

## Distinguishing main idea and supporting details

**Instructions:** Read the passage. Then complete the activities that follow.

### Beware of these plants!

An unsuspecting fly lands inside the two halves of a green leaf. Perhaps it was attracted by the soft pink colour in the middle of the green. Suddenly the halves of the green leaf snap shut. The fly has become the plant's dinner. This is not a description of a monster plant created in someone's mind. This is a real plant whose diet consists mainly of insects.

There are millions of plants in the world. Some of these plants get part of their food from insects. Some of these plants catch insects on sticky hairs or leaves. Others drown their insect victims in pools of water. One catches unlucky insects when they fly too close to its leaves.

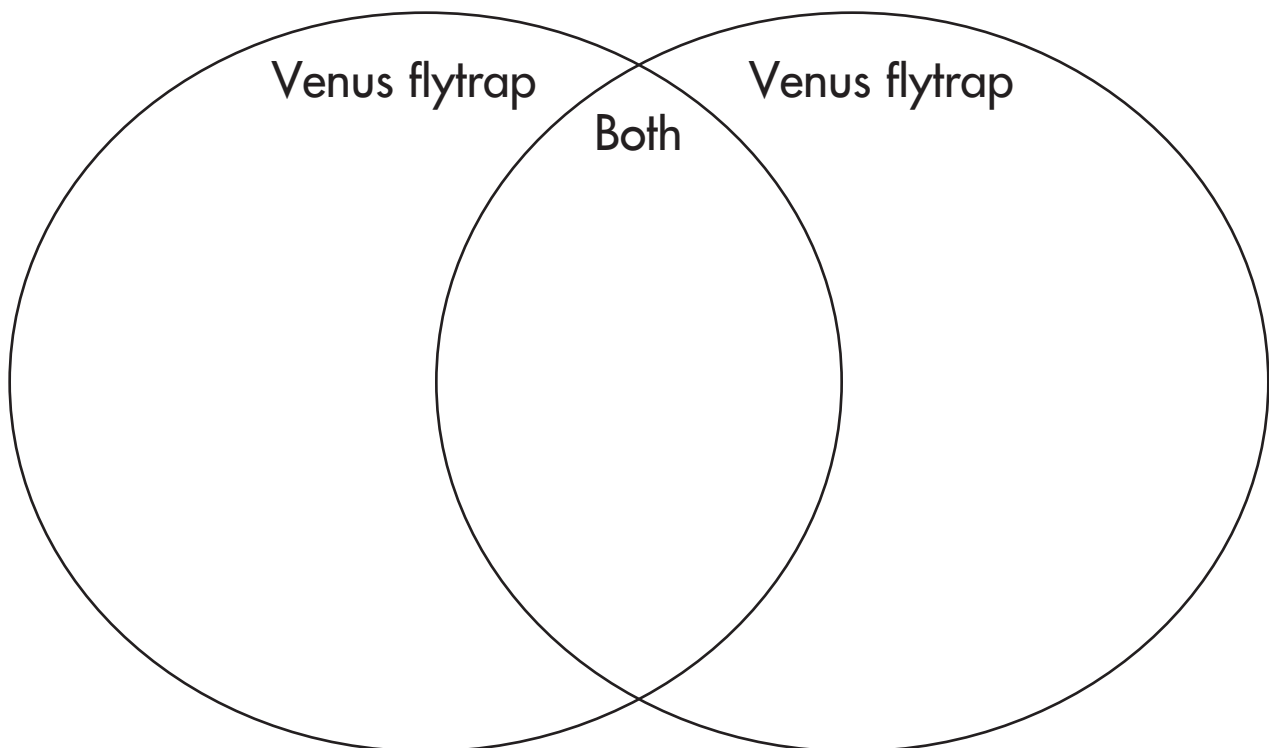
The *pitcher plant* is an insect-eating plant. Pitcher plants have leaves that form into tubes. These tubes sometimes flare out at the top. The sturdy tubes are able to gather rainwater. Stiff hairs grow downward along the inside of the tube. This stops the insects crawling out once they are inside the tube. The leaf is also covered in wax. The wax makes the leaf slippery. The insect slides into the rainwater at the bottom and drowns. In time, the plant will take the insect in as food.

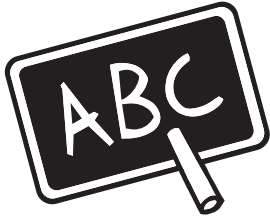
Another kind of insect-eating plant catches insects with its leaves. The *Venus flytrap* can sense when an insect is nearby. Its leaves open and close like jaws. Around the leaves' edges are little prickly spines. Three trigger hairs grow out of the leaves' pink centre. They are called *trigger hairs* because they signal to the leaves to begin snapping. If an insect touches only one of the hairs, nothing happens, but if two hairs are

touched, the leaf shuts and the fly is captured. With their sharp little teeth clamped tight, the leaves cannot be forced apart. Small creatures are trapped inside. It takes several weeks for a fly to be digested by the plant. If the leaves miss their victim, they will reopen in about 30 minutes.

In some ways, these insect-eating plants are like other plants. For example, like ordinary plants, they need water and sunlight to grow. However, insect-eating plants also need the insects to survive. The insects are like plant vitamins. They do for the insect-eating plant what a multivitamin does for a human. They help keep it strong and healthy.

**Instructions:** Write details about the pitcher plant in the left circle. Write details about the Venus flytrap the right circle. Write details that apply to both plants in the middle.





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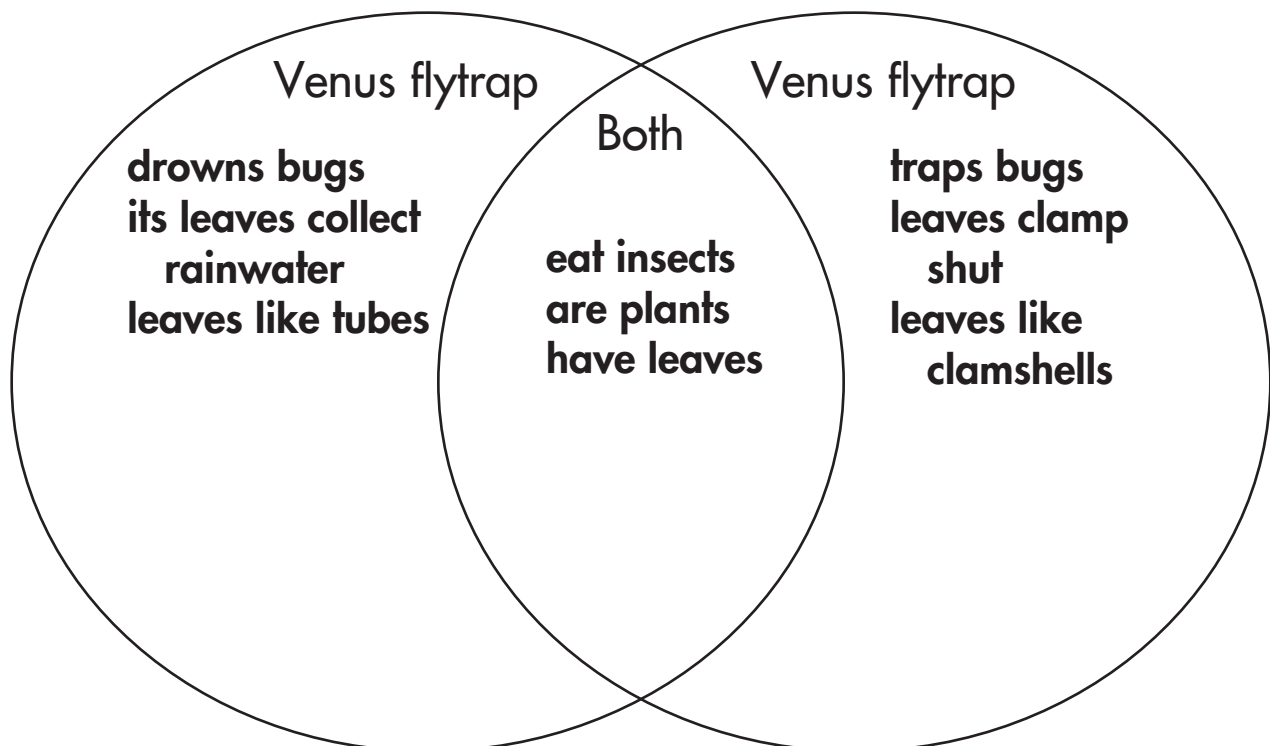
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**Instructions:** In the boxes below, draw what you think these plants might look like.

Pitcher plant

Venus flytrap