

31 Plants and People

There are more than 300,000 different kinds of plants, including trees and flowers. Most plants are green, though some, such as flowers, have many colors. Plants help us live. They take the bad air that goes out of our bodies and turn it into good air, which goes back into our bodies. Plants also have parts that help us when we are sick, and parts we can eat that keep us feeling well. Some plants grow fruit and vegetables. Others, such as trees, give us wood to build houses and buildings. Without plants, we would die.

Plants have been on Earth for millions of years. People think the first flowering land plant grew about 140 million years ago. The oldest living plant, a tree in the United States, is 4,600 years old. Another kind of tree in the United States, one called the redwood, is the largest living thing in the world.

Plants have been an important part of human history. For example, countries fought wars so they could sell plants that people like to use for drinking and eating. Today, people all over the world make a lot of money selling plants and some of their parts. Scientists are trying to make new plants that we can eat or put in drinks that will help us live longer.

In addition to helping us, plants are pretty. Many people like to keep plants in their homes. These plants help make the air better, and they are also beautiful to look at. You can buy these kinds of plants at special stores. There are many books that can help you choose which plant to get and also tell you how to care for it. Remember, however, that almost all plants need soil, light, and water. Like a child or a pet, they are living things.



Time _____

Circle the right answer.

1. The reading is about:

- a. different types of plants
- b. how old plants can grow to
- c. plants and their benefits

2. The writer does NOT mention that:

- a. plants can be good for sicknesses
- b. some plants are not good to eat
- c. plants can clean the air for us

3. The writer says that:

- a. the oldest living tree is about 1,000 years old
- b. one type of tree is the biggest living thing in the world
- c. there are over a million species of trees

4. According to the reading, which statement is true?

- a. Plants are not used to make money for people.
- b. People are trying to make plants that can help us live longer.
- c. It is better to keep plants outside rather than inside a home.

5. Which of the following does the writer mention in the reading?

- a. Fighting because of plants
- b. A big company that sells plants
- c. Plants used for medicine

Score _____