

Plant and animal habitats

Take the quiz

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/quiz/q50456192>

Introduction

Every plant or animal lives in a habitat. A habitat is another name for their local environment. Plants and animals often have to adapt, or change in order to survive.

Habitats

A habitat is a place where a collection of plants and animals live and which provides them with food and shelter.

Seashores, gardens and ponds are all examples of habitats. Habitats can be big (a jungle, for example) or small (a leaf, for example).

Woodland habitat

The animals and plants living in a woodland habitat might include owls, thrushes, caterpillars and oak trees.



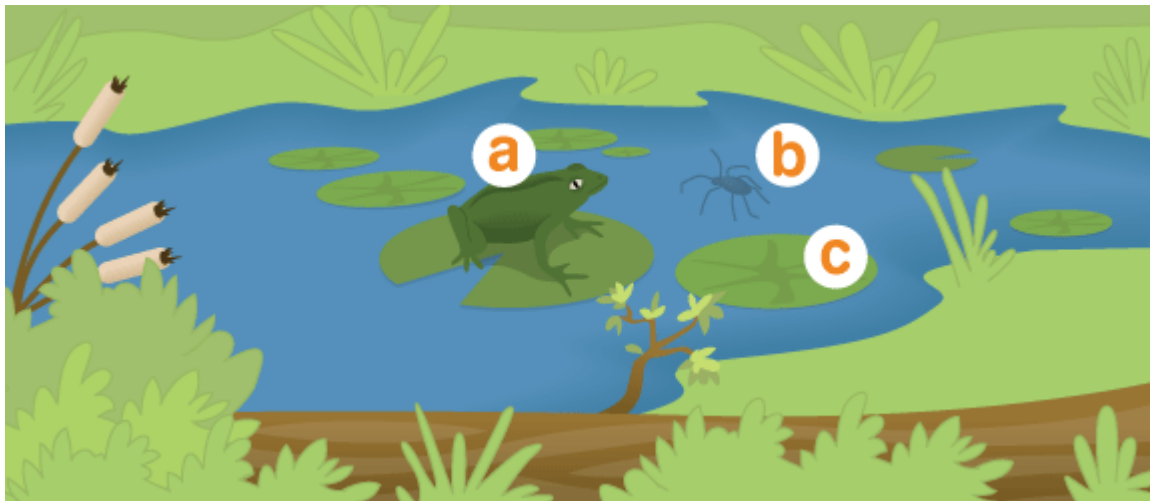
How plants and animals adapt

Animals and plants are **adapted** to their habitats. This means that they have special features that help them to survive.

An African **elephant**, for example, lives in a hot habitat and has very large ears that it flaps to keep cool. A **polar bear**, on the other hand, lives in a cold habitat and has thick fur to keep warm.

Pond habitat

Here are some plants and animals that have adapted to living in a pond habitat.



- **a.** Frog - The frog has webbed feet to help it swim quickly.
- **b.** Water spider - Hair-like bristles cover the abdomen, which allows the spider to breathe underwater.
- **c.** Lily pad - The lily pad has a jelly-like substance on the bottom of its leaves to make it hard for insects to grab on to it.

Animals suiting their habitat

The animals and plants in one habitat are **suited** to live there and may not be able to survive in other habitats.

A woodland owl, for example, would not survive in a desert habitat because:

- There is little water available in the desert.
- The temperatures would be much warmer than a woodland owl would be used to.

When a habitat **changes**, the animals and plants that live there are affected. For example, when pond weed is removed from a pond, the fish and snails that rely on the weed for food may find it hard to survive.

Plants

Take the quiz

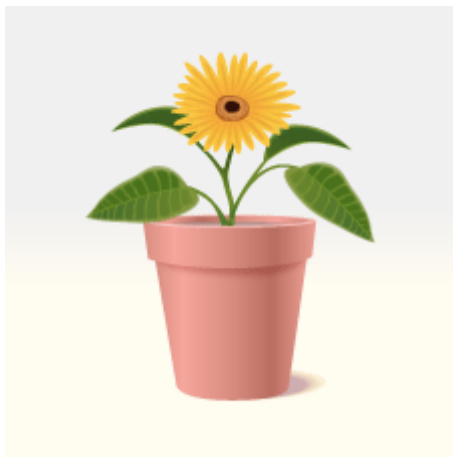
Introduction

Plants need air, light, warmth, water and nutrients to be healthy. If they are healthy, they can continue making their own food through photosynthesis. The roots, leaves and the stem of a plant have different functions that help to keep it healthy.

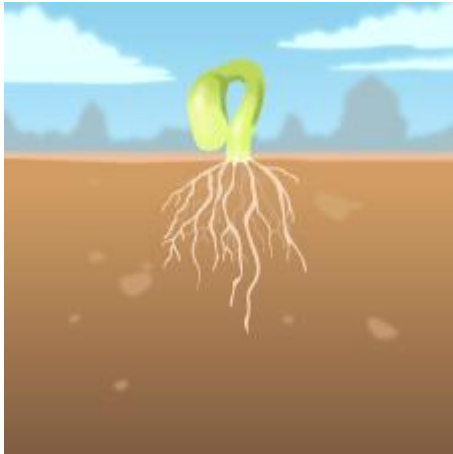
A plant needs these things to grow well:

- air
- light
- warmth
- water
- nutrients

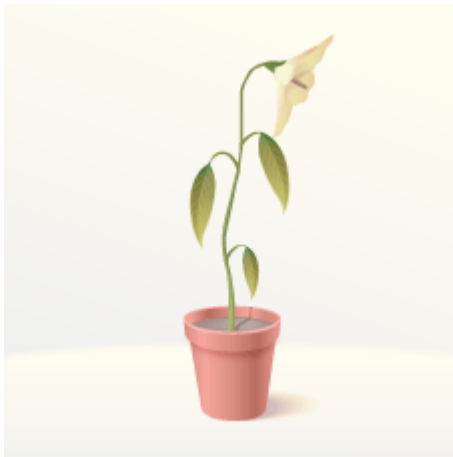
A healthy plant is upright with green leaves.



A seed will not produce a plant at all if it is kept too cold. The seed needs **warmth** to germinate (develop from a seed into a plant) and start to grow into a healthy plant.



A plant that is kept in a **dark place** will grow tall and spindly in search of light and then become weak and die.



A plant that is **not watered** will have a weak stem and dried up leaves and will eventually die.



What different parts of plants do

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- The **roots** of a plant take up water and nutrients from the soil. The roots also keep the plant steady and upright in the soil; they "anchor" the plant.
- The **stem** carries water and nutrients to different parts of the plant.
- The **leaves** use light from the sun, along with carbon dioxide from the air and water to make food for the plant. This process is called photosynthesis.

