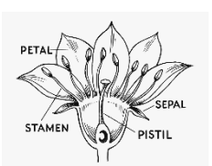
Plant Trivia

- More than 300,000 different types of plants have been identified.
- Bamboo is the world's fastest growing plant.
- Humans eat more than 2,000 types of plants.
- There are more plants in the ocean than on land.
- Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on the outside.

Did You Know ...?

- Photosynthesis can occur in the stem of some plants such as: cacti, celery, asparagus, and bananas.
- Plants provide people with food, clothing, shelter, oxygen, and medicine.
- Most flowers have four main parts: petals, stamen, pistil, and sepals.



Joke Time

What did the big flower say to the little flower?

Joke Answer:

What's up, bud?

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Thirsty Stems

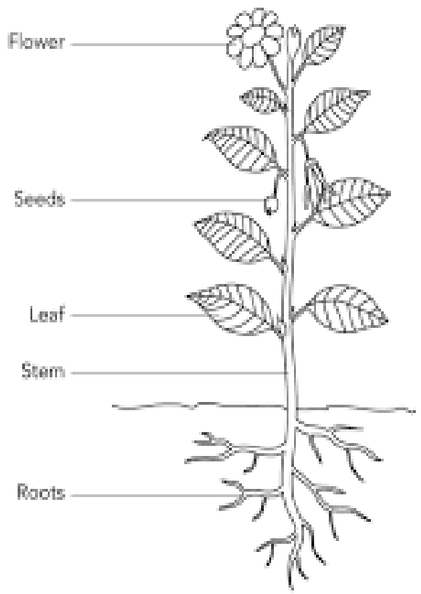
Plants come in all shapes and sizes and grow almost everywhere on Earth. The basic parts of most land plants are roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds. Each part has a different function.

Roots hold the plants in the soil and absorb water and nutrients that are needed by the rest of the plant.

Stems support the upper part of the plant and act as a system for moving the water and nutrients to the rest of the plant.

Leaves are where *photosynthesis* usually occurs - where food for the plant is made. Chlorophyll in the leaves captures light energy and uses it to convert water and carbon dioxide into plant food and oxygen.

Flowers are the reproductive part of plants. They often have showy petals and fragrances to attract pollinators such as birds, bees, and other insects.

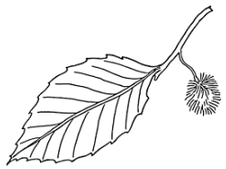


After flowers are pollinated and fertilized, they produce **seeds**. Seeds contain an *embryo* that can develop into another plant.

Fruits are the fleshy substances that usually surround seeds. They protect the seeds and attract animals to eat them. This helps in seed dispersal.

The fruit of a plant is often confused with fruit, the food. Sometimes they are the same – for example, a raspberry is a *fruit* we eat and it's the *fruit* of the raspberry plant. Sometimes they are not – for example, a green pepper is a *vegetable* we eat but it's the *fruit* of a pepper plant because it protects the seeds.

How Well Did You Read?



1. What is the author's purpose for writing this article?

   _____

   _____

2. What are the two functions of roots?

   _____

3. The fleshy protection surrounding a seed is called a _____.
   - flower
   - leaf
   - fruit

4. Photosynthesis is _____.
   - the fleshy protection surrounding a seed.
   - the process of capturing light energy and using it to convert water and carbon dioxide into plant food and oxygen.
   - a system for moving water and nutrients.

5. Why do flowers often have strong colors and fragrances?

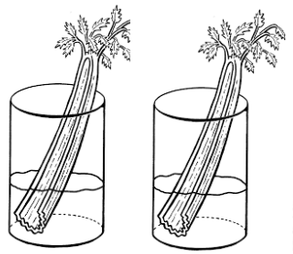
   _____

   _____

Experimenting with Celery Stems

Materials:

- 2 five-inch stalks of celery
- 3 tablespoons of salt
- 3 tablespoons of sugar
- 2 plastic cups
- water
- paper towel



Directions:

1. Mix 3 tablespoons of salt into 1 cup of water. Stir until d rst plastic cup.
2. Mix 3 tablespoons of sugar into 1 cup of water. Stir until dissolved. Pour into second plastic cup.
3. Place one celery stalk into the saltwater solution, and the other into the sugar water solution.
4. Place the cups of celery and water in the refrigerator overnight.
5. In the morning, take the celery out of the water and place on a paper towel.
6. After one hour, taste the two celery stalks. Can you tell which one was in saltwater and which one was in sugar water?

How Does It Work?

The water moves up the stem in celery through a vascular system called the *xylem*. It carries the salt and sugar with it, in the same way stems carry water and nutrients.

Eat Up! Have you eaten every part of a plant?

Try and think of 1 yummy example for each plant part to fill in the empty boxes.

Roots	Stems	Leaves	Flowers	Seeds	Fruit
Carrots	Celery	Spinach	Broccoli	Corn (kernels)	Blueberries