**Killer Plants**

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| Level | K (Fountas & Pinnell) or equivalent |
| Subject Area | Science |
| Concepts | Survival, interdependence |
| Reading Focus | Students will learn to use the comprehension strategies of Asking Questions and Determining Important Ideas as they read, think, talk and write in response to the text. |
| Text Type | Informational |
| Academic Vocabulary | air, dissolve, energy, food, forest, insect, lake, light, liquid, mixture, plant, size, soil, United States, water, streams |

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| **Topic Talk** | * Have students talk about the plants they see around their house and school. Ask: “What do plants need to be healthy?” Why do we have them in our homes and school? * Show students the cover of the book and read the title and back cover blurb aloud. Ask: “From the cover photograph and the blurb, what do you predict the book will be about? What surprises might lie ahead?” |
| **Contents** | * Open to the contents page and ask: “Why do books have contents pages?” Discuss that contents pages are helpful for finding your way through the book, and they hint at what is inside. * Read the titles of the chapters aloud. * Ask students to look at the chapter titles, and to think of questions they have about the book. Choose some students to share their questions with the group. * Introduce students to Agent Nat the Ant at the bottom of the page and read the speech bubble aloud. |
| **Opening Chapters** | * Read aloud the chapter 1 title, and pages 2 and 3 together. * Look closely at the first paragraphs on page 3. Ask: “What is the important idea?” Have some students share their ideas. * Explain that important ideas are what the author is trying to tell you. * Look closely at the second paragraph on page 3. Explain that there is an important idea, but there are also details that support the idea. Have students identify which part is the important idea, and which parts are the details. Use a graphic organiser such as a table or branching diagram. * Read page 4 together. * Check in with students if any of their questions from earlier have been answered yet. (If yes, ask: “What was your question and what was the answer?”) * Have students share if they have thought of any new questions while reading. * Read aloud the chapter 2 title and page 5 and 6 together (pause at the ant questions). * Have students lace their fingers together to better understand how the flytrap cage locks its “teeth” together. * Ask: “What important idea is the author trying to tell us on these pages?” Have students think, pair, share about the main idea, then discuss as a group. * Explain that authors use supporting details to tell you more about the important idea and to “hold up” the main idea – like walls hold up a roof to make a house stronger. * Model finding a supporting detail for the important idea by doing a “think aloud” and show how it makes the important idea stronger. * Have students think, pair, share about the ant questions. * Read pages 7 and 8 together. * Ask students to think of a question about Venus flytraps. Use Visible Thinking Routine “Think Puzzle Explore” to document learning process here. * Discuss asking questions as you read helps to look more closely at a text and find out what things you want to know more about. * Ask: “If we have questions that aren’t answered in the book, how could we find out the answers?” Have students brainstorm different ways they could research their questions about killer plants. * Set a purpose for reading from chapter 3 to the end of the book:   + While you are reading, try to think of questions to ask. (Optional: note down questions, and cross them off if they are answered.)   + Try to think about what the author is trying to tell you in each part – what is the important idea?   + Pause at the ant questions to answer them, and read the Ant Tunnel carefully. |

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| As students read on independently, you can check in with them to discuss the ant questions, or personalize learning more by using the *Mini-Lessons* and *Fluency, Language and Text Features* to scaffold parts of the book that might be unfamiliar or challenging.  Bring students together again for reflection using the “After Reading” prompts. |

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| **After Reading** | 1. Ask students to brainstorm the things mentioned in the book that plants (and all living things) need to survive. Discuss if these needs are the same, or different, to people and animals. 2. Explain that this is one of the important ideas through the entire book. Ask: “What other important ideas did you discover as you read?” 3. Discuss how finding the important ideas helped to understand better what the author was saying and why they wrote the book. 4. Ask: “What questions did you think of as you were reading?” and “Were they answered in the book, or not?” Discuss how asking questions helps to think deeply about the text and figure out what information you’d like to find out. | |
| **Writing Prompts** | *Fiction* | Imagine that you are deep in a jungle and find a new killer plant. What does it look like? How does it catch food? Write a story about finding the plant, using lots of describing words (adjectives). |
| *Informational* | Write a step-by-step summary of how the bladderwort catches and digests its prey. |
| *Letter Writing* | Imagine that a swamp near you has lots of Venus flytraps and sundews in it – but it is going to be filled in to build a mall. Write a letter to the newspaper about why this should happen or not. |
| *Opinion* | Do you think strangler figs should be stopped from killing other trees? Why or why not? Remember to use evidence from the text, and add a conclusion. |
| *Research* | The pitcher plant and tree shrew help each other survive. Find out about another pair of plants and animals that work together to survive. Take notes, and write a summary about what you find out. |