

About Plants

Plants are a silent but vital part of life on Earth. They are so important because they make their own energy from sunshine via a process called **photosynthesis**. Because they make their own food, they are at the bottom of the food web supplying food and energy for all other life on the earth.

Plants store extra sugars in their stems, roots, seeds or fruit. That energy is passed on to any animal that eats them, including us. We are part of the food web when we eat plant parts like apples, carrots, rice or potatoes. **Photosynthesis is the first step in the complex food web** that connects all living things. Every creature on earth depends to some degree on green plants and their byproducts.

The **oxygen that is released in the process of photosynthesis** is also essential for life on Earth. Forests and green phytoplankton coating the oceans take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen in the process of photosynthesis. This allows all the other organisms on earth to inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide in the process of breathing with a plentiful supply.

Plants also root in and cover over the soil helping to keep it in place and **preventing erosion**.

Just the Facts:

- 1) Green plants produce their own energy through photosynthesis.
- 2) Green plants are the bottom of the food chain and provide much of the food it takes to support life on earth.
- 3) Along with a few other organisms (blue green algae on the surface of the ocean, etc.), green plants produce much of the breathable oxygen on the planet by pulling carbon dioxide out of the air and releasing oxygen.
- 4) Plants provide ground cover to prevent soil erosion.