

Why Leaves Change Color

Read the text. Then answer the questions on the next page.

- 1 In summer, the leaves on many trees are green. In fall, they turn yellow, orange, and red. Why does this happen?
- 2 Leaves are green because they are full of a green material called chlorophyll (say it: KLOR-uh-fil). Chlorophyll uses sunlight to make food for the tree. In summer the days are long, so the leaves make a lot of food.
- 3 In fall, the days get shorter and cooler. There is less sunlight, so the tree stops making chlorophyll. The green color fades away. Yellow and orange were in the leaf all along, but the green covered them up. Now we can see them. Some leaves also make a new red color in the fall.
- 4 Soon the leaves fall to the ground. A tree cannot make much food in the dark, cold winter. Because it drops its leaves, the tree saves water and rests until spring.



Why Leaves Change Color: Questions

Go back to the text to find your proof. Underline it in the color shown.

1. Why are leaves green in summer?

red

- ☐ They are wet from the rain.
- ☐ They are full of chlorophyll.
- ☐ They are very young.

2. What causes the tree to stop making chlorophyll?

orange

- ☐ There is less sunlight in fall.
- ☐ The leaves get too heavy.
- ☐ Animals eat the leaves.

3. What colors can we see after the green fades away? Why?

yellow

4. Finish the chart. A cause is why something happens. An effect is what happens.

CAUSE

In summer the days are long.

→

EFFECT

CAUSE

→

EFFECT

The tree stops making chlorophyll.

CAUSE

The tree drops its leaves.

→

EFFECT

5. Which word in paragraph 4 tells you that a cause is coming?

green

- ☐ soon
- ☐ because
- ☐ until

Why Leaves Change Color: Answer Key

Answers are in green. The proof is where to find each answer in the text.

1. Why are leaves green in summer?

red

- ☐ They are wet from the rain.
- ☒ **They are full of chlorophyll.**
- ☐ They are very young.

Proof Paragraph 2: “Leaves are green because they are full of a green material called chlorophyll”

2. What causes the tree to stop making chlorophyll?

orange

- ☒ **There is less sunlight in fall.**
- ☐ The leaves get too heavy.
- ☐ Animals eat the leaves.

Proof Paragraph 3: “There is less sunlight, so the tree stops making chlorophyll.”

3. What colors can we see after the green fades away? Why?

yellow

Yellow and orange. They were in the leaf all along, but the green covered them up.

4. Finish the chart. A cause is why something happens. An effect is what happens.

CAUSE

In summer the days are long.

→

EFFECT

The leaves make a lot of food.

CAUSE

There is less sunlight in fall.

→

EFFECT

The tree stops making chlorophyll.

CAUSE

The tree drops its leaves.

→

EFFECT

The tree saves water.

5. Which word in paragraph 4 tells you that a cause is coming?

green

- ☐ soon
- ☒ **because**
- ☐ until

Proof Paragraph 4: “Because it drops its leaves, the tree saves water and rests until spring.”