

Do the preparation task first to help you with the difficult vocabulary. Then read the article and do the exercises to check your understanding.

Preparation: matching

Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a–j next to the numbers 1–10.

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|---------|----------------|----|---|
| 1..... | an organism | a. | a very small animal with a thin body and many pairs of legs |
| 2..... | photosynthesis | b. | an English robber who took money from the rich and gave it to the poor |
| 3..... | endangered | c. | a living thing like an animal or a plant |
| 4..... | the soil | d. | a natural process when dead plants break down and are destroyed |
| 5..... | nutrients | e. | the dirt in a garden, farm or forest where plants grow |
| 6..... | decomposition | f. | an adjective describing land in which plants cannot grow |
| 7..... | Robin Hood | g. | the process where a green plant uses water and carbon dioxide and turns it into food when the plant has light |
| 8..... | a millipede | h. | an adjective describing an animal or plant which has become rare and could disappear completely |
| 9..... | faeces | i. | something that people, animals and plants need to grow and live |
| 10..... | infertile | j. | waste that comes out of the body of an animal or a person |

1. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

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|----|---|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | The article says that some species, which many people don't know about, are very important for life on Earth. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. | When leaves fall to the ground in autumn, they have nothing important left to do. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. | Fallen leaves are important for life in the forest. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. | There is not much life in the soil in a forest. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. | Leaves which are thick and dry find it easy to attract organisms that help them decompose. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 6. | Leaves which are very different become more similar after millipedes eat them. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |

2. Check your phrasal verbs: gap fill – using the verbs

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word which appears in CAPITAL LETTERS. You must not change the word in capital letters. Use a maximum of six words.

Example: Scientists find the role of the millipede interesting.

INTERESTED

Scientists _____ the role of the millipede.

Scientists are interested in the role of the millipede.

1. Robin Hood gave money to poor people.

GIVEN

Poor people _____ Robin Hood.

2. Conservation efforts should take into account lesser-known species.

PAY

Conservation efforts should _____ lesser-known species.

3. Without the decomposition of leaves, carbon would not be returned to the atmosphere.

LEAVES

If _____ they would not return carbon to the atmosphere.

4. Soil is not as lifeless as we think.

MORE

There is _____ we think.

5. Some leaves manage to attract decomposers.

SUCCEED

Some leaves _____ decomposers.

6. Rich leaves become slightly less attractive.

REDUCTION

There is _____ the attractiveness of rich leaves.