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Level 4 – 10th August 2026

Deadly flowers could help create new medicines

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2608/260810-toxic-flowers-4.html>

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Please try Levels 5 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2608/260810-toxic-flowers-4.html>

The world is full of amazing natural medicines. However, many species of flowers can poison and kill people.

Researchers in the USA and Czechia have found that two very poisonous plants could be used to make new medicines. The scientists conducted research on two flowers: wolfsbane and larkspur. Wolfsbane can cause death from respiratory paralysis or heart failure. "Biohacking" of the plants' chemical makeup could create valuable medicines.

The researchers recreated the toxic compounds from the plants. One researcher said knowing how to create them could provide totally new ways of testing. They could reduce pain, treat malaria and cancer, and kill pests. A biochemist said: "Plants are the best chemists around, upgrading their... natural compounds over millions of years to help them survive." Another researcher said many of today's medicines come directly from plants.

Sources: <https://phys.org/news/2026-07-deadly-blooms-genetic-blueprint-hard.html>
<https://www.earth.com/news/deadly-plants-could-inspire-a-new-generation-of-natural-medicines/>
<https://bioengineer.org/two-deadly-flowers-show-major-medical-potential/>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2608/260810-toxic-flowers-4.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. The world is full of amazing | a. poisonous plants |
| 2. many species | b. failure |
| 3. poison and | c. of flowers |
| 4. two very | d. paralysis |
| 5. scientists conducted research | e. chemical makeup |
| 6. death from respiratory | f. natural medicines |
| 7. heart | g. kill people |
| 8. biohacking of the plants' | h. on two flowers |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. researchers recreated the toxic | a. of testing |
| 2. knowing how to | b. directly from plants |
| 3. provide totally new ways | c. and cancer |
| 4. They could reduce | d. create them |
| 5. treat malaria | e. survive |
| 6. over millions | f. compounds |
| 7. help them | g. pain |
| 8. today's medicines come | h. of years |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2608/260810-toxic-flowers-4.html>

The world is (1) _____ natural medicines.

However, many species of flowers can (2) _____

people. Researchers in the USA and Czechia have found that

(3) _____ plants could be used to make new

medicines. The scientists (4) _____ two flowers:

wolfsbane and larkspur. Wolfsbane can cause

(5) _____ paralysis or heart failure. "Biohacking"

of the plants' chemical makeup could (6) _____.

The researchers (7) _____ compounds from the

plants. One researcher said (8) _____ create them

could (9) _____ ways of testing. They could reduce

pain, treat malaria and cancer, (10) _____. A

biochemist said: "Plants are the best chemists around, upgrading their...

(11) _____ millions of years to help them survive."

Another researcher said many of today's medicines

(12) _____ plants.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2608/260810-toxic-flowers-4.html>

The world is full of amazing natural medicines. However, many species of flowers can poison and kill people. Researchers in the USA and Czechia have found that two very poisonous plants could be used to make new medicines. The scientists conducted research on two flowers: wolfsbane and larkspur. Wolfsbane can cause death from respiratory paralysis or heart failure. "Biohacking" of the plants' chemical makeup could create valuable medicines. The researchers recreated the toxic compounds from the plants. One researcher said knowing how to create them could provide totally new ways of testing. They could reduce pain, treat malaria and cancer, and kill pests. A biochemist said: "Plants are the best chemists around, upgrading their... natural compounds over millions of years to help them survive." Another researcher said: many of today's medicines come directly from plants.

TOXIC FLOWERS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2608/260810-toxic-flowers-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about toxic flowers 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) _____

WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2608/260810-toxic-flowers-4.html>

Write about **toxic flowers** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.

[illegible]