

# Lesson Plan

**Fluent  
reading stage  
Levels 19–20**



*How Do Plants Grow Here?* explores the adaptations that plants that live and thrive in harsh environments have to enable them to find the water and nutrients they need, as well as survive the impact of excessive heat, cold, or other environmental stressors.

**Informative text types:**  
**Explanation**

## Science Curriculum links

Australia

- **BS (ACSSUO30)** Living things grow, change and have offspring similar to themselves

New Zealand

- **LW:** Living things are suited to their particular habitat and they respond to environmental changes, both natural and human induced

## Key concepts

- Some plants can grow in very harsh environments.
- Plants that live in harsh environments have adaptations that enable them to absorb water and nutrients, and to withstand extreme climatic conditions.

## Content vocabulary

cactus, cling, energy, filters, freshwater, frozen, harsh, leaves, mangrove plants, melts, protect, rocky, roots, rounded noon flower, salty, seawater, seaweed, shallow, soil, stems, sunlight, thaw

## Text features

- Chapters with headings and sub-headings
- Captions, text boxes, labelled diagrams
- Glossary and index

## Reading strategy

- Linking graphics and visual images to written text

## First reading session

### Getting started

#### Introducing the book

Activate students' prior knowledge. Ask: *What do plants need to grow?* List suggestions on a chart. Invite students to think about how plants might grow when finding the things they need to survive is difficult.

Ask: *What do you know about plants that grow in very cold or very hot places? How do these plants get the water and food they need? How do they survive the heat and the cold?* Have students turn and talk about this with a partner. Discuss as a whole group.

Provide each student with a copy of *How Do Plants Grow Here?* Say: *This book looks at how plants that grow in difficult environments survive.* Have students browse through the book.

#### Exploring vocabulary

Ask: *What words or phrases might be in this book?* Have students work with a partner, then share with the group. List the words on a chart and invite students to make suggestions about what each word means. Where appropriate, have the students add a drawing (for example, a picture or a symbol) to the words on the chart to make the meaning clear. Discuss each word as you list them on the chart. If necessary, introduce the content vocabulary and add these words to the list.

#### Introducing the reading strategy

Say: *Good readers link what they read in the text with the information in the diagrams and photographs. This helps them to understand the information better.* Have students talk about occasions when they have used information from different text features to help with understanding. Have the students flick through the book to identify the text features they will need to look out for (labelled diagrams, photographs, captions).

#### Reading the text

Have students turn to pages 4 and 5 and read the introduction independently. Ask: *What is special about plants that can grow in harsh places? What makes an environment a harsh place for a plant to grow? What do you think the answer to the question will be?*

Have students read chapter 1 independently. Say: *As you read, remember to link what you read to the information in the diagrams, photos and captions. This can help you to understand the text better.*

## Second reading session

### Building understanding

Ask: *What have you learnt about how plants survive and grow in harsh places?* Discuss as a whole group.

Have students read chapter 2 independently.

Ask: *How do plants get food and survive the cold in harsh environments? What makes very cold environments difficult places for plants to live?*

Have students turn and talk to a partner about their ideas.

## Final reading session

Have students read chapter 3 and the conclusion independently. Say: *As you read, remember to practise linking all the information on each page to build a complete understanding of the text.*

### Bringing it all together

Ask: *What have you learnt about the special features that some plants have to enable them to grow in harsh environments?* Have students turn and talk with a partner. Invite students to share their knowledge and create a group chart by recording their responses.

Ask: *Why are harsh environments so challenging for plants to live in? Why can't other plants live in these places?* Discuss as a whole group.

Students could complete the Blackline Master about how plants grow in harsh environments.

#### Reflecting on the reading strategy

With a partner, have students reflect on a time when they linked visual images to the written text. Ask: *On pages 6 and 7, how did you make sure that you got all the information? What did you learn from the text? What did you learn from the diagram and photographs? How did linking this help you to more fully understand the information?* Invite pairs to share their ideas.

Ask: *Why do writers provide information in different formats? Why is using all the information on a page important?* Discuss as a whole group.

## Going beyond the book

### Speaking and listening

Have students work with a partner to list open-ended questions about the information in the book.

Have each pair work with another pair, taking turns to ask and answer these questions.

### Vocabulary

Have students turn to page 4. Point out the word *harsh*. Ask: *Why is this word in a darker colour?* Say: *The colour of the word tells us that it is listed in the glossary. Glossaries help readers to understand words that may be new to them.*

Model how to turn to and use the glossary on page 19. Have students find other highlighted words in the book and practise referring to the glossary to work out their meaning. Students could select other words in the book and write glossary entries for them.

### Visual literacy

Refer students to the diagram on page 11. Ask: *What information does this diagram contain?* Point out the different colours used to show what is happening as the weather warms.

## Writing

Have students write an explanation about how a plant might grow in a difficult place, such as in a crack in the footpath or on top of a cliff. Provide the students with a template detailing the structure and elements of an explanation.

### Planning to write an explanation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Getting started

What is my topic? \_\_\_\_\_

What do I want to explain? \_\_\_\_\_

Who am I writing for? \_\_\_\_\_

Where will I find information? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Planning my explanation

##### 1. General statement

What am I explaining? \_\_\_\_\_

##### 2. Explanation of the process

First \_\_\_\_\_

Next \_\_\_\_\_

Then \_\_\_\_\_

Finally \_\_\_\_\_

 **Hint:** Explanations tell *how* and *why* things happen. They use words like *as*, *because* and *result*. They use phrases that describe time.

#### Additional features I could use

- ☐ Maps to show location
- ☐ Text boxes to provide additional information
- ☐ Photographs and diagrams to support text
- ☐ Captions and labels to explain photographs and diagrams
- ☐ Time line to show history of key events

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### Download the template at

[www.WorldWiseReading.com.au/teacherresources](http://www.WorldWiseReading.com.au/teacherresources)

Say: *Reread information in the book about the environment you are going to write about.* Students can also use research skills to find out extra information.

Encourage students to share their ideas with a partner. Say: *Talk about the plant and the environment you are writing about and what information you will include.*

Use the template to remind the students about the structure of an explanation. Say: *Follow the template when you write. Think about the words you will need to explain the sequence of events in the life of the plant. Think about how the environment causes difficulties and how the plant is affected by these things.*

# Blackline Master: Plant survival

Name/s: \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a plant that can live in each of these environments. Add arrows and labels to show the parts of the plant that help it to survive.

| Environment                                                                        | Labelled plant diagram |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
|    |                        |
|   |                        |
|  |                        |

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