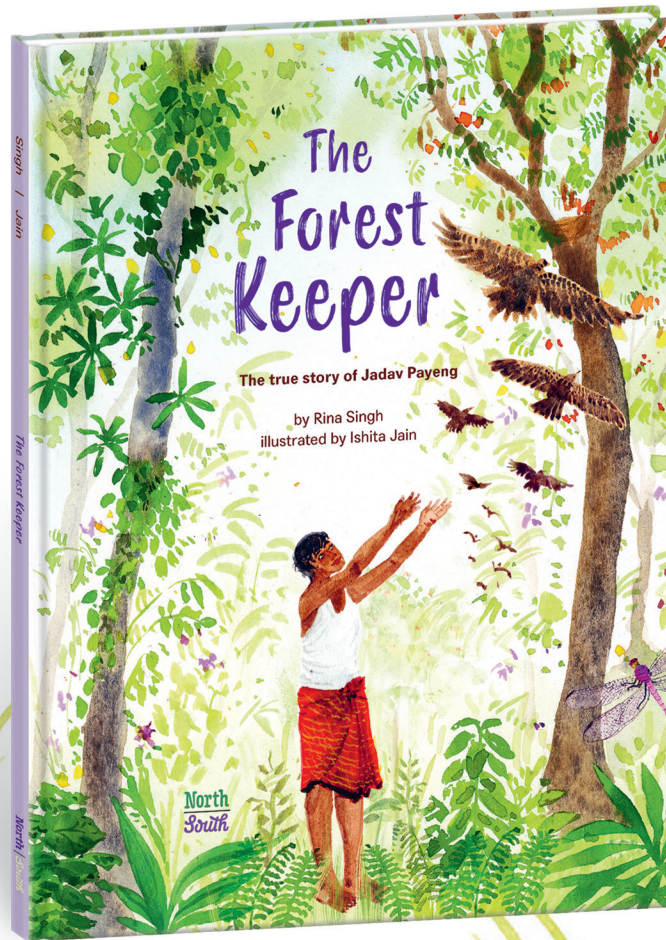


# The Forest Keeper

## Teacher's Guide

### Discussion Guide Grades K-3

Jadav Payeng may not be well known in many circles, however his legacy spanning over three decades changed our natural world in profound ways. A determined 16-year-old tribal boy, this environmentalist and innovative problem solver saved an entire ecosystem with a bag of seeds and a vision. Jadav and his achievements are a true inspiration. How can you make an impact?





# The Forest Keeper

## Teacher Resource Guide



*Building on prior knowledge and looking at BIG IDEAS*

### What is a Forest?

Read the title and discuss the cover illustration.  
Where does this story take place?



Chart: What we know about forests. Include living and non-living things found in forests.

Living things found in a forest	Non-Living things found in a forest

### Facts about Forests

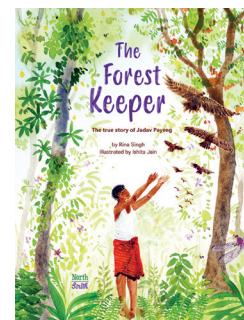
- \* A forest is mostly trees and woody plants.
- \* Forests are always changing.
- \* Forests are made up of soil, water, plants, animals, birds, fungi and insects.
- \* Forests provide a home for many living things.
- \* Forests are the largest land biome.
- \* Living things need each other to survive. A forest is a web of life.
- \* Trees need water, soil and air to survive.
- \* Forests provide the environment with gases needed in our atmosphere for all life on earth. They play a huge role in the global intake of carbon dioxide and production of oxygen.
- \* Forests are being cut down all over the world.





## Before Reading

1. Discuss the front and back cover illustrations and the title, *The Forest Keeper–The true story of Jadvav Payeng*.
2. Ask the students to make predictions about the setting and the main character.
3. Open to the first illustration of a bamboo plant. Have students describe the illustration in detail. Note the parts of the plant from the leaves to the stem and roots. Discuss the importance of each part of the plant.
4. Does this plant look like something that grows in your yard? What are the similarities and differences from plants outside our window?
5. Why would the illustrator incorporate this drawing at the beginning of the book? (It has important meaning)
6. Read/ listen to the introduction.
7. Discuss the lyrical text. How does the author write? Style?
8. How does the author portray the river?
9. What human qualities does she give the river? Give examples.
10. Discuss the illustrations. How does the illustrator represent the river? The land? The plants, trees/vegetation?
11. Summarize the introduction.  
How is the river both a blessing and a curse? (good vs. bad)
12. Predict what the story will be about



*Read/ listen to the story uninterrupted*

## Guided Questions

**As you read/listen to *The Forest Keeper* think about the...**

- \* New vocabulary words in context.
- \* Setting and how it affects the story (where and when the story takes place).
- \* Main character's personality traits, motivations, and accomplishments.  
What does Jadvav do and say?
- \* Problems and solutions in the story.
- \* Central themes and ideas. What is the story mostly about?
- \* Passage of time. How does time pass?

*... continued on next page*





## After Reading

Go back to the book to answer comprehension questions.

1. What does the author, Rina Singh, mean when she says, "the river was behaving badly"?
2. Describe how Jadav felt as he watched.
3. What is the problem in the story?
4. Why do the snakes die?
5. How does this make Jadav feel?
6. What is his plan?
7. Is his plan a good idea? Why or why not?
8. What kind of support does he receive from the community? How do the people in the village help him?
9. Why do the elders believe that it is an impossible task to plant the seeds?
10. Where and when does Jadav begin to plant seeds? Why?
11. What do trees need to live?
12. Can trees grow on a sandbar? How?
13. Describe the type of character Jadav is. Use examples from the story.
14. What is Jadav's dream?
15. How was Jadav able to achieve his dream?
16. How did he use innovation in a remote environment without technology?
17. Jadav planted many species of plants. How did this help the island?
18. How did Jadav create the forest biome with the river and the monsoons coming and going? What had changed?
19. Describe the other species that came to the islands after the forest began to thrive.
20. What happened after new species migrated to the forest?
21. After Jadav spent years of hard work to create a thriving ecosystem, the villagers threatened to burn the forest down to get rid of the elephants. Explain how Jadav handled the problem.
22. How did living things adapt to the changes in their environment throughout the story?
23. Jadav worked hard for many years. How do the author and illustrator let you know that time is passing in the story?
24. What did you learn from the story?





## BIG IDEA

How do our choices impact ourselves, our communities, and our world?

### Discuss

Pollution

Wasting water, electricity

Cutting down trees

## Biodiversity

Write the word on the board- “**Biodiversity**”

Biodiversity is a big word. It is a very important word. Let's break the big word up into smaller words.

Look at the prefix-“bio” and the word “diversity.” What do they mean separately?

**Bio** means **life on Earth**.

**Diversity** means **differences**.

Brainstorm the meaning of biodiversity with the students and chart ideas.

- \* Share examples of different animals, plants, and microorganisms. (species)
- \* Where do these organisms live? (ecosystems)
- \* What important roles do these organisms play?
- \* How do they survive?
- \* How are these organisms and environments interconnected?

### Facts

What's the big idea about biodiversity?

- \* It is important to the survival of all species to have many different species of animals, plants, and microorganisms. We call this diversity.
- \* In a diverse ecosystem all species have an important role to play in helping others survive.
- \* Healthy and diverse ecosystems can withstand and recover from disasters.
- \* Everything on Earth is interconnected.





### Making text to world connections

1. Go back and re-read the story. Sequence the important events.
2. Can one person change the world? Explain.
3. What do you admire about Jadav?
4. What lessons can you take away from his story?
5. How do our actions today impact how people might live in the future?
6. What choices did our elders make that affect the way we live today?
7. How can we make choices to ensure a healthy future?

### Become a steward of your community

Think about a problem going on in your environment. How can you design and create a plan to change your neighborhood or community for the good? Present to the class.

### Example

**Problem:** We use way too much paper during the school day. It is a huge waste.

**Possible solution:**

I will challenge my class or school to go an entire day without using any paper.

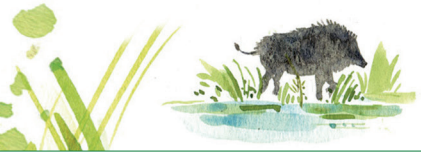
This will raise awareness of the amount of paper that gets used and goes to waste every day in school.

I will document all the paper wasted daily including worksheets, textbooks and posters on the wall.

Create a chart or a visual showing the data.

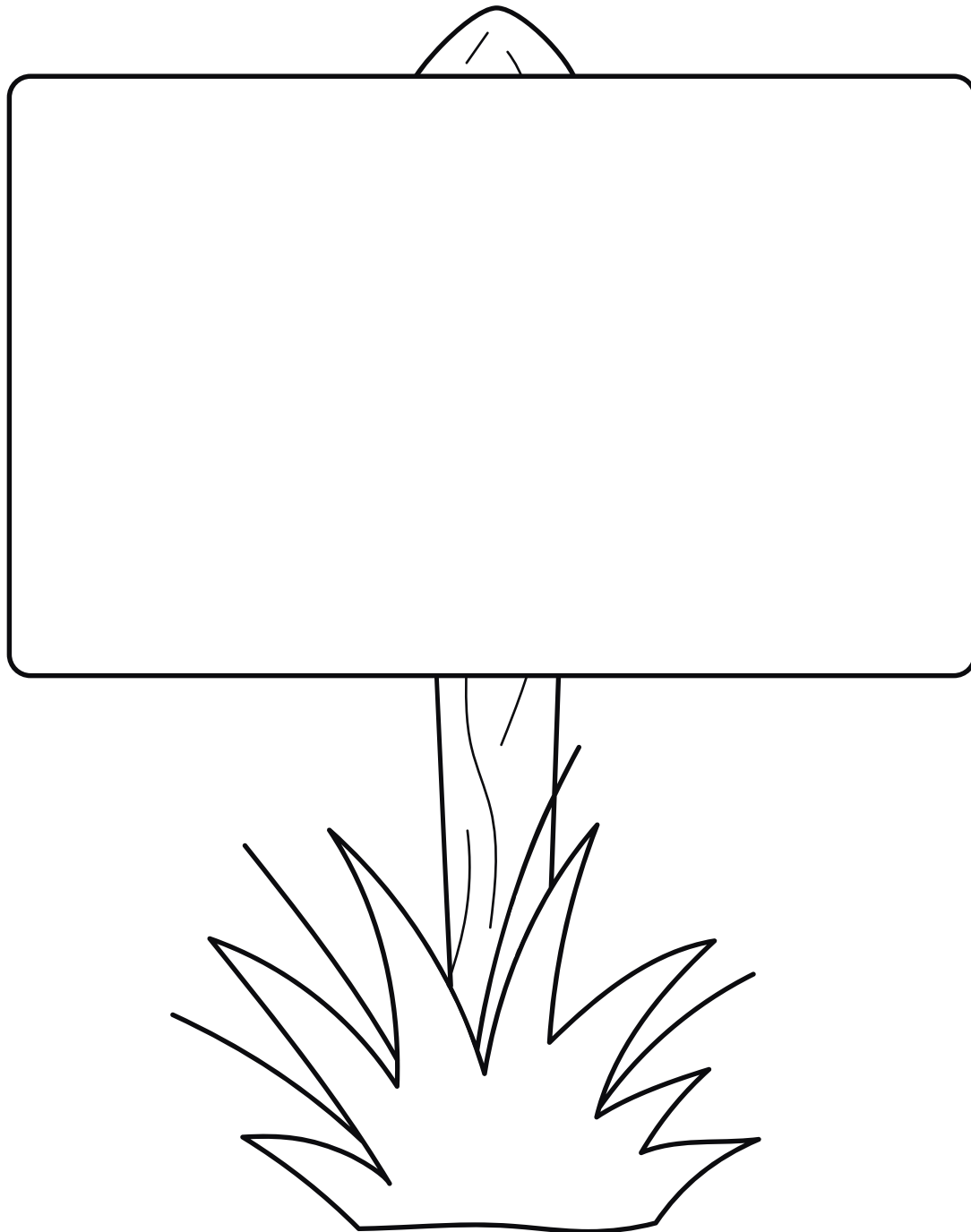
I will propose ways the school could save paper in future and how this will benefit the community and environment.





## Create a "thank you" sign

commemorating the work of Jadav Payeng. Where would you place the sign? Explain.





## Why is the history of our planet so important to the future?

### **READ THIS!**

#### **EPA History: Earth Day**

##### **The First Earth Day in April 1970**

It may be hard to imagine that before 1970, a factory could spew black clouds of toxic smoke into the air or dump tons of toxic waste into a nearby stream, and that was perfectly legal. They could not be taken to court to stop it.

How was that possible? Because there was no EPA, no Clean Air Act, no Clean Water Act. There were no legal or regulatory mechanisms to protect our environment.

In spring 1970, Senator Gaylord Nelson created Earth Day as a way to force this issue onto the national agenda. Twenty million Americans demonstrated in different U.S. cities, and it worked! In December 1970, Congress authorized the creation of a new federal agency to tackle environmental issues, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Please visit [energy.gov](http://energy.gov) for more information.





## EARTH DAY

- \* What is Earth Day?
- \* Why do we celebrate Earth Day?
- \* Why is it important to celebrate and honor the achievements of the environmental movement and raise awareness of the need to protect Earth's natural resources for future generations?
- \* When was the first Earth Day?
- \* What type of person is Gaylord Nelson? Why is he a hero?
- \* Why wasn't there an Earth Day before 1970?
- \* What are the three pillars of Earth Day?
- \* What happens on Earth Day?
- \* How can people participate in Earth Day?
- \* How/why did Earth Day become a holiday?
- \* Who do we thank for establishing an Earth Day?
- \* Write and decorate a thank you note to Jadav Payeng, telling him why celebrating Earth Day is so important.
- \* Spend some time outdoors with a journal. Keep track of things you can personally do to improve the condition of your environment.

**The Curriculum Writer:** Marla Conn, MS.Ed is a reading/literacy specialist, Educational Consultant, author.

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