

Why Do Leaves Change Colour?



Autumn

is the season when leaves change colour and fall.

Leaves are **green** in spring and summer.

This is because of a green pigment called **chlorophyll**.

Chlorophyll helps leaves make food from sunlight.

This food helps the tree grow.

In autumn, the days get shorter and the weather gets cooler.

The tree knows it is time to rest.

It stops sending water and food to the leaves.

Without chlorophyll, other **colours** in the leaves can be seen.

These colours are there all the time, but the green covers them up in summer.

Some leaves turn **yellow** or **orange**.

Some turn **red** or **purple**.

The colours are beautiful!

When the leaves change colour, they also get dry and fall off.

This helps the tree save energy during winter.

In winter, the tree is bare.

It rests until spring, when new leaves will grow again.

VOCABULARY

pigment

a natural substance that gives colour

chlorophyll

the green pigment in leaves

autumn

the season after summer and before winter

energy

what plants use to stay alive and grow



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What pigment makes leaves green in spring and summer?

- 2 What does chlorophyll help leaves do?

- 3 What happens in autumn that tells the tree it is time to rest?

- 4 Why does the tree stop sending water and food to the leaves?

- 5 Why can we see other colours in the leaves in autumn?

- 6 What colours can some leaves turn?

- 7 What happens to the leaves after they change colour?

- 8 Why is it helpful for the tree to lose its leaves in winter?

- 9 What happens to the tree in winter?

THINK DEEPER



Why do you think trees lose their leaves instead of keeping them all year?

Write three ideas.

- 1 -----

- 2 -----

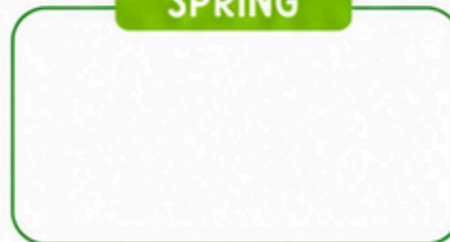
- 3 -----

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

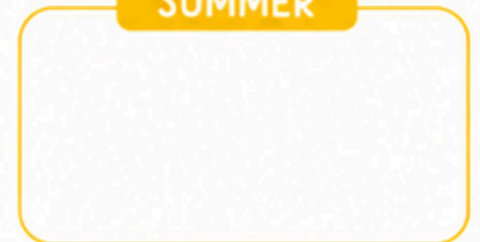


Draw a tree in the four seasons.
Show how the leaves change.

SPRING



SUMMER



AUTUMN



WINTER

