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Level 2

Scientists change plants' sunblock to grow more crops

19th November, 2016

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1611/161119-photosynthesis-2.html>

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Please try Levels 0, 1 and 3. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1611/161119-photosynthesis-2.html>

Biologists have thought of a new way to increase the size of crops by 20 per cent. They genetically modified the thing in plants that is responsible for photosynthesis. Photosynthesis is the important chemical reaction where plants use sunlight to change carbon dioxide into oxygen. It lets us breathe. The scientists found a way for plants to use the energy they get from sunlight better, so they produce more food. Lead researcher Professor Stephen Long said his team is genetically modifying the world's biggest crops, such as rice, wheat, maize and soybean.

The scientists changed the thing that plants use to protect themselves from damage from the Sun's strongest rays. Plants turn their energy into heat when they become too hot. However, plants do this even when clouds block the Sun. The scientists put extra copies of the heat-loss genes into plants. These speed up the heat-loss process so the plants can quickly return to using energy to grow. This could help the world's food needs. Professor Long said if he could get 20 per cent more food from crops, it would reduce the future pressure on food supply.

Sources: <http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2016/11/how-turning-plants-sunshield-can-grow-bigger-crops>
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/11/161117141231.htm>
<http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/47544/title/Genetic-Modification-Improves-Photosynthetic-Efficiency/>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1611/161119-photosynthesis-2.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Biologists have thought | a. modified |
| 2. increase the size of crops | b. reaction |
| 3. genetically | c. more food |
| 4. responsible for | d. by 20 per cent |
| 5. chemical | e. into oxygen |
| 6. change carbon dioxide | f. of a new way |
| 7. they produce | g. such as rice |
| 8. the world's biggest crops, | h. photosynthesis |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. the thing that plants use | a. on food supply |
| 2. damage from the Sun's strongest | b. block the Sun |
| 3. Plants turn their energy | c. rays |
| 4. plants do this even when clouds | d. to grow |
| 5. These speed up the heat-loss | e. food needs |
| 6. using energy | f. to protect themselves |
| 7. This could help the world's | g. process |
| 8. it would reduce the future pressure | h. into heat |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1611/161119-photosynthesis-2.html>

Biologists have thought (1) _____ to increase the size of crops by 20 per cent. They genetically modified the thing in plants (2) _____ for photosynthesis. Photosynthesis is the important (3) _____ where plants use sunlight to change carbon dioxide into oxygen. It lets us breathe. The scientists found a way for plants (4) _____ energy they get from sunlight better, (5) _____ more food. Lead researcher Professor Stephen Long said his team is genetically modifying the world's biggest (6) _____ rice, wheat, maize and soybean.

The scientists changed (7) _____ plants use to protect themselves from damage from the Sun's strongest rays. Plants turn their energy (8) _____ they become too hot. However, plants (9) _____ when clouds block the Sun. The scientists put extra copies of the heat-loss genes into plants. These (10) _____ heat-loss process so the plants can quickly return to using energy to grow. This could help (11) _____ needs. Professor Long said if he could get 20 per cent more food from crops, it would reduce the future (12) _____ supply.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1611/161119-photosynthesis-2.html>

Biologists have thought of a new way to increase the size of crops by 20 per cent. They genetically modified the thing in plants that is responsible for photosynthesis. Photosynthesis is the important chemical reaction where plants use sunlight to change carbon dioxide into oxygen. It lets us breathe. These scientists found a way for plants to use the energy they get from sunlight better, so they produce more food. Lead researcher Professor Stephen Long said his team is genetically modifying the world's biggest crops, such as rice, wheat, maize and soybean. These scientists changed the thing that plants use to protect themselves from damage from the Sun's strong rays. Plants turn their energy into heat when they become too hot. However, plants do this even when clouds block the Sun. These scientists put extra copies of the heat-loss genes into plants. These speed up the heat-loss process so the plants can quickly return to using energy to grow. This could help the world's food needs. Professor Long said if he could get 20 per cent more food from crops, it would reduce the future pressure on food supply.

PLANTS SURVEY

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1611/161119-photosynthesis-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about plants in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

