

1. Tropical forests are being destroyed at the rate of at least eleven million hectares each year, an area the size of Pennsylvania. About half of all tropical forests are already gone.

Discuss two major reasons for this high rate of tropical deforestation.

#### Scoring Guide

##### Score & Description

##### Complete

The response provides two reasons for tropical deforestation.

##### Partial

The response provides one reason for tropical deforestation.

##### Inappropriate

The response does not provide any appropriate reasons why the rates of tropical deforestation are high. Responses may provide incorrect answers such as: the rates of deforestation are high because people are cutting down trees.

##### Complete - Student Response

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Discuss two major reasons for this high rate of tropical deforestation.

People want to grow crops and build cities. They can't do that in the middle of a rain forest so they burn it down.

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Discuss two major reasons for this high rate of tropical deforestation.

One main reason for the destruction of rainforest is that nearby farmers cut down trees so they can plant crops. Another reason why people destroy the forests is to create more land for cattle to graze.

## Scorer Comments:

The first response is not flawless, but it provides two credited reasons for tropical deforestation. The building of cities is an acceptable answer, although most deforestation is attributable to other causes. Similarly, although a good deal of the rainforest is being burned, other techniques for clearing the forests—including timber harvesting—are also employed. The second response offers two major reasons.

## Partial - Student Response

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Discuss two major reasons for this high rate of tropical deforestation.

Two major reasons for this high rate of tropical deforestation is more people are being born than dying and big cities are being built. A second reason is the tropical forests contain many value medicines used today to cure diseases.

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Discuss two major reasons for this high rate of tropical deforestation.

People need trees for paper & lumber.

## Scorer Comments:

Partial responses offer one reason for the high rate of tropical deforestation. The first response received credit for mentioning building cities. The rainforests' potential as a source of medicines has been a major argument for its preservation rather than a cause of its destruction. The second response received credit for citing lumber production, a source of much uncontrolled tree cutting.

## Inappropriate - Student Response

Tropical forests are being destroyed at the rate of at least eleven million hectares each year, an area the size of Pennsylvania. About half of all tropical forests are already gone.

Discuss two major reasons for this high rate of tropical deforestation.

One is the pollution.

Tropical forests are being destroyed at the rate of at least eleven million hectares each year, an area the size of Pennsylvania. About half of all tropical forests are already gone.

Discuss two major reasons for this high rate of tropical deforestation.

1) I don't like it because when they kill the Forest they kill animals too 2) The more they cut down trees the less air we have.

Scorer Comments:

Inappropriate responses provide no acceptable reasons for deforestation. Although there may be a connection between air pollution, acid rain, and tropical forest degradation, the first response is simply too vague. The second response deals with effects of deforestation rather than the causes.

NAEP national performance results in Geography at grade 8: 2001

Tropical Forests

Inappropriate:30%. Partial:39%. Complete:21%. Omitted:8%. Off task:3%.

NOTE: These results are for public and nonpublic school students. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2001 Geography Assessment.