



Plants and People

Plants and People

You have already learned several different ways that people make use of different parts of plants. Let's think of different fruits that people eat. Remember the gigantic turnip, where the people ate the root of the plant and the top of the plant or greens.

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Today you will learn that plants provide two very important things for animals and humans to survive: oxygen and food. Take a deep breath. When you breathe in, oxygen goes into your body. Just like we must eat everyday, we must also breathe oxygen in order to survive.

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Eating and breathing are only two of the many ways that people use plants. Listen carefully to find out how plants provide oxygen as well as some other ways people use plants.

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Where would we be without plants? The truth is that life for animals, insects, and human beings would be impossible if it weren't for plants.

The most obvious reason plants are important is that they **provide** or supply food. People, including you, eat plants or parts of plants every day.

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What does the woman in this picture have in her mouth? It's lettuce! Of course, you don't see too many people chomping on lettuce in this way, but you will find lettuce in salads and on sandwiches. Lettuce is good for you. It is a healthy vegetable that comes from a plant.

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Just like fruit, all vegetables are parts of plants, including potatoes, beans, peas, carrots, peppers, cucumbers, and squash. Each comes from different plants--and from different parts of plants--but they all come from plants nonetheless.

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What
fruits and
vegetables do
you see in
this picture?

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Many fruits and vegetables are healthy and tasty, so you should try to eat some every day.

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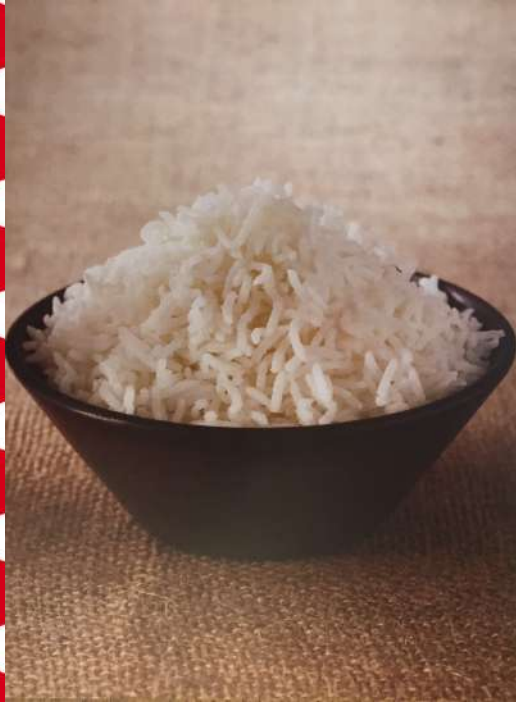
This is a picture of an ear of corn and a cornfield. Believe it or not, corn comes from a special type of grass. Do you like to eat corn on the cob?

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Have you eaten any bread lately? It is likely, then, that you have eaten wheat. Wheat also comes from a type of grass. Its seeds are ground up and used to make a wheat flour, and wheat flour is used in many kinds of breads, cereals and cakes.

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This is a picture of a bowl of rice and a rice paddy, or field. People all over the world eat rice. It is used to feed billions of people every day!

You have just learned about three important grains: corn, wheat and rice. Grains are seeds that come from different types of grasses.

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Plants and plant products can also be used to make fabric, or cloth. Fabrics are used to make clothing, blankets, and other everyday things. This picture shows cotton plants. Fluffy, white cotton is often dyed, or colored, to make colorful clothing and blankets.

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When people are feeling sick or sad, it is nice to give them a bouquet of flowers. A bouquet is a bunch of flowers arranged together. Flowers can cheer people up and let them know they are loved. Have you ever received flowers?

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There are many things that you would not guess have anything at all to do with plants, such as the tires on a car, which are made of rubber. In fact, much of the rubber we use--for everything from tires to rubber bands to basketballs--comes from the sap of rubber trees.

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The white liquid coming out of this rubber tree is sap, which is turned into rubber.

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Another type of sap we use comes from maple trees. This type of sap is clear and gives us something much better tasting than rubber: maple syrup! In early spring, people drill small holes into the trunks of maple trees and insert spouts, which allow the sap to drip out into buckets or holding tanks.

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When the sap is boiled, it turns into maple syrup. Don't worry--the holes don't hurt the trees! They heal during the summer and fall, and people pick a different spot on the trunk to drill the next spring.



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Some plants and plant parts can be used to make medicines for curing diseases or healing wounds. Using plants to make medicine requires a great deal of knowledge. A person must know how to find the right kind of plant, and he or she must know exactly which part of the plant to use and how to use it.

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In some parts of the world, knowledge of medicinal plants has been passed down from generation to generation--from parents to their children--for thousands of years.

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One very common medicinal plant is the aloe vera plant. Inside its thick green leaves is a clear gel, which many people use to help heal small cuts and to soothe sunburns. Some doctors and scientists think that eating or drinking parts of the aloe plant is good for your stomach, and can help prevent many diseases.

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People use the wood from trees to build houses and to make many other things. This lumberjack, a person who cuts down trees, is using a powerful chain saw to cut down a great big pine.

Why do you think the lumberjack is wearing ear plugs?

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After he chops this tree down, the lumberjack will saw off all the branches. The bare trunk will be loaded onto a truck and taken to a lumber mill, where it will be turned into boards.

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People also use the wood from trees to make fires when it is cold outside. This person is splitting logs to burn in the fireplace. Wood is also used to make tool handles, instruments, and other objects. Baseball bats are often made of wood from the ash tree, one of the strongest trees in the forest.

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It is very important to plant a new tree for every old tree that is cut down, so that there will be plenty of trees for other people to use in the future.

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Here is another important thing to know about plants: they help keep the air clean and fresh. When plants make their own food, they release oxygen into the air.

What is this process called?

When you breathe in, that same oxygen travels to your lungs. Oxygen keeps you alive; you need oxygen all day, every day.

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*Did you have any idea
how important plants are
to people?*

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

What are some foods that plants provide?

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

*What can people make
from cotton plants?*



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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

What kind of plants are car tires, basketballs, and rubber bands made from?

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

Many plants are used for medicine. Which plant is used for cuts and burns?

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

What is lumber, or wood from trees, used for?

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Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

How do plants help people breathe?

Word Work

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

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*In the read aloud you heard, "When people are feeling sick or sad, it is nice to give them a **bouquet** of flowers."*

*Say the word **bouquet** with me.
Whisper **bouquet** to the ceiling.
Whisper **bouquet** to the floor.
Let's clap the word out.*

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A **bouquet** is a bunch of flowers, sometimes tied together with a string and placed in a vase.

Ava gave her mother a **bouquet** of flowers on her birthday.

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*Tell me who you would like to give a **bouquet** of flowers to and why.*

*Try to use the word **bouquet** when you tell about it.*

*“I would give a **bouquet** to ____, because....”*

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*What are the words we have been
talking about?*

Let's clap them out.