

Soil's Two Jobs

Read for evidence that soil supports plants and supplies nutrients.

3.6.b "soil provides support and nutrients necessary for plant growth."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words that show how soil supports a plant. Circle words that show how soil provides nutrients for growth.

Maya's Bean Pot

- ① On a sunny porch, Maya planted two bean seeds in a pot of garden soil. She pressed each seed into the soil so it would not tip or blow away. As the seeds sprouted, tiny roots grew down through spaces between soil pieces. The roots held the young plants in place while the stems and leaves grew upward toward light.
- ② Garden soil contains nutrients, or materials plants need to grow. When water moves through the soil, it can dissolve some nutrients. Roots take in the water and dissolved nutrients. The nutrients help a plant make new leaves, stems, roots, and flowers. If soil has too few nutrients, a plant may grow slowly or have pale leaves.
- ③ After a hard rain, Maya checked her pot. The soil was still around the roots, so the bean plants stood upright. She added a thin layer of compost to the top of the pot. Compost is broken-down plant material that can add nutrients to soil. Maya knew the plants needed soil for two important jobs: holding roots steady and supplying nutrients for growth.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the soil help Maya's bean plants stay upright after the rain?

2 According to the passage, how do nutrients in soil get into a plant's roots?

3 What might happen if soil has too few nutrients?

4 Why did Maya add compost to her pot, and which job of soil does it help?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a plant you know. Write two sentences explaining how soil helps that plant stay supported and how soil helps it get nutrients to grow.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline words that show how soil supports a plant. Circle words that show how soil provides nutrients for growth. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the soil help Maya's bean plants stay upright after the rain?	The soil stayed around the roots and held the plants upright.
2	According to the passage, how do nutrients in soil get into a plant's roots?	Water moving through soil dissolves nutrients, and roots take in the water and dissolved nutrients.
3	What might happen if soil has too few nutrients?	A plant may grow slowly or have pale leaves.
4	Why did Maya add compost to her pot, and which job of soil does it help?	Compost can add nutrients to soil. It helps soil supply nutrients for plant growth.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A tomato plant's roots grow into soil, and the soil holds the plant upright. Water carries nutrients from the soil into the roots, helping the tomato plant grow leaves and fruit.

Accept any plant example that accurately explains both soil jobs: holding roots or the plant steady, and providing nutrients that roots take in, usually with water. Student examples may name different plant parts or growth results.