



RAINFOREST
TRUST®

The Path of the Jaguar

Primary Levels: Ages 6 – 10

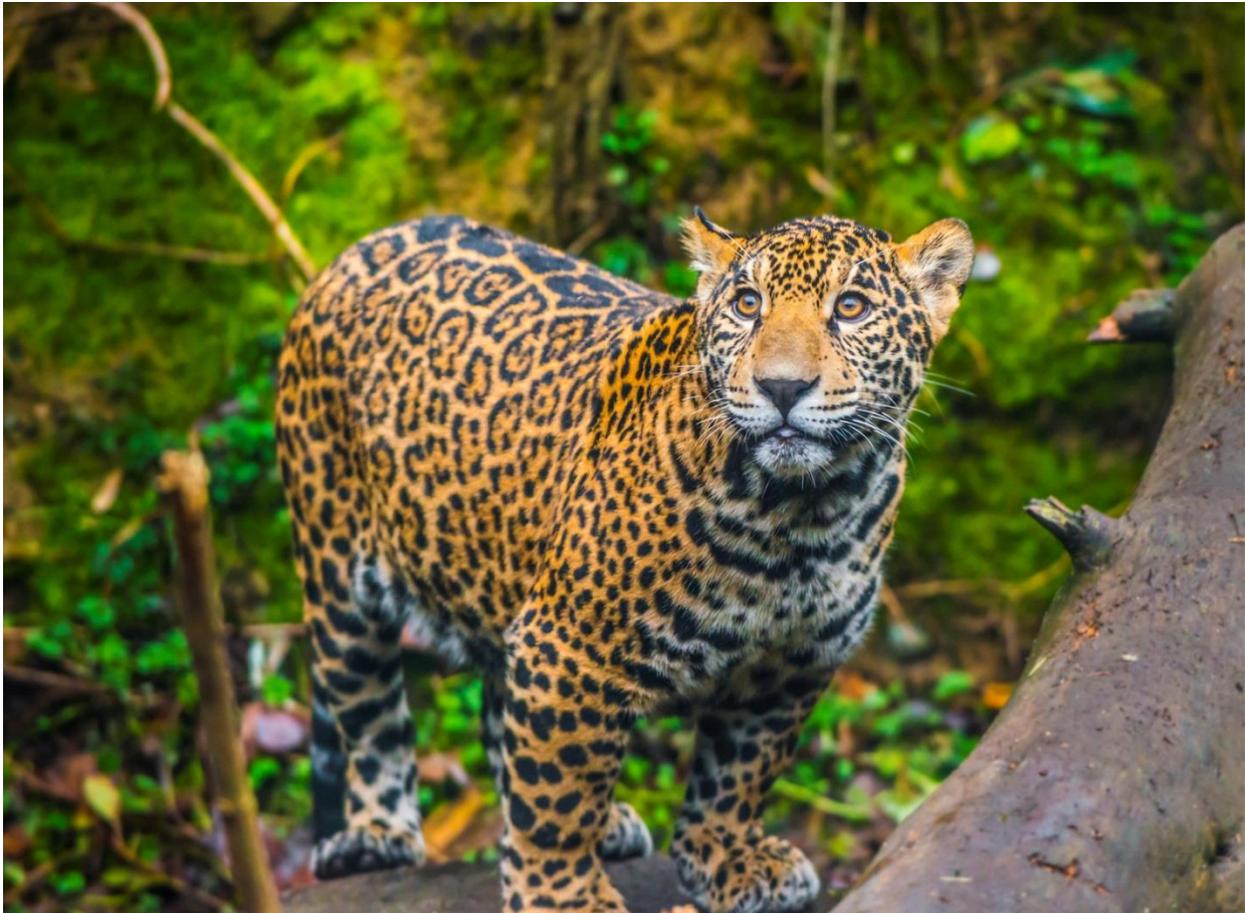


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Primary Levels: 6 – 10 year olds

Standards

- Common Core Standards for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics
- Next Generation Science Standards for Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems: Animals, Plants, and Their Environment: Environmental Impacts on Organisms

Concepts

- Just as you rely on your environment for food, shelter and resources to live and thrive, so do plants and animals. They rely on their environment for the raw materials to survive in relative safety. To protect animals like the jaguar, we need to protect their homes.
 - What do jaguars have in common with you and your habitat needs?
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Part I: Making Connections

Idea – Students will learn about the jaguar, the largest big cat in the Americas and the apex predator of the South American rainforest. Compare and contrast jaguars to humans. Have students describe what both humans and jaguars need to survive. For example food/prey to eat, space to roam, clean water, safety etc.

Materials –

- Maps of school area or local area.
- Pictures, props and information teachers want to include from online research about jaguars.
- Printable/downloadable jaguar habitat and corridor maps from Rainforest Trust conservation partner Panthera.
 - Map 1. Jaguar Present and Historic Range.
<http://www.panthera.org/sites/default/themes/panthera/images/rangemaps/jaguar.jpg>
 - Map 2. Jaguar Population and Corridors.
http://www.panthera.org/sites/default/themes/panthera/images/rangemaps/Jaguar_Corridor_March2012_1600.jpg

Procedure –

1. Have students learn about the Jaguar’s natural history, habitat and distribution through the jaguar species profile on Rainforest Trust’s website.
2. Ask students to become acquainted with Map 1 of the jaguar’s historic and present range. Ask students some reasons why they think the jaguar’s habitat is smaller today than in the past?
3. Get students acquainted with Map 2 showing jaguar populations and corridors. Ask students to pay particular attention to dark green jaguar populations versus light green jaguar corridors. Ask them to explain the relationship between these colors and patterns on the map. Why are both important?

Part II: Reading & Discussion

Idea – Students learn about threats to the jaguar and its rainforest habitat through a story about how a boy made a promise to help the jaguar and be the voice of the animals that can’t speak for themselves.

Materials – Book. *A Boy and a Jaguar*. By Alan Rabinowitz.

Procedure -

1. Read the story to the class.
2. Have students ask how the animals and the boy both help each other. Ask if they have ever felt a connection with a pet or wild animal? Share and discuss together.
3. Have students discuss what it would be like if you didn't have a voice like the boy in the story - like the animals? Who would be your voice to stand up for you?

Part III: Math & Geography

Idea – Students understand the landscape the jaguar lives in by using maps to connect jaguar populations to one another through corridors and measuring the distances they must travel to get between areas of habitat.

Materials –

- Local map of school yard, neighborhood or local area
- Panthera jaguar habitat and range maps from Part I.

Procedure –

1. A male jaguar's home range typically varies between 19 – 53 sq. miles in the wild. Have students estimate that area on their local maps of home. How big is that roughly? Give some examples.
2. Using Map 1 of the jaguar's historic and current range, ask students to measure how far the jaguar's range once extended historically. Now do the same for their current range. What is the difference?
3. Using Map 2 of the jaguar's current population and habitat corridors, explain that big dark green areas are the best and safest habitat for jaguars and that the smaller the area, the less habitat and more dangerous it is for jaguars to roam. Have students pick a small jaguar population in the east of South America to chart a course for a jaguar trying to get to a bigger population in the west of South America. Have them find the best way for their jaguar to stay in its habitat and stay safe. Have students measure how many miles the journey would take.

Part IV. Create

Idea – How can the jaguar make it safely through the corridors from one refuge to the next?

Materials – Previous maps. Paper and pencils, pens, coloring and art supplies for decoration

Procedure – Have students look at the route from east to west they chose to connect their jaguar to a bigger habitat. Ask students to draw a "story map" of the path of the jaguar to get to the heart of the Amazon rainforest. Have students be creative and encourage them to draw and decorate their map route. Students should include signs, symbols or icons for dangers along the route including deforestation, hunters, logging, cities, and roads as well as for pristine forest habitat with natural prey, rivers, and other jaguars. Label, create and have fun drawing!

Part V. Present

Idea – *A Boy and a Jaguar* is a true story. Explore the author Alan Rabinowitz's path to becoming a biologist and devoting his life to helping the animal he connected to as a child.

Materials – student's story map of the Jaguars Path

Procedure – Have students describe and present their story maps to the class. Ask students to imagine they are a wildlife biologist whose mission is to protect jaguars and their rainforest habitats. Based upon what you have learned, what are some ways you would help Jaguars? By protecting habitat and creating corridors to connect their populations do you help other rainforest plants and animals too? Which ones? How? What are some ways you can be a voice for the rainforest?