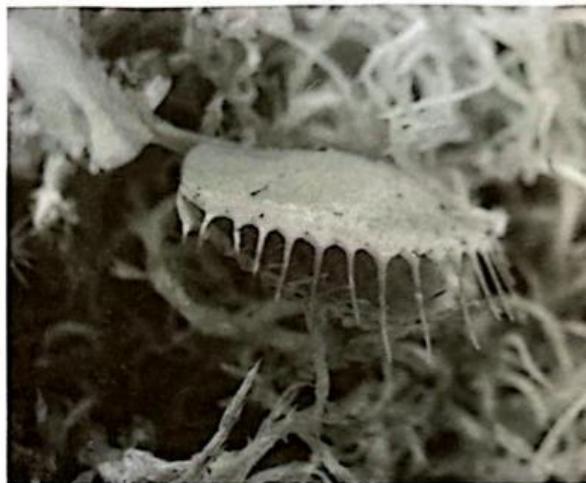


# 35 The Venus Flytrap

Usually, insects eat plants. But did you know that there are plants that eat insects? The most famous bug-eating plant is called the Venus flytrap. It traps flies. That is why it is called a flytrap. Venus flytraps are just like other plants except that they eat bugs. They need sunlight and water to grow. They also need nutrients from the soil. So, why do they eat bugs? Well, the soil that they live in is poor. Most plants cannot live in such poor soil. But Venus flytraps make up for the lack of nutrients by eating bugs. They can get extra nutrients from bugs that they catch.

You may be wondering how a plant can eat. After all, plants do not have mouths or stomachs or other parts for eating. This is how it works: The leaves of the Venus flytrap actually look like a mouth, and this "mouth" opens and closes. The Venus flytrap simply waits with its mouth open until an insect flies in. There are special hairs in the mouth. These hairs are very sensitive. If anything touches them, the mouth quickly closes. So, if a bug flies in, the mouth closes and the bug gets trapped inside.

Over the next few days, the plant produces a juice that is like the juice in your stomach. It breaks down the insect so the plant can get nutrients from it. It only eats the inside of the insect, though. The outside is too hard to break down. So, some time between five and twelve days later, the mouth will open. The only thing left of the bug is its outside. That will be washed away by rain or blown away by the wind. And then the Venus flytrap just waits for another bug to land in its mouth.



Time \_\_\_\_\_

**Circle the right answer.**

1. The reading is about:

- a. what the Venus flytrap eats
- b. how the Venus flytrap eats
- c. where the Venus flytrap lives

2. According to the reading, it is true that:

- a. the Venus flytrap is the only plant that eats insects
- b. the Venus flytrap does not need rich soil to grow
- c. the Venus flytrap can eat many bugs in one day

3. Which of the following is true?

- a. The Venus flytrap's mouth is as big as a human's mouth.
- b. The Venus flytrap traps insects.
- c. The Venus flytrap breaks down all of the insect.

4. After a Venus flytrap catches a bug, its mouth stays closed:

- a. for 1 to 2 days
- b. for 1 to 2 weeks
- c. for more than 2 weeks

5. What does the word "nutrients" in this sentence mean?

They also need **nutrients** from the soil.

- a. Something good in food
- b. Water
- c. Part of a plant

**Score** \_\_\_\_\_