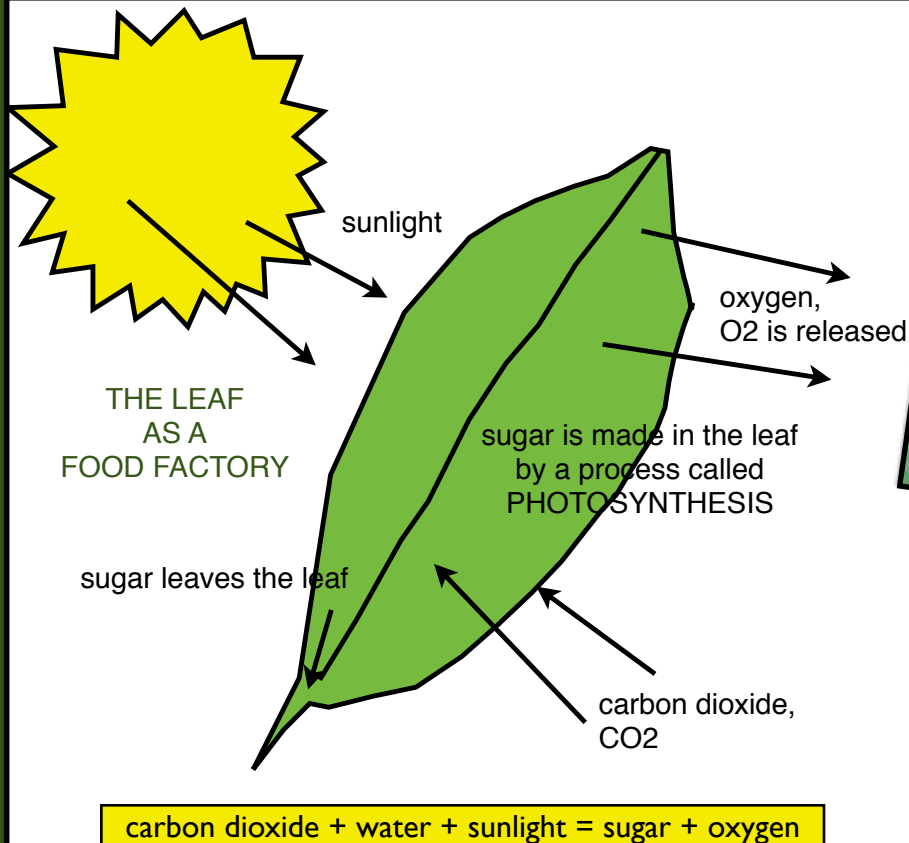


Nature Facts - Leaves



FANTASTIC FACTS

1. TEA IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED BY A CHINESE EMPEROR IN 2737BC WHEN SOME LEAVES ACCIDENTLY BLEW INTO A POT OF BOILING WATER
2. THE LARGEST LEAF IS THE RAFFIA PALM OR AMAZONAIN BAMBOO PALM. BOTH GROW TO MORE THAN 20M IN LENGTH
3. STINGING NETTLE LEAVES AND STEMS ARE COVERED WITH TINY HAIRS WHICH BREAK WHEN TOUCHED, RELEASING ACID AND CAUSING A NASTY STING
4. THERE ARE NEARLY 1000 KNOWN SPECIES OF PLANTS WITH EDIBLE LEAVES
5. THE MONKEY PUZZLE TREE GOT ITS NAME WHEN SOMEONE REMARKED 'IT WOULD PUZZLE A MONKEY TO TRY AND CLIMB UP IT'.

How does a leaf make food for the plant?

Next time you take a closer look at a leaf notice the pattern created by the veins, air spaces and tiny food factories of the plant. This is where the food for the plant is made through a process called **PHOTOSYNTHESIS**.

The leaves absorb the carbon-dioxide through tiny pores called **STOMATA**. Water is pulled up by the roots and carried up to the

leaves. Sunlight is trapped by the green **CHLOROPHYLL**. Light, water and carbon-dioxide are then used to make sugar for the plant. Oxygen is a by-product and is given off by the plant. In the autumn the chlorophyll disintegrates giving rise to other pigments that produce a colourful display. Without plants we would have no food to eat or oxygen to breath.