Name: _____ Date: _____

The Snap of the Venus Flytrap

Circle group

Most plants sit still and drink in sunlight. The Venus flytrap has a surprising trick. It catches and eats insects. In nature it grows in just a small part of the southeastern United States. It lives in wet, boggy ground.

Bog soil lacks some nutrients that plants need. One is nitrogen. Plants there must find another way to get what the soil does not have. The flytrap uses its leaves. The end of each leaf looks like a pair of jaws. It has stiff little bristles along the edges.

Inside each trap are tiny trigger hairs. If an insect touches a hair one time, nothing happens. If it touches a hair a second time soon after, the trap snaps shut. This keeps the plant from wasting energy on a raindrop or some dust.

The bristles lock like fingers and make a cage. Then the plant gives off juices. The juices break down the soft parts of the insect. After several days, the trap opens. The leftover shell blows away.

A flytrap still makes food from sunlight, like other green plants. The insects are like a vitamin that helps it grow in hard ground.

Questions

1. Where does the Venus flytrap grow in nature?

_____

_____

2. Which nutrient does bog soil lack?

_____

_____

3. What happens when an insect touches a trigger hair twice?

_____

_____

4. Why must a trigger hair be touched two times?

_____

_____

5. What does the trap do after it closes on an insect?

_____

_____

6. Why does the writer compare insects to a vitamin?

_____

_____

Words to know

boggy: soft, wet, and swampy
nitrogen: a nutrient that plants need to grow
bristles: short, stiff hairs
trigger: a part that sets something in motion when touched
juices: liquids made by a plant or animal

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Snap of the Venus Flytrap

Triangle group

Most plants are happy to sit still and drink in sunlight, but the Venus flytrap has a surprising trick. It catches and eats insects. In nature it grows only in a small part of the southeastern United States, in wet, boggy ground.

Bog soil is poor in some of the nutrients that plants need, especially nitrogen. Plants that grow there must find another way to get what the soil lacks. The flytrap solves the problem with its leaves. The end of each leaf is shaped like a pair of jaws with stiff little bristles along the edges.

Inside each trap are tiny trigger hairs. When an insect walks in and touches a hair once, nothing happens. If it brushes a hair a second time within a short while, the trap snaps shut. This double check keeps the plant from wasting energy on a raindrop or a bit of falling dust.

The bristles lock together like fingers, making a cage. Then the plant gives off juices that slowly break down the soft parts of the insect. After several days, the trap opens again and the leftover shell blows away.

A flytrap still makes food with sunlight like other green plants. The insects are more like a vitamin that helps it grow in difficult ground.

Questions

1. Where does the Venus flytrap grow in nature?

_____

_____

2. Which nutrient is missing from bog soil?

_____

_____

3. What happens when an insect touches a trigger hair twice?

_____

_____

4. Why must a trigger hair be touched two times?

_____

_____

5. What does the trap do after it closes around an insect?

_____

_____

6. Why does the writer compare insects to a vitamin?

_____

_____

Words to know

boggy: soft, wet, and swampy
nitrogen: a nutrient that plants need to grow
bristles: short, stiff hairs
trigger: a part that sets something in motion when touched
juices: liquids made by a plant or animal

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Snap of the Venus Flytrap

Square group

Most plants are content to sit motionless and absorb sunlight, but the Venus flytrap has a remarkable trick: it captures and consumes insects. In the wild it grows only in a small corner of the southeastern United States, in wet, boggy ground.

Bog soil is deficient in certain nutrients that plants need, particularly nitrogen, so the plants that grow there must find another way to obtain what the soil cannot provide. The flytrap solves this problem with its leaves. The tip of each leaf is shaped like a pair of jaws, with stiff little bristles lining the edges.

Inside every trap are tiny trigger hairs. When an insect wanders in and brushes a hair once, nothing happens, but if it touches a hair a second time within a short interval, the trap snaps shut. This double check prevents the plant from squandering energy on a raindrop or a speck of falling dust.

The bristles then interlock like fingers, forming a cage. Next, the plant releases juices that slowly dissolve the soft parts of the insect. After several days the trap opens again, and the leftover shell is blown away.

A flytrap still manufactures food from sunlight like any other green plant. The insects are comparable to a vitamin that helps it survive in difficult ground.

Questions

1. Where does the Venus flytrap grow in the wild?

_____

_____

2. Which nutrient is bog soil particularly deficient in?

_____

_____

3. What happens when an insect touches a trigger hair a second time?

_____

_____

4. Why must a trigger hair be touched twice?

_____

_____

5. What does the trap do after it closes around an insect?

_____

_____

6. Why does the writer compare insects to a vitamin?

_____

_____

Words to know

boggy: soft, wet, and swampy
nitrogen: a nutrient that plants need to grow
bristles: short, stiff hairs
trigger: a part that sets something in motion when touched
juices: liquids made by a plant or animal

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: The Snap of the Venus Flytrap

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: The Snap of the Venus Flytrap

Easier · 193 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.1

1. In wet, boggy ground in a small part of the southeastern United States.
2. Nitrogen, among others.
3. The trap snaps shut.
4. So the plant does not waste energy on a raindrop or some dust.
5. It gives off juices that break down the soft parts, then opens after several days.
6. The plant already makes food from sunlight, and the insects add what the soil lacks.

Triangle: The Snap of the Venus Flytrap

This passage · 213 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.3

1. In wet, boggy ground in a small part of the southeastern United States.
2. Nitrogen, among other nutrients.
3. The trap snaps shut.
4. So the plant does not waste energy closing on a raindrop or a bit of dust.
5. It gives off juices that break down the soft parts, then opens again after several days.
6. The plant already makes food from sunlight, and the insects only add what the soil lacks.

Square: The Snap of the Venus Flytrap

Harder · 215 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.1

1. In wet, boggy ground in a small corner of the southeastern United States.
2. Nitrogen.
3. The trap snaps shut.
4. So the plant does not squander energy on a raindrop or a speck of dust.
5. It releases juices that dissolve the soft parts, then opens again after several days.
6. The plant already makes food from sunlight, and the insects only supply what the soil lacks.