Task Five – People ‘Meet Boukou’

Enquiry Question – How is Boukou’s life different from your own?



Information

Hello, my name in Boukou!

Me and my family are Baka hunter-gatherers. Our ancestors were the original inhabitants of this rainforest in Cameroon. The word ‘hunter-gatherer’ means that we move from place to place collecting and hunting food found wild in the forest. Baka people speak their own unique language, also known as Baka, which is different from the other languages spoken in the Cameroon. Our lives depend on the rainforest as it provides us with food and homes.

Where is my rainforest?

My family and I live in a rainforest in Cameroon, can you find it on the map?

The rainforests of Cameroon are among the most diverse habitats in the world, but remain under great threat from commercial logging.

Loggers are quickly destroying the rainforests. But luckily we are able to work with the Rainforest Foundation to set up ‘community forests’, which allow the Baka people to protect parts of our forest from loggers and developers.

Forest people such as the BaTwa and BaMbuti ‘Pygmies’ in Democratic Republic of Congo have suffered during the many civil wars that have been fought in the country. The fighting still continues in some parts and the forest people are also threatened by mining.

There are up to 50,000 Baka forest people in Cameroon’s rainforest, and there are also similar ‘pygmy’ communities in Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon and the Central African Republic.

Task

Task

Carefully read the information above and write a letter to Boukou, asking him about his life. You may be interested in how you say things in his language? What his home is like?, What food he eats?, How he learns? What his family are like? Finish off your letter by telling him some things he may find interesting about your life.

Task Six – Food in the Rainforest

Enquiry Question – Why do different areas of the world eat different cuisines?

Information

Baka communities move from place to place in search of food that the forest provides, including animals, fruit and vegetables. They stay in one area for a while and then move to set up a new camp in a different part of the forest.

Boukou’s father and the men hunt in the forest, using bows and poisoned arrows and spears. Hunting is one of the most important activities, it gives them food to eat, but it also has symbolic meanings and prestige is given to successful hunters. They always make sure that the meat is shared among everyone.

They think carefully about what to hunt in order to protect the rainforest, they never hunt too many of a species so it survives to provide more meat in the future. All sorts of animals are eaten from rodents, antelope, porcupines, monkeys and even crocodiles. They only hunt at the right time of the year in order to be sustainable (that means the forest will still stay the same even when they are hunting).

Boukou’s mother joins the women to gather wild fruits, nuts, mushrooms and vegetables, such as yam, in the forest. They also collect honey from beehives in the trees. During some times of the year insects such as termites and caterpillars are eaten too!

During dry seasons when the water level is low, fish and eels can often be found in the mud of the river bed. Fresh-water shrimps and crabs are cooked back at the camp for the community to share, these are my favourite!

Task

Using the information above about what food the Baka community hunt and gather, design a three course meal that you could make using the food available. You could draw and label these dishes, create a restaurant standard 3 course menu (make sure you include details about what each course consists of), write out recipes for the three dishes (don’t forget to include the method) or you could even record a cooking tutorial video (you can pretend to be cooking).