

The Tree

THE TREE

Looked at simply as a machine, the *tree*¹ – any tree – is truly *remarkable*². Powered by energy from the sun, it *manufactures*³ its food out of carbon dioxide and water. It is strong enough to *split*⁴ rock. Its efficient “plumbing system” raises water from far underground to the highest leaf. A tree is formed in a *wondrous*⁵ way. It may start life in a very small form – perhaps something no bigger than a little *pebble*⁶ – and yet it may grow more than 300 feet tall. It can, if large, produce wood for dozens of houses. It may provide man and animals with fruit or nuts. It may *yield*⁷ *turpentine*⁸ or wood *pulp*⁹ for our paper, or a syrup for pancakes.

Truly a tree is remarkable, but it is far from being a machine. A tree is a living thing, much more complex than any machine man has built. Like most living things, a tree is made up of many *cells*¹⁰. Billions of these tiny building blocks are joined together in every tree. Each part of the tree has its own special kind of cell. The cells inside a leaf are different from those in the *trunk*¹¹, and both kinds are different from those of the root. Each of these organs – leaf, trunk and root – plays its part in the life of the tree.

Trees work in almost magical ways. Leaves breathe for the tree and make the food it needs to live. Roots gather water and *minerals*¹². The trunk holds the leaves up to the sunlight, sends them water from the roots and gets food for them. Trees are the main source of *timber*¹³.

Please Note:

1 inch (in) = 25,399 mm

1 foot (ft) = 30,497 cm (= 12 inches)

1 yard (yd) = 0,9144 m (= 3 feet)

1 mile (m) = 1,6093 km (= 1760 yards)

Vocabulary Notes

1. tree: any woody perennial plant which normally has one well-defined stem and a definitely formed crown. It's usually considered to have a minimum mature height of 8 to 10 feet
2. remarkable: out of ordinary, deserving or attracting attention
3. to manufacture: to make, to produce
4. to split: break or cause to break into two or more parts
5. wondrous: surprising, unusual, inexplicable
6. pebble: small stone made smooth and round by action of water
7. to yield: to give a natural product, a result or a profit
8. turpentine: oil obtained from trees used as solvent in mixing paint and varnish and in medicine
9. pulp: soft mass of wood fibre used for making paper
10. cell: microscopic unit of living matter enclosing a nucleus with self-producing genes
11. trunk: main stem of tree apart from branches and roots
12. minerals: natural substances of inorganic matter
13. timber: wood suitable for building and carpentry

EXERCISES

A. Find if the following statements are True or False:

1. Trees are like machines.
2. All parts of trees have the same cells.
3. Trees can raise water from underground to the highest leaf.
4. Trees manufacture their own food with the help of the sun.
5. All parts of a tree do the same job.

B. Fill the blanks with a suitable word.

Trees are powered by energy from the _____ and manufacture their _____ out of carbon dioxide and _____. Trees are not like machines but they are _____ things much more _____ than any machine man has built. Like most living things, a tree is made of many _____. Each part of the tree has its own _____ cells. The main organs of a tree are: _____, _____ and _____. _____ breathe for the tree and make the _____ it needs to live. Roots _____ the tree with _____ and _____. The trunk _____ the leaves up to the sunlight and sends them water from the _____.

C. Complete the following chart:

Verb	Adjective	Noun
_____	complete	_____
_____	complicated	_____
_____	_____	energy
produce	_____	_____
_____	simple	_____
yield	_____	_____
grow	_____	_____
_____	_____	fruit