

The Rainforest

Learning Objective:

To find out about the people and settlements of the rainforest.



There are millions of people living in the rainforests of the world. These tribal people live a traditional way of life that has stayed relatively unchanged for hundreds of years. These tribes understand the rainforest and live in harmony with it.



Photo attribution: SeCom/Agência de Notícias do Acre

One of the largest tribes of the Amazon is the **Yanomami**. The Yanomami lived unknown to the rest of the world until the 1960s and they continue to live in the traditional way. The Yanomami live in small villages. Each family has a **shabono**, a large oval hut with a space in the middle where the whole family lives.



Shabonos are made in clearing in the rainforest and are made of thatched palm leaves and wood. They are around 100m long. These houses are temporary and new ones are built every few years.

The Yanomami tribe get their food through hunting, fishing and growing crops. The men clear sections of the jungle so that the women can plant fruits and vegetables, such as bananas, sugarcane, plantains and sweet potato. They also gather fruit and berries from the rainforest.

Men hunt animals such as monkeys, sloths, pumas and birds for meat, as well as fish. They use poison darts to kill their prey. The poison is often taken from poison dart frogs. This picture shows a man using a blowpipe to fire a poisoned dart at an animal.



Boys learn to hunt from a young age so that they will be able to provide for their own family when they are older. They go out with the men, sometimes for days at a time.

Girls stay at home with their mothers until they get married and learn to gather and prepare food, including insects to roast in the evening. They also look for vines that can be woven into baskets.



The Yanomami believe that there is nothing separating mortal life and the spiritual life. They believe everything in the world has a spirit that is alive and that when you destroy nature, you destroy people too.



The Yanomami have spiritual leaders called **shamans**. A shaman goes into a trance to get in touch with the spirit world so he can help and heal people.

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The Yanomami tribes celebrate special events with large feasts. They invite neighbouring villages to join in and have food, music and dancing. They decorate their bodies with paint and decorate their faces by placing small sticks through their nose and chins.

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There are lots of other tribes like the Yanomami who live in the rainforest away from the rest of the world.

Have a look at the pictures on the next slides. What do they tell you about life for traditional tribal peoples in the rainforests?





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Capo de Botocudos

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 Botocudos, of Tapuyon tribe, living in forests of Brazil.
 Early 1800s.

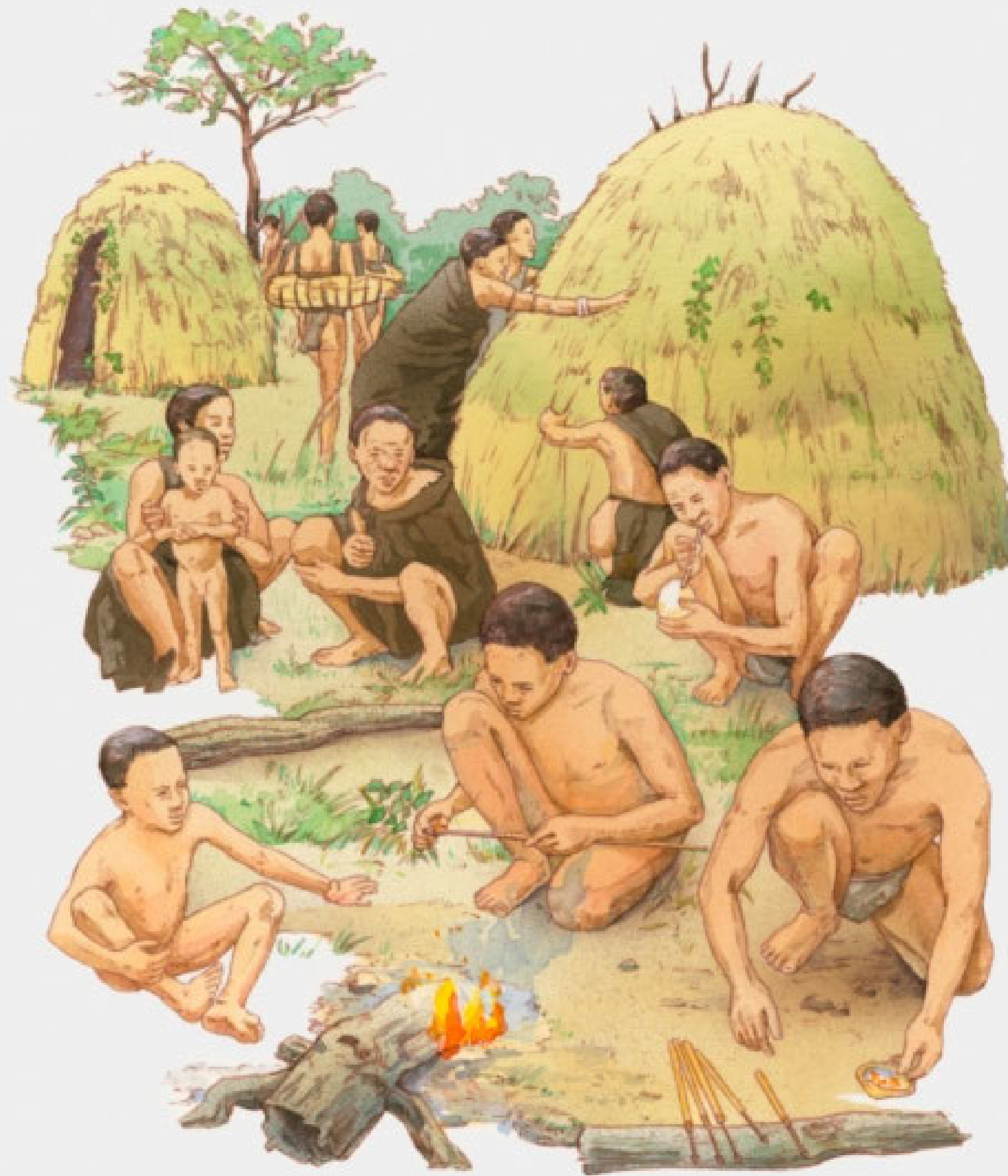
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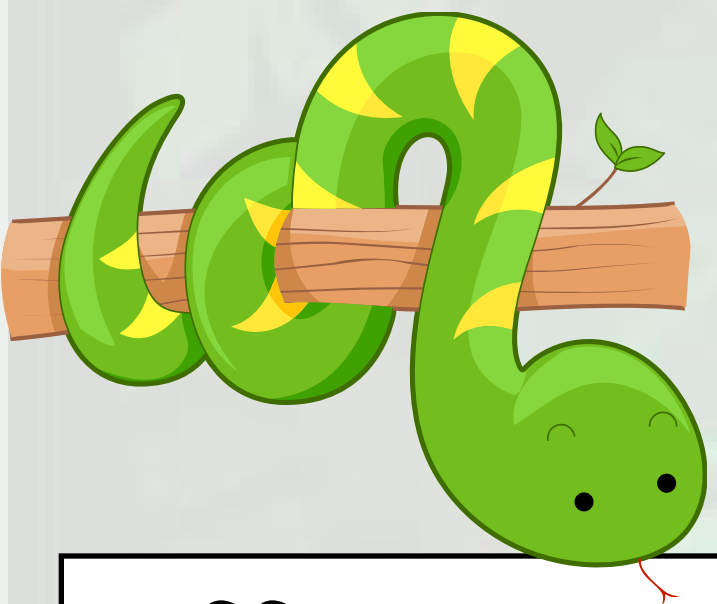
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How are the lives of the people in these traditional tribes different to our lives?

What do we have or use everyday that they do not?





What ideas did you come up with?

Differences:



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What do you think would be the best thing about living as a tribe in the rainforest?



What do you think would be most difficult about this kind of lifestyle?