



TERRIFIC TRIVIA TIDBITS

Jungle. Rainforest. What's the difference? A jungle is land covered with dense foliage and typically refers to the ground or understory layer of a tropical rainforest. Rainforests can be temperate or tropical (tropical rainforests are featured in this VBS) and encompass a variety of different vegetation layers, from the understory to the canopy. This trivia includes facts from jungles as well as from tropical rainforests more generally.

Now—time for a question. Do you know what the largest jungle in the world is called? The Amazon jungle (more properly called the Amazon rainforest). It's almost as big as the whole US!

Use this and the following trivia tidbits (also available on the [Resource Download](#)) to start thinking about our fun theme—the tropical rainforests of the world and their jungles—as well as our spiritual theme—the 7 biblical C's of history. These fun facts can be shared ahead of time at staff meetings with adults and teens or during the week of VBS with the kids. Use them at arrival and dismissal times or during any downtime between rotations.

Part 1: General Information

- Do you ever wear a belt around your middle? God made the earth with a type of “belt” around its middle. It's called the equator. That's where tropical rainforests with jungles are found.
- Weather forecast today in the tropical rainforest? Warm and rainy. Tomorrow's forecast? Warm and rainy. The next day's? Warm and rainy. And on, and on, and on.
- Hungry? There's plenty of food to be found in jungles, such as bananas, pineapples, cinnamon, peppers, oranges, coffee beans, guava, cashews, and many other foods.
- God designed various leaves in the rainforest to help in different ways. There are leaves with drip tips that allow water to run off the tips. This keeps the leaves dry and free of mold. Other leaves act like mini “buckets” that gather water. Each is uniquely made by God.
- Guess what you call one banana? A finger. How about a whole bunch attached together? A hand.
- If you've ever imagined swinging on a vine through the jungle, just know there really are thick, rope-like vines in the jungle called lianas, and many animals do swing on them.
- Speaking of vines, strangler fig vines coil around a tree and eventually “strangle” the tree to death.
- Have you heard of cloud forests? They are cool rainforests higher up on mountains that are frequently covered by low-level clouds.
- The largest river in the world is the Amazon River. It can be brown, black, red, green, white, or blue, depending on the sediment content and depth.
- Ever heard of killer plants? Tropical pitcher plants found in Southeast Asia kill bugs, and sometimes larger pitcher plants catch lizards and rats!
- The word *rainforest* was invented around 1900 to describe a forest that grows in constantly wet conditions.
- Indigenous people sometimes use poison-tipped arrows to hunt. Where do they get the poison? From poison dart frogs!
- Do you like taking hot showers or cold showers? If you visit a jungle, it often feels like you're standing in a hot and steamy shower.
- Pretend you're standing in the rain. Because rainforests have really thick foliage, drops of rain can take 10 minutes to reach you on the forest floor!
- Do you like the smell of flowers? There's one you won't like for sure, and that's the Rafflesia that grows in the jungles of Southeast Asia. As the biggest flower in the world, it's three feet (90 cm) across and smells like rotting meat, thus its other name—the corpse flower.

- Feeling sick? Many of the medicines we use today originate from plants in the jungles and are used to treat conditions such as asthma, arthritis, malaria, heart disease, and even cancer.
- Glow-in-the-dark mushrooms? Yep, they're a thing in the rainforest! God gave some living things the ability to make their own light, which is called bioluminescence.
- There are areas of jungles that are so difficult to reach they remain largely untouched. Wonder what's in there?
- Organisms that live on other plants are called epiphytes, and they like to hitch a ride on hosting plants. Epiphytes don't need soil to grow but instead get their nutrients from the air, water, and debris—thus their nickname of air plants.
- Chocolate . . . growing on trees? Cacao seeds grow in the jungle, and that's where chocolate comes from.
- Hide and seek. Because there are so many tangled trees and vines in the jungle, animals have lots of places to hide from predators.
- Guess which continent doesn't have jungles. Did you guess Antarctica? Jungles can be found on every other continent.
- Check out these jungle plant names: Lobster Claws, Monkey Brush, and the Walking Palm.
- Only 6% of the world is covered by rainforests, but over half of all species live there.
- Stick out your tongue. Now try to touch your eyelid with it. Okapis have such long tongues they can actually lick their own eyelids.
- Guess what group of animals you'll find the most of in the rainforest. Did you say insects? It's estimated that 2.5 million insect species live in the Amazon jungle alone. Add in the other jungles of the world, and you've got yourself a lot of insects!
- Which jungle cat has the strongest bite? The jaguar. It can bite straight through the thick shell of a turtle.
- Some animals' feet never touch the forest floor! They live their whole lives up in the trees.
- Wanna meet a freaky big frog? Then check out the Goliath frog. It's the biggest frog in the world at over 12 inches (30 cm) in length and seven pounds (3 kg) in weight, making it bigger than some house cats. Any ideas why they nicknamed it the Goliath frog?
- How's this for creative? When it's curled up, the bird-dropping crab spider looks like . . . bird droppings! It even smells like them.
- If you want to see the world's smallest bear in the wild, head to the jungles of Southeast Asia where the sun bear lives. It's about half the size of the American black bear.
- At the Black Ivory Coffee business in Thailand, about 20 elephants that live in the jungle are fed coffee beans. When they go to the bathroom a day or so later, their waste is harvested and made into one of the most expensive coffees in the world—Black Ivory Coffee.

Part 2: Animal Information

- Would you freak out or think it's cool to see an Amazon giant centipede that is a foot long? Bird-eating tarantulas the size of dinner plates? A rhinoceros beetle the size of a baseball? You can find them all in jungles.
- Ribbit! Most of the world's frogs live in jungles, including some crazy-looking ones like glass frogs, tomato frogs, the Surinam horned frog, and the hairy frog.
- Most chill animal? Maybe the sloth. It spends its days hanging upside down on branches, slowly eating leaves and sleeping. It moves so slowly it may grow algae on its fur, making it appear a fuzzy green color.
- Here's a clever invention. The orangutan of the Southeast Asian rainforests makes his own hat out of leaves! God gave him that ability to cool himself down from intense heat and to be protected from rainforest downpours.
- What's one of the loudest animals in the rainforest? The howler monkey. God gave it an enlarged hyoid bone in its throat which makes its calls especially loud. You can hear it echoing through the jungle three miles away.
- Ants that explode? Yep! If they feel threatened, they squeeze their muscles really hard. That makes them explode! They leave a harmful, sticky goo behind.
- God designed the basilisk lizard with feet that enable it to "walk" on water. Because of that, it is sometimes called the Jesus lizard.
- Have you ever tried to bite off more than you can chew? Leaf-cutter ants bite off so many leaves it's incredible. They actually carry the leaves around—almost 50 times their weight! That would be like a person carrying the weight of about three large men in his teeth!
- Zap! Watch out for electric eels if you end up in a South American jungle river. They can grow to be eight feet (2.4 m) long and give a jolt that is strong enough to knock a horse off its feet. They aren't real "eels" but instead are knifefish.
- Do you like bright-colored birds? Some of the most beautiful, colorful birds in the world live in jungles, such as the toco toucan, scarlet macaw, Amazon kingfisher, and the ruby-throated hummingbird.

- Who's the king of the jungle? It's often thought to be lions, but lions typically don't live in jungles. Many tigers do though.
- Did you suck your thumb when you were a baby? Baby elephants suck their trunks.
- What's the largest rodent in the world? A mouse? A rat? Nope, it's a capybara. They can weigh up to 150 pounds (68 kg) and stand at two feet (60 cm) tall. Now that's one big rodent!
- What is the world's strongest bird of prey? The forest-dwelling harpy eagle. Even though they are birds, they eat mammals as big as sloths and monkeys. One look at their faces and you might be intimidated too!
- Is it true that piranhas eat humans? They usually eat animals and plants. While they can be aggressive toward people, it would be highly unlikely they would attack a full-grown adult. Keep your hands inside the boat though!