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## **Level 5**

### **Plants can make intelligent decisions**

**4th July, 2016**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1607/160704-decisions-5.html>

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**Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.**

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# THE READING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1607/160704-decisions-5.html>

Plants are smarter than we think. Researchers say they are capable of making intelligent decisions. They say the humble pea plant can make decisions about how best to survive, even though it does not have a brain. Researchers from Oxford University grew several pea plants that had their roots in two different pots, each containing differing amounts of nutrients. One pot always had the same amount, while the other pot varied between a lot and a little. The plants were very consistent. Their roots almost always went to the pot with the most nutrients.

The research paper will be published in the 'Current Biology' journal. A researcher said it, "raises a question, not about plants, but about animals and humans". He thought the pea plant might be more efficient when making decisions than humans. He said: "We have a very fancy brain, but maybe most of the time we're not using it." He said pea plants do not have human-like intelligence, but they show complex behaviour to take advantage of their environment. It would be interesting to see how our lives would be different if we made decisions like the pea plant.

Sources: <http://gizmodo.com/plants-can-make-some-decisions-better-than-humans-1782946737>  
<http://www.techtimes.com/articles/168007/20160701/pea-plants-show-ability-to-take-risks-and-gamble-for-nutrients.htm>  
<http://www.wired.co.uk/article/pea-plants-can-gamble>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1607/160704-decisions-5.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. make decisions about how       | a. lot and a little     |
| 2. it does not have a             | b. best to survive      |
| 3. plants that had their roots in | c. consistent           |
| 4. each containing differing      | d. brain                |
| 5. One pot always had the same    | e. most nutrients       |
| 6. varied between a               | f. two different pots   |
| 7. The plants were very           | g. amounts of nutrients |
| 8. the pot with the               | h. amount               |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. research                  | a. of their environment |
| 2. it raises                 | b. like the pea plant   |
| 3. most of the time we're    | c. be different         |
| 4. plants do not have human- | d. a question           |
| 5. they show complex         | e. like intelligence    |
| 6. take advantage            | f. paper                |
| 7. see how our lives would   | g. not using it         |
| 8. made decisions            | h. behaviour            |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1607/160704-decisions-5.html>

Plants are (1) \_\_\_\_\_ think. Researchers say they are capable of making (2) \_\_\_\_\_. They say the humble pea plant can make decisions about how (3) \_\_\_\_\_, even though it does not have a brain. Researchers from Oxford University grew several pea plants that had their roots (4) \_\_\_\_\_ pots, each containing differing amounts of nutrients. One pot always had the same amount, while the other pot (5) \_\_\_\_\_ lot and a little. The plants were very consistent. Their roots almost always went to the pot with (6) \_\_\_\_\_.

The research paper (7) \_\_\_\_\_ in the 'Current Biology' journal. A researcher said it, "(8) \_\_\_\_\_, not about plants, but about animals and humans". He thought the pea plant might be more efficient when (9) \_\_\_\_\_ than humans. He said: "We have a very fancy brain, but maybe most of the time (10) \_\_\_\_\_." He said pea plants do not have (11) \_\_\_\_\_, but they show complex behaviour to take advantage of their environment. It would be interesting (12) \_\_\_\_\_ lives would be different if we made decisions like the pea plant.

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1607/160704-decisions-5.html>

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# DECISIONS SURVEY

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1607/160704-decisions-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about decisions in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

*Plants can make intelligent decisions – 4th July, 2016*  
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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

# WRITING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1607/160704-decisions-5.html>

Write about **decisions** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.

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