



Teacher Edition

AlphaWorld

# Amazing Plants

Written by James Talia



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# How to use this book

## **Before reading:** Talkthrough

Talk through the book with the children. Encourage them to predict the text from the pictures and to think about the information they provide. Direct the children's attention to aspects of the text that may challenge them. Support the children to deal with these challenges by asking the *Talkthrough* questions on each page.



## **During reading:** Observe and support

Observe the children as they read. As needed, support children by assisting them to discover and use reading strategies and cues to solve problems and respond to reading challenges that arise in the text. Encourage them to monitor their own reading. Interruptions to the child's reading should be minimal and focused on a specified learning need.



## **After reading:** Checking comprehension, responding to text

To further develop children's understanding of the text, select activities found on the inside back cover. These whole text, sentence and word level activities reinforce the teaching focus of this book. Assessment ideas are provided to assist with planning for further teaching.

## Setting the context

Ask: *What is the most amazing plant you know? Why is it amazing?*

## Background information

Many plants have adaptations that enable them to grow in adverse conditions. The rafflesia has developed a strong aroma that attracts flies in the jungle. The flies pollinate the plant. Venus flytraps and pitcher plants grow in areas where there are few nutrients in the soil. They get the nutrients they need by catching insects. Cacti and boab trees can withstand long periods of low rainfall by storing water in their trunks. Cacti have thorns that stop animals from eating them.

## Introducing the book

*This book is called 'Amazing Plants'. It tells us about plants that either look amazing or can do amazing things.*



## Front cover

*Have you ever seen this plant? What do you know about it? Why would it be included in a book about amazing plants?*



## Title page

*What is this page called? What does it usually have on it?  
Read the title and author together.*



## **Talkthrough**

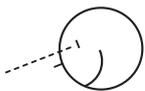
*This is the contents page. What does a contents page tell us? How is it organised?*

Read through the chapter names.



## Contents

Introduction	4
The biggest flower	6
Insect eaters	8
Plant traps	10
The upside-down tree	12
Spiny stems	14
Index	16



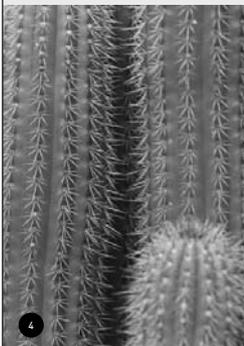
### **Observe and support**

Can the child use the contents page?

*Can you find the chapter on plant traps? What page is it on? What chapter starts on page 12?*

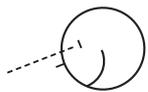
### Introduction

Some plants look amazing.  
Other plants can do amazing things.



### Talkthrough

*This is the introduction. It tells us what the book is about. It says that some plants are amazing because of the way they look. Others are amazing because of what they do.*



## Observe and support

Does the child check what they read with the phonic information on the page?

Point out a word.

*How did you know what that word was? What did you check at the start of the word? What did you look for at the end of the word? What else did you check?*

**The biggest flower**

This is the biggest flower in the world.  
It is about one metre wide.

This flower grows in some jungles  
and it smells like rotting meat.

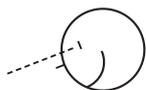
The flower of the rafflesia



## Talkthrough

*This plant grows in some jungles. It is amazing because it has the biggest flower of any plant in the world. The flower is more than one metre wide.*

*Demonstrate the width of the flower with your arms. The other thing that is amazing about this plant is that its flower has a bad smell. It smells like rotting meat.*



## **Observe and support**

Can the child understand the inferred meaning of the text?

*Why is this plant amazing?*

### Insect eaters

This plant eats insects.

It has leaves that are shaped like a cup.

There is liquid at the bottom of the cup.

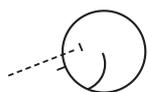
When an insect falls into the liquid,  
it drowns and the plant uses it for food.

The pitcher plant



### Talkthrough

*This plant is amazing because it eat insects. It has leaves shaped like a cup. The cup is filled with liquid. When an insect falls into the cup it drowns. The plant uses the insect for food.*



## **Observe and support**

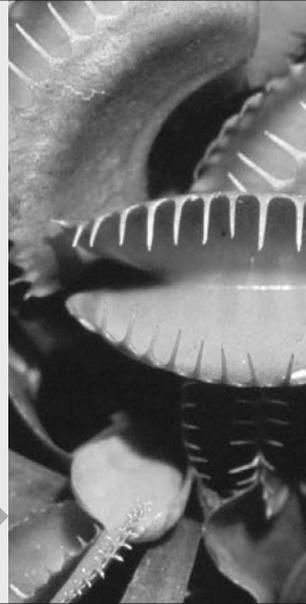
Can the child understand the literal meaning of the text?  
*How does this plant get food? Where did you read that?*

### Plant traps

This plant also eats insects.  
It has leaves that open and shut.  
The leaves snap shut  
when an insect lands on them.  
The insect is trapped  
inside the leaf.

The Venus flytrap

10



### Talkthrough

*This plant also eats insects. It can close its leaves very quickly when an insect crawls inside.*



## **Observe and support**

Can the child interpret the text?

*Why does the plant trap insects? What have we already read in the book that might help us to think about this?*

### The upside-down tree

The branches of this tree look like roots growing up in the air. This tree grows in very dry places and can keep lots of water in its trunk. Some of these trees grow for more than 5000 years.

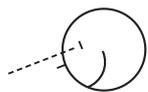
The baob tree

12



### Talkthrough

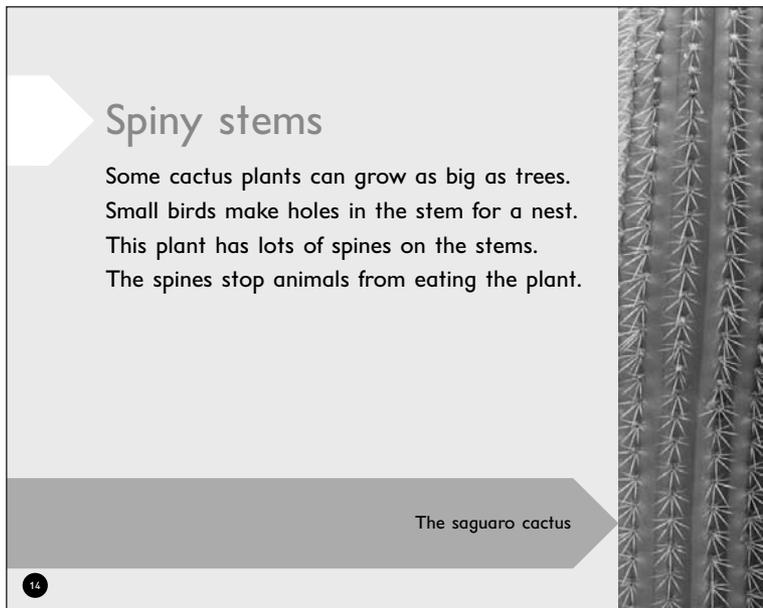
*The book calls this tree the 'upside-down tree'. Why do you think it does this? This tree is amazing because it can live in places where there is hardly any water. It keeps water in its trunk. It can live for a very long time. The book says 5000 years.*



## **Observe and support**

Can the child use the text to interpret the information contained in the picture?

*Why is the tree's trunk the shape it is? Why doesn't it have lots of leaves?*



### Spiny stems

Some cactus plants can grow as big as trees. Small birds make holes in the stem for a nest. This plant has lots of spines on the stems. The spines stop animals from eating the plant.

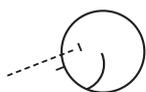
The saguaro cactus

14



### Talkthrough

*What are these plants called? Why are they amazing? Cacti can grow as tall as trees. Sometimes small birds build nests in them. Their sharp spines make it hard for animals to eat the cactus.*



## **Observe and support**

Does the child correct errors without prompting?  
*Why did you change that? What did you notice? How did you know what to say instead?*



## Talkthrough

*What is this? What do we use it for?*

*Point out the alphabetical order.*

*Can you find me 'rafflesia'? What did you look for?*

*What is on page 10?*

## Index

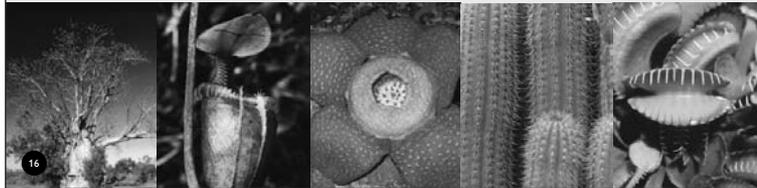
boab tree 12

pitcher plant 8

rafflesia 6

saguaro cactus 14

Venus flytrap 10



## Comprehension check

*Why does a cactus have sharp spines?*

*Which other plants use smell?*

*Which was the most amazing plant in the book?*

*Why?*

*What does 'amazing' mean?*

## Responding to text



In small groups, make a chart showing each plant and the amazing part of that plant.



Sentence recomposition. Cut up selected sentences into individual words and ask students to compose them in an appropriate order.



Make a list of the words that describe parts of the plant or what it does.

**For further literacy activities** see the accompanying book, *AlphaWorld Literacy Learning Activities: Early Reading Levels 6–11*. It contains two reproducible blackline masters specifically related to this book.

## Assessment

Can the child:

- integrate a range of information to support their reading?
- understand the text at the literal, inferential and interpretive level?

- understand the vocabulary in the book?

# Amazing Plants

**Topic:** Our marvellous world

**Curriculum link:** Living Things; Society and Environment

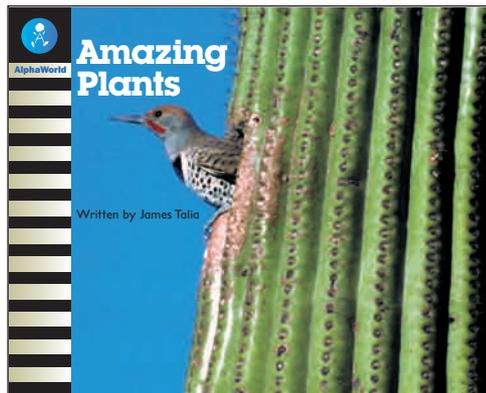
**Text type:** Description

**Reading level:** 10

**Word count:** 178

**High-frequency words:** about, are, can, do, for, has, in, inside, is, like, look, lots, others, some, the, there, this, when

**Vocabulary:** amazing, plants, biggest, world, metre, wide, smells, rotting, meat, insects, leaves, shaped, cup, liquid, drowns, food, snap, lands, trapped, branches, roots, growing, air, grows, dry, places, store, water, trunk, years, cactus, trees, birds, holes, stem, nest, spines, animals



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## Possible literacy focus

Understanding descriptive language and describing characteristics.

Reading labels.

Inferring meaning.

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## Summary

This book describes some of the characteristics of unusual plants and why these natural adaptations have occurred. The pictures allow readers visual access to the characteristic being described.

**AlphaWorld**



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