

THE LIFE CYCLE of a plant



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STAGE 5

seed

The life of most plants all starts with a **seed**. Seeds are a small plant covered with a protective skin called a **seed coat**. The seed coat will keep it safe from the weather. What do seeds need to grow? They need water, soil, sunlight, and space. Seeds come in lots of sizes! Most are small, but the biggest seed is called the coco de mer. It is the seed of a palm tree and can grow to be 12 inches long and weigh up to 40 pounds! That's about as heavy as a microwave. Can you believe it?



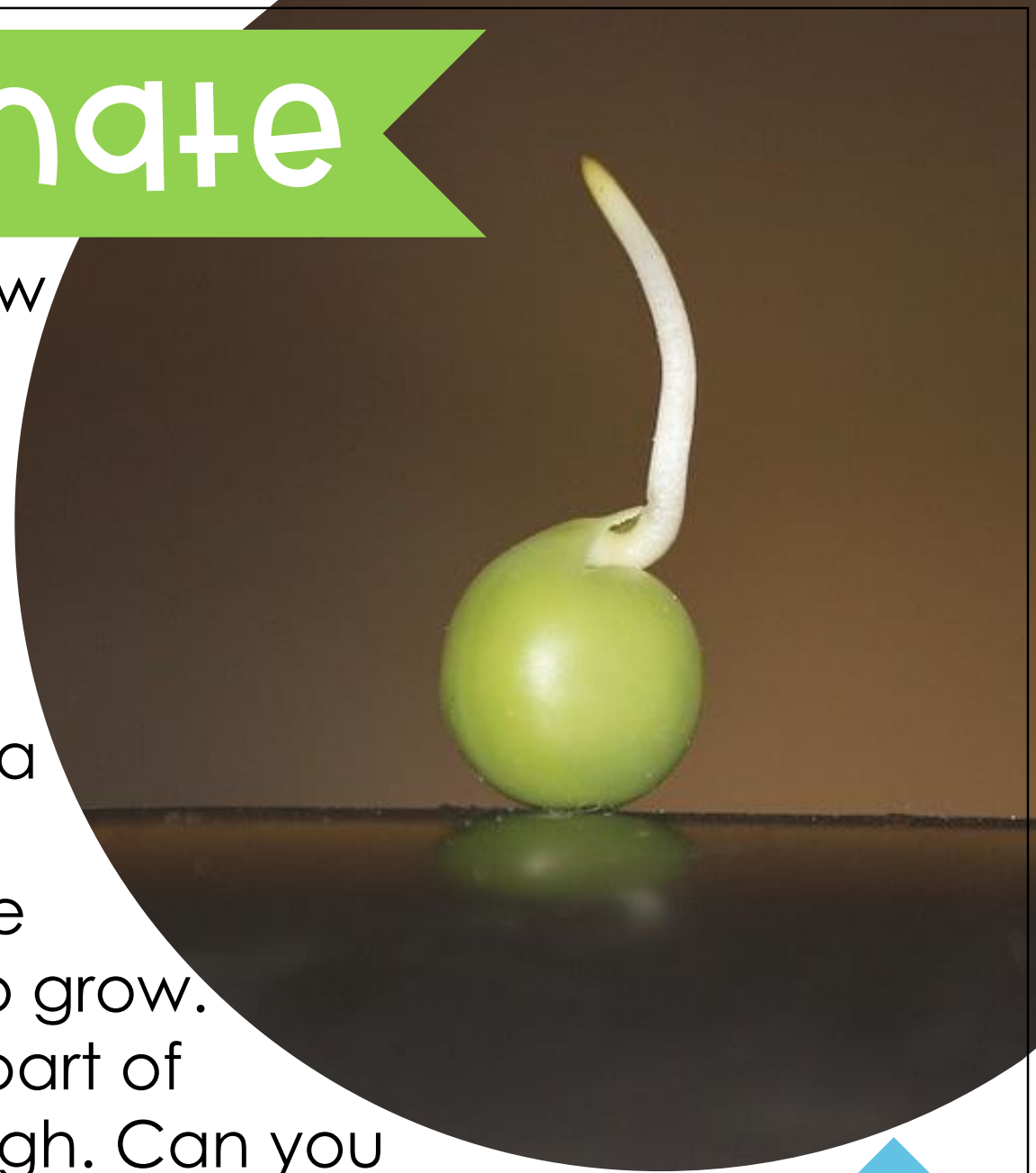
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germinate

So, we all know it is important to water a seed. Well, as water is taken in, the seed begins to swell and fill up. It gets bigger and bigger. This is the part of a plant's life cycle called germination. It means the plant is now beginning to grow. Neat, huh? Soon, a tiny part of the plant will poke through. Can you believe that little guy will soon be a big plant full of flowers?



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seedling

Soon after this, **roots** will start to grow down into the soil. The roots will hold the plant up nice and tall and a sprout will grow up into the air. See the sprout in the picture? It sprout needs food! It uses the sunlight, water, air, and space to grow. This little plant is called a **seedling**.

Seedlings are small and thin and usually only have a few leaves. It may be small but this little thing will be a plant before you know it!



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young adult

The seedling is now growing bigger. Soon, it turns into a **young adult**. At this stage of life, the roots of the plant go down and start to spread out into the soil. It does this because the plant needs more support now that it is growing to be much bigger. The stem grows stronger, taller, and thicker. Leaves on the plant begin to get bigger too. There are much more of them now! Can you count how many are on this young adult?



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grown adult

The last stage!

Finally, when the plant stops to grow it has become a **grown adult**. Adult plants can grow **flowers**. These flowers will have their own tiny seeds inside of them. The tiny seeds will grow to be the same kind of plant as its parent. Animals and insects will spread these seeds as they are eating from the plant. The seeds will begin to grow in a new place and it is the start of another plant life cycle.



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