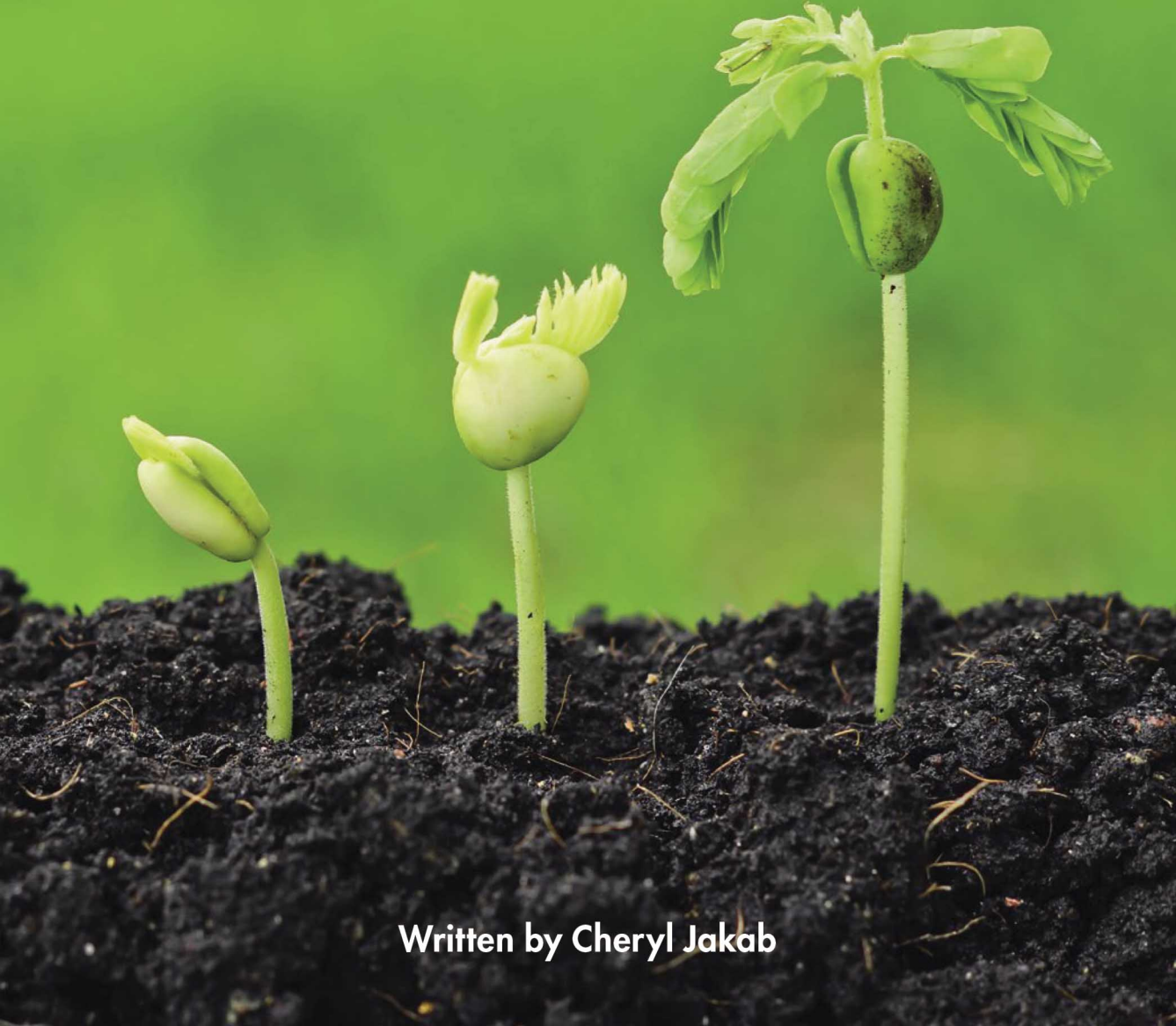
TALK ABOUT TEXTS

Plant Life Cycles



Written by Cheryl Jakab

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For Review Only

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macmillan education

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What is a Life Cycle?

A life cycle is a series of stages a living thing goes through in its life. For example, the life cycle of a frog has four stages – egg, tadpole, froglet and adult frog. The stages form a cycle. The cycle repeats when the living thing **reproduces**.

Plants are living things with life cycles. There are nearly 400 000 plant **species** on Earth. Some species live for just a few weeks. Others live for hundreds of years. During their lives, plants go through the various stages of their life cycles.

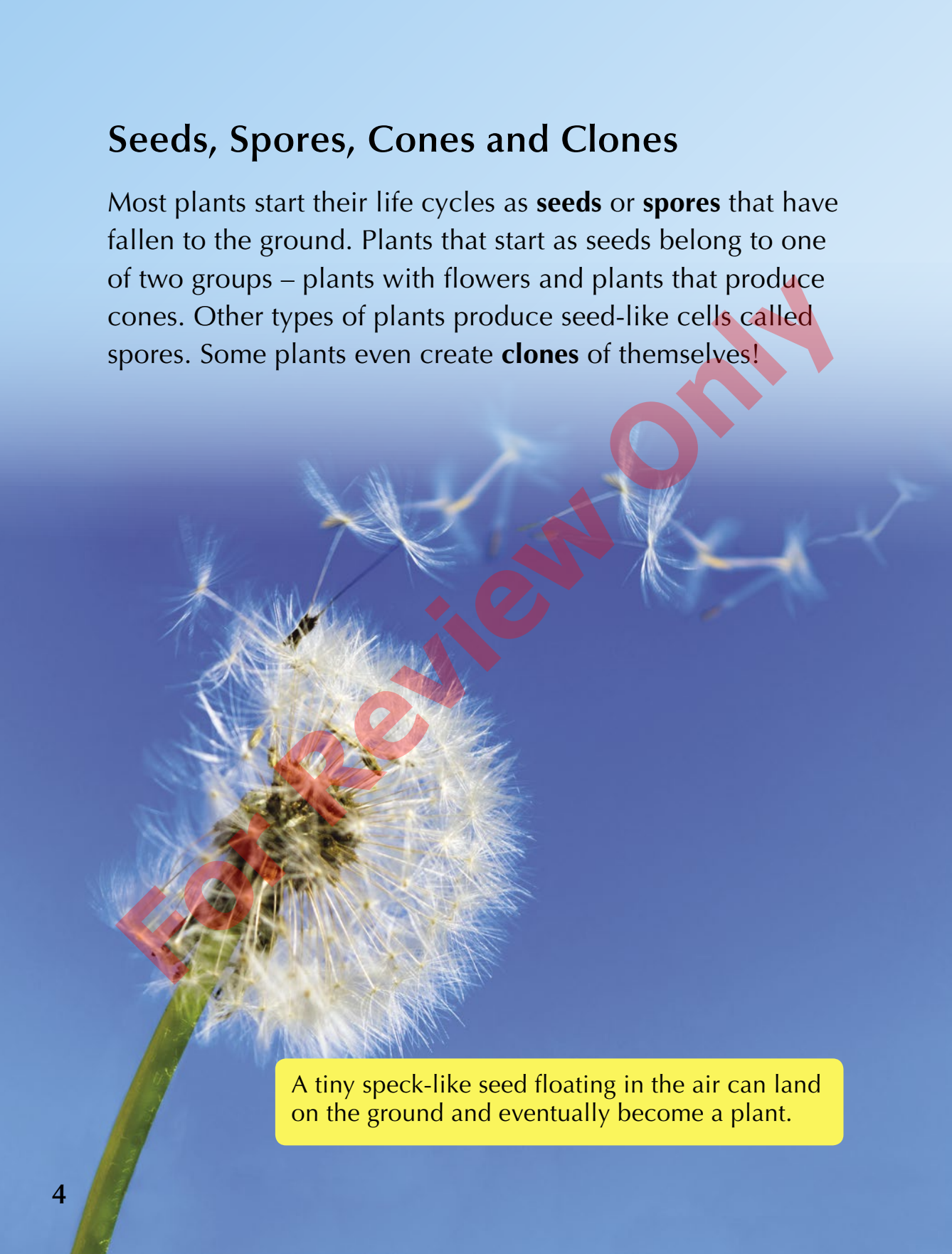
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All kinds of plants, from trees to shrubs, go through a life cycle.

Seeds, Spores, Cones and Clones

Most plants start their life cycles as **seeds** or **spores** that have fallen to the ground. Plants that start as seeds belong to one of two groups – plants with flowers and plants that produce cones. Other types of plants produce seed-like cells called spores. Some plants even create **clones** of themselves!



A tiny speck-like seed floating in the air can land on the ground and eventually become a plant.

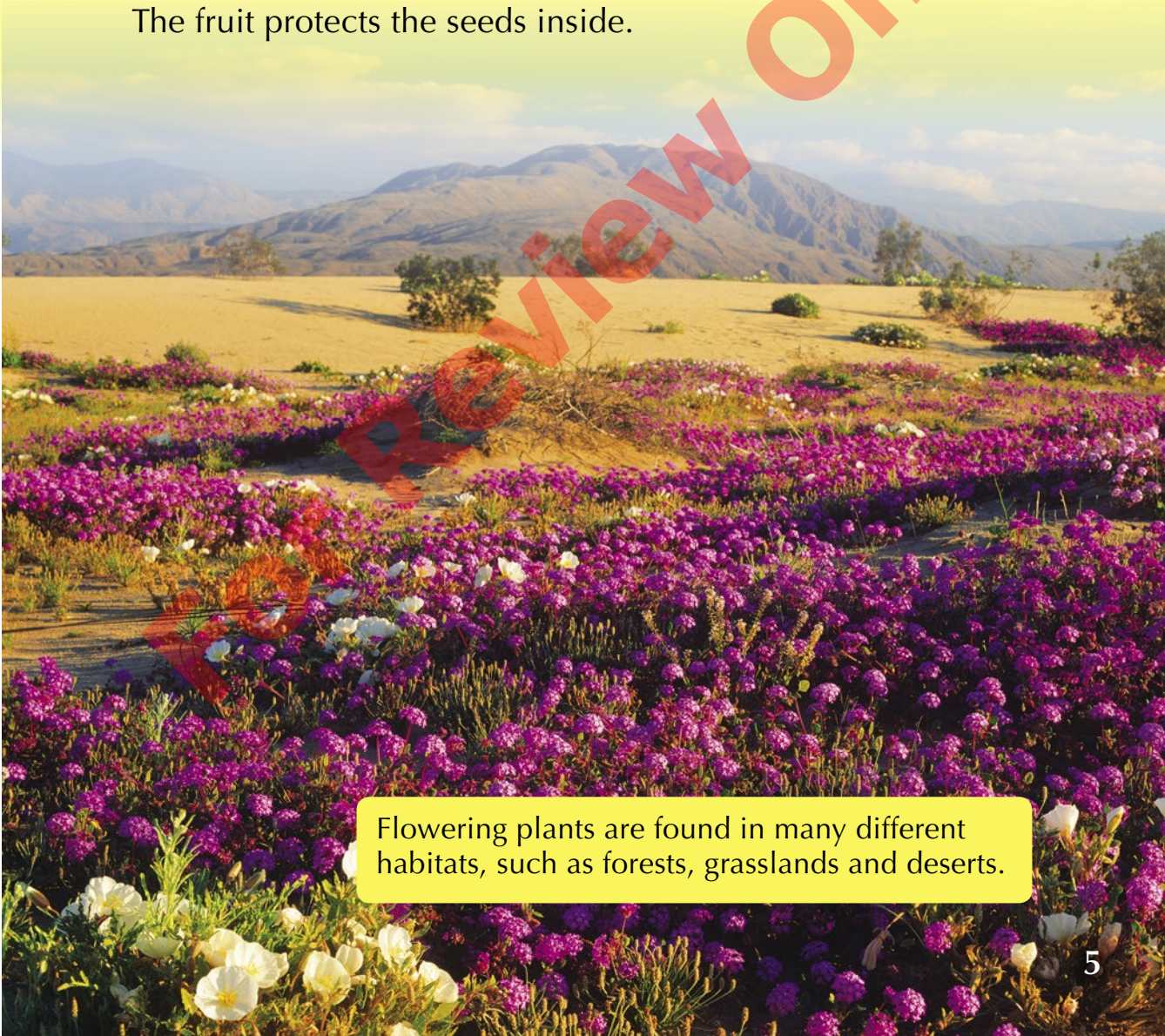
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Flowering Plants

Plants that produce flowers at some stage in their life cycle are known as flowering plants. Some examples of flowering plants are roses, apples and zucchinis.

Flowers on a flowering plant produce one or more seeds. In many flowering plants, a part of the flower grows into fruit. The fruit protects the seeds inside.

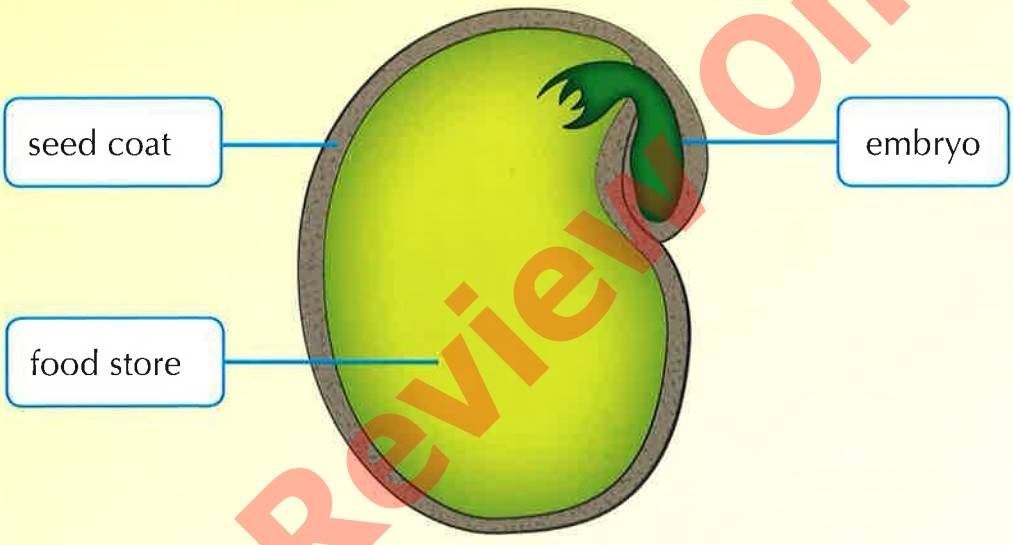
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Flowering plants are found in many different habitats, such as forests, grasslands and deserts.

Seed Stage

The seed is the first stage of a flowering plant's life cycle. An adult plant produces one or more seeds. A seed contains the embryo. This is a tiny plant that grows inside the seed. The seed is covered with a seed coat. The seed provides food and a safe home for the embryo.



The embryo is safe in the seed, waiting to grow.

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Seeds come in many shapes, sizes and colours. The seeds of the cacao tree are huge compared to the size of the plant. The coconut produces a few giant seeds at a time. The giant eucalyptus produces thousands of very tiny seeds.



A seed from the coco de mer palm tree can weigh almost 25 kilograms.

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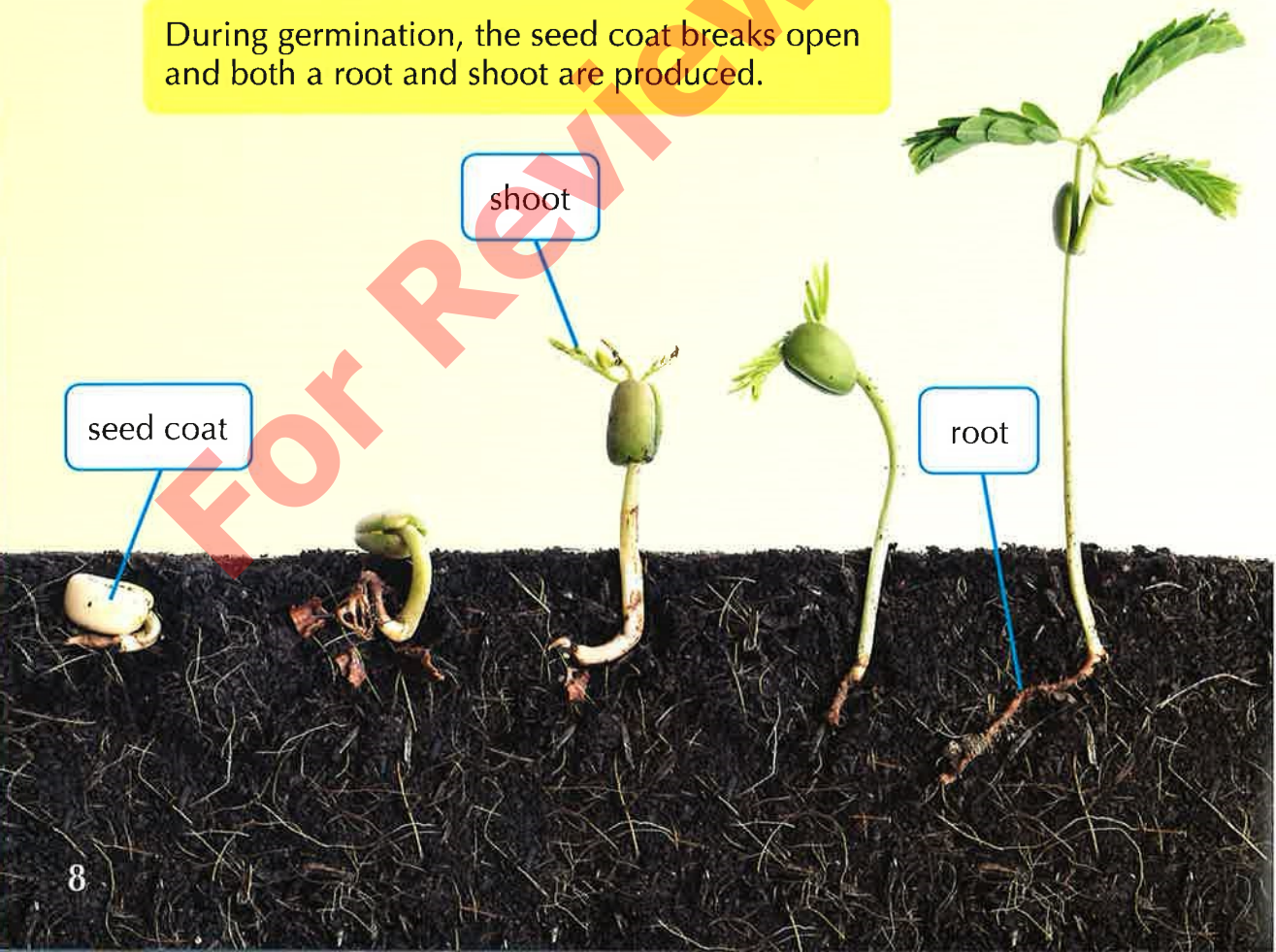
Seeds often end up far from the adult plant. The wind can carry light seeds away. Seeds in fruit may be eaten by animals and then left in a different place after they are digested.

Seedling Stage

The tiny plant that grows from a seed is called a seedling. A seed starts to grow when it gets water and warmth. Most seeds need soil and light, too. When a seed starts to change into a seedling, it is called germination.

Germination happens after the seed coat is softened by water and breaks open. The seed grows a tiny root and a shoot. The seed provides food for the seedling at this early stage.

During germination, the seed coat breaks open and both a root and shoot are produced.



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