Written work

- Have students choose a natural place in your country that some people want to develop and others want to conserve. Ask them to write a couple of paragraphs developing arguments for one of those positions.
- Have students write a letter to Michael Fay praising or criticizing his work in the Ndoki Rain Forest.
- Ask students to write a paragraph or two on their own ideas for what can or should be done (or not done) about poaching or logging in the Ndoki Rain Forest.

LANGUAGE NOTES: *Divvied up* is a colloquial way to say divided between two or more people or organizations.

The expression *You're talking . . .* is used colloquially to mean *I'm going to estimate . . .*

Whacking is a colloquial way to say killing or cutting down.

VIDEO SCRIPT

John Quinones: For Michael Fay, saving this forest is not just a battle, it's a war.

Michael Fay: Most of the large blocks of forest in Africa have been divvied up in the last twenty years to logging companies. They have just been invading the forest at an unbelievable rate.

John Quinones: Last year, French logging companies cut down 200,000 trees in this part of Congo. The product—mahogany and plywood, most of it for export.

Michael Fay: Let's just have one place on earth where, you know, we're not thinking about how much money we're going to make off of it. Let's just say, you know, this is an amazing

place, and it's the last one left, so let's save it at any cost.

John Quinones: This is what . . . a couple of hundred feet tall?

Michael Fay: Yeah. It's probably . . . yeah . . . about 200 feet.

John Quinones: How much money is there in this?

Michael Fay: You're talking about \$10,000 on the open market for this tree. Not bad.

John Quinones: How old is this tree, do you think?

Michael Fay: Well, nobody really knows the ages of these trees. And we've had some dates that have been over 1,000 years old. So, you know, a tree that takes 1,000 years to grow takes twenty minutes to cut down.

John Quinones: With the vigilance of a hawk, he watches over hundreds of miles of forest and its wildlife.

Michael Fay: I can see some buffalo down in the river there. And I don't see any elephants.

John Quinones: We pass over a clearing where elephants normally gather, but today, there is something terribly wrong here.

Michael Fay: There's two of them here.

John Quinones: There's an elephant every ten feet.

Michael Fay: The farther you walk, the more you see. They're everywhere. This place is just littered with carcasses.

John Quinones: The killers are a local network of ivory poachers who ambush the elephants with powerful ammunition, remove their tusks, and then sell the ivory in bulk to Europe and Japan. This was a small elephant.

Michael Fay: Yeah, very small. Which means that they're not being selective out here. It means they're just whacking any elephant they see.

John Quinones: This random slaughter of elephants, Africa's largest endangered mammal, was supposed to have ended in 1989. That was the year Congo joined ninety-nine other countries in banning the ivory trade. Within minutes, we count nearly 300 sets of remains—the biggest elephant killing field ever found. In the capital, Brazzaville, a few days later, we find markets teeming with ivory sold right out in the open. It's real ivory?

Merchant: Yeah.

John Quinones: Real? Not plastic?

Merchant: No.

John Quinones: Most of the customers here, we are told, are foreign tourists, mainly from Europe. Without the protection of conservationists, Ndoki would surely die. But the work of Fay and his team depends on funding, which is always uncertain.

Michael Fay: Six hundred thousand dollars a year to save, in my opinion, the last great wilderness in tropical Africa. And you know, we can't come up with the money? And that's . . . that's crazy. It's insane. It's just . . . it's unbelievable.

John Quinones: Eighty-five percent of the rain forests that once covered the planet have now disappeared. The world cannot afford to lose the treasures of Ndoki, says Michael Fay. For once lost, they can never be regained. It's hard work—one man trying to save the rain forest. How long will you keep going?

Michael Fay: Well, as . . . as long as it takes. If we lost this place, if all of those animals get poached out and logging occurs, no one will ever have seen it. No one will know what it was.

ANSWER KEY

- A. *The following should be crossed out:* a, b, e, f, g
- B. 1. about 200 feet 2. about \$10,000 3. no one knows for sure, could be 1,000 years 4. about twenty minutes
- C. 1. mainly logging companies. They do it to export wood overseas. 2. about 300 3. about 85 percent 4. *Answers should include variations on the following:* In 1989, Congo joined ninety-nine other countries to ban the ivory trade. 5. It's being bought by foreign tourists, mainly from Europe.
- D. 1. one place on earth 2. how much money we're going to make 3. an amazing place 4. save it at any cost 5. Six hundred thousand dollars a year 6. crazy 7. insane 8. unbelievable
- E. *Individual responses should include a variation on the following:* Most of the customers in the ivory markets in Brazzaville are foreign tourists. By purchasing ivory, they are supporting the poaching of Ndoki's elephants.