



THE READING LINK

for *The Science of Food Teacher's Guide* and *The Mysterious Marching Vegetables*

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BioEd Teacher Resources from the Center for Educational Outreach

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Read Main Idea

Conclusions Write

Opinion
Fact
Idea

General

Supporting

Summary
Word

Details

Context

Cause
Effect

Inference

Sequence
of Events

This Reading Link contains ready-to-use reading and language arts activities aligned with The Science of Food integrated unit. It is not intended to represent a comprehensive reading program. The activities are related to language arts objectives common to many curricula and cover a range of grade and ability levels. Teachers may wish to select from these activities those that are most appropriate for their own students.

BioEdSM

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Word Meaning/Context Clues



1. Fill in the circle by the word that best answers each question.

a. Animals that eat only plants are called _____.

- decomposers
- herbivores
- carnivores
- omnivores

b. Food gives our bodies the
_____ we need to grow
and to do things.

- bacteria
- soil
- germs
- energy

c. Good soil has
many _____.

- nutrients
- leafcutter ants
- germs
- pesticides

d. _____ break
dead plants and animals
down into tiny pieces that
go back into the soil.

- Fertilizers
- Decomposers
- Pesticides
- Proteins



Word Meaning/Context Clues (continued)



2. **Many Meanings.** Sometimes a word can have more than one meaning. Look at the different meanings for **row** and **break**. Then pick the meaning of those words that fits best in each sentence. Write its number next to the sentence.

row

1. A number of people or things arranged in a line
2. A line of seats, as in a classroom or theater
3. To make a boat go, by pulling on oars

_____ If we want to sit in the front row, we'll have to get there early.

_____ Riff loved to row the boat around the pond.

_____ The vegetables were planted neatly, all in a row.



break

1. To separate into two or more pieces by force
2. To crack a bone; fracture
3. To make or become unusable
4. A period of rest or relaxation

_____ Be careful climbing in the apple tree. You could fall and break your arm.

_____ Don't slam the gate. You might break it!

_____ Gardening is hard work. Let's take a break.

_____ Please don't break my new shovel.

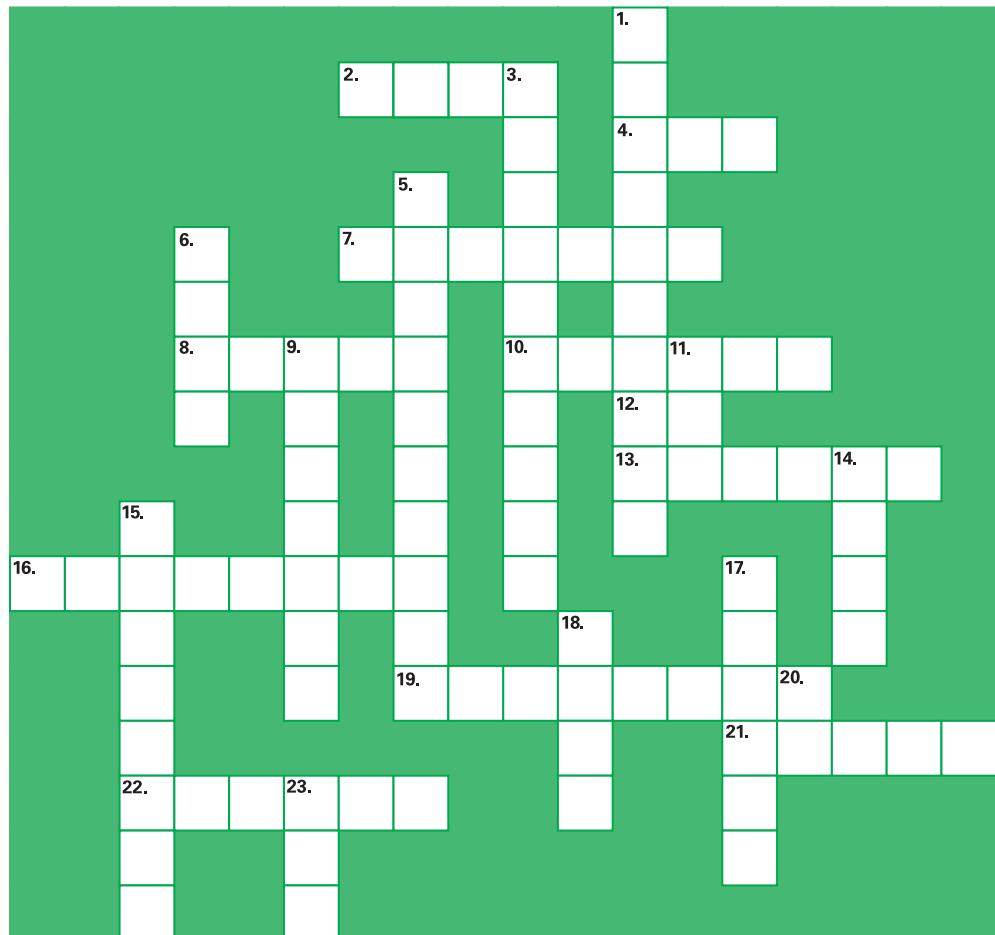
Word Meaning/Context Clues (continued)



3. **The Mysterious Crossword Puzzle.** All of the words in this crossword puzzle are in the story, *The Mysterious Marching Vegetables*.

Across

Down



Sequence of Events



1. Read the chapter, "Friends for Dinner," on pages 27–33 of the storybook. Which one of the four things below happened FIRST in that chapter? Write 1 next to it. Then write 2, 3 and 4 to show the order in which the other events happened.

- _____ Oscar Otterbee brought a sack of pecans to trade with Mr. Slaptail.
- _____ Mr. Slaptail reminded Riff and Rosie about the picnic.
- _____ Mr. Slaptail sprinkled powder around the edge of the garden.
- _____ Riff and Rosie dug potatoes.

2. After you have read the whole story, find the event below that happened LAST. Write 4 next to it. Then write the numbers 3, 2 and 1 to show the order in which the other events happened.

- _____ Riff and Rosie made cookies for a big picnic.
- _____ Mr. Slaptail told his friends about a mystery in his garden.
- _____ The ants visited the picnic.
- _____ Mr. Slaptail, Riff and Rosie spent a night together in the garden, wrapped in leaves.



Cause and Effect Relationships



1. Fill in the circle by the word that best answers each question.

a. Why did the characters wrap themselves in leaves when they spent the night in the garden?

- To keep warm.
- So that they would have something to eat.
- So that they would be hard to see.
- To keep bats away.

b. Why were Mr. Slaptail's spinach leaves disappearing?

- He didn't fertilize them enough.
- Leafcutter ants were taking them.
- Worms were eating them.
- They were wild, and they marched away.

2. Think about what happened when Mr. Slaptail sprinkled a powder around his garden. Write your answers to the following questions.

a. What happened right away?

b. What was the result?



Details and Supporting Ideas



1. Riff and Rosie learned a lot about safe food handling and preparation to keep themselves healthy. How many food tips do you remember? Write them in the space below.

2. Rosie and Riff also learned many things from Mr. Slaptail about how to grow vegetables. Write down at least four things that are important for growing healthy plants and vegetables.



Main Idea



- 1. Choosing the Main Idea.** Look at the yellow box at the top of page 10 in the storybook. Which sentence below best describes the main idea of this Science Box? Fill in the circle next to your answer.

- Plants are amazing.
 - Plants are very important food producers.
 - Stems carry nutrients and water up to the leaves from the roots.
 - The soil in Mr. Slaptail's garden is brown and fluffy, with lots of compost.

2. Look at the yellow box on page 19 in the storybook. Which sentence below best describes the main idea? Fill in the circle next to your answer.

- There are many different kinds of leaves.
 - Leaves from maple trees are shaped like the palm of your hand.
 - Leaves that need protection can be prickly.
 - Tiny green things, called chloroplasts, are the food factories in leaves.



3. Read the chapter called “Night Watch” (pg. 18–21). Write one sentence that tells the main idea of the chapter.

Summarizing



1. In this story, Riff and Rosie spend a night in Mr. Slaptail's garden. In your own words, tell what it is like for them and what happens there.



2. Describe two different ways in which you might get rid of pesky insects.

Fact and Opinion



Following Written Directions

Facts are true. Opinions are what someone thinks, but they might not be true. Based on the story, tell whether you think each of these sentences states a fact or an opinion. Write F for “Fact” or O for “Opinion” in each space. (Look back in the story if necessary.)



- _____ Grandma’s Choco-Crunch Cookies are delicious. (page 3)
- _____ Mr. Slaptail’s garden looks like a jungle. (page 6)
- _____ We use math every day. (page 4)
- _____ Mr. Slaptail is Bright Water Corners’ best gardener. (page 7)
- _____ Ants are useful as decomposers. (page 15)
- _____ Every day, some of Mr. Slaptail’s spinach leaves disappear. (page 13)
- _____ Yellow squash are crunchy and delicious. (page 9)
- _____ A burglar who gets hungry while he is robbing houses is stealing Mr. Slaptail’s spinach. (page 13)
- _____ Leaves are food factories. (page 10)
- _____ The cookies that Riff and Rosie made looked just like Grandma’s. (page 14)
- _____ Peanut butter, lettuce and apple sandwiches are delicious. (page 11)
- _____ Dressing-up in disguises is fun. (page 17)
- _____ The spinach leaves are walking away. (page 21)
- _____ Dirty dishes should be washed with soap and warm water. (page 15)
- _____ Baking soda is a non-poisonous way to make insects go away. (page 27)

Following Written Directions

Follow the directions on pages 36 and 37 of the storybook to make a paper ant chain. Decorate your finished ant chain.

Inferences, Generalizations and Conclusions



1. Fill in the circle next to the word that best answers each question.

- a. How do you think Riff was feeling when he said “I love mysteries. Let’s go!”?
- scared
 - lazy
 - excited
 - nervous
- b. How did Mr. Slaptail feel when he said, “It looks like someone’s stealing my spinach!”?
- frightened
 - excited
 - happy
 - angry
- c. When Riff and Rosie were waiting for the burglar in the garden at night, they were _____.
- nervous
 - angry
 - sad
 - happy
- d. How did Mr. Slaptail feel when Riff said, “Let’s dig up the mound.”?
- happy
 - concerned
 - excited
 - sad



Inferences, Generalizations and Conclusions (cont.)



2. After you have read *The Mysterious Marching Vegetables*, decide whether you think each of these sentences is True or False. Mark T for “True” or F for “False” on the line next to each sentence. If you decide a sentence is false (it does not state a logical conclusion from the story), rewrite it below to make it a true statement.

- _____ Mr. Slaptail is a good gardner.
- _____ Ants are pests, so there is no reason not to kill them
- _____ Polluted soil and water can't make us sick if we don't touch them.
- _____ Ants can do amazing things, considering their tiny size.
- _____ Almost all animals and plants are useful, in some way, to all of us.
- _____ Riff and Rosie get upset with Mr. Slaptail because he always asks for their help.
- _____ All food that we eat had to begin with plants growing in the sun.



3. Rewrite the false sentences to make them true.

Predicting Probable Outcomes



Write another chapter for the story. Tell what you predict will happen after the rain washes the white powder away from Mr. Slaptail's garden. What else might happen in the garden?

OR



What do you think would happen if Riff and Rosie could talk to the ants and explain the problems the ants are causing for Mr. Slaptail? Write a story, telling what Riff, Rosie and the ants would say, and what would happen then.

Predicting Probable Outcomes (continued)

