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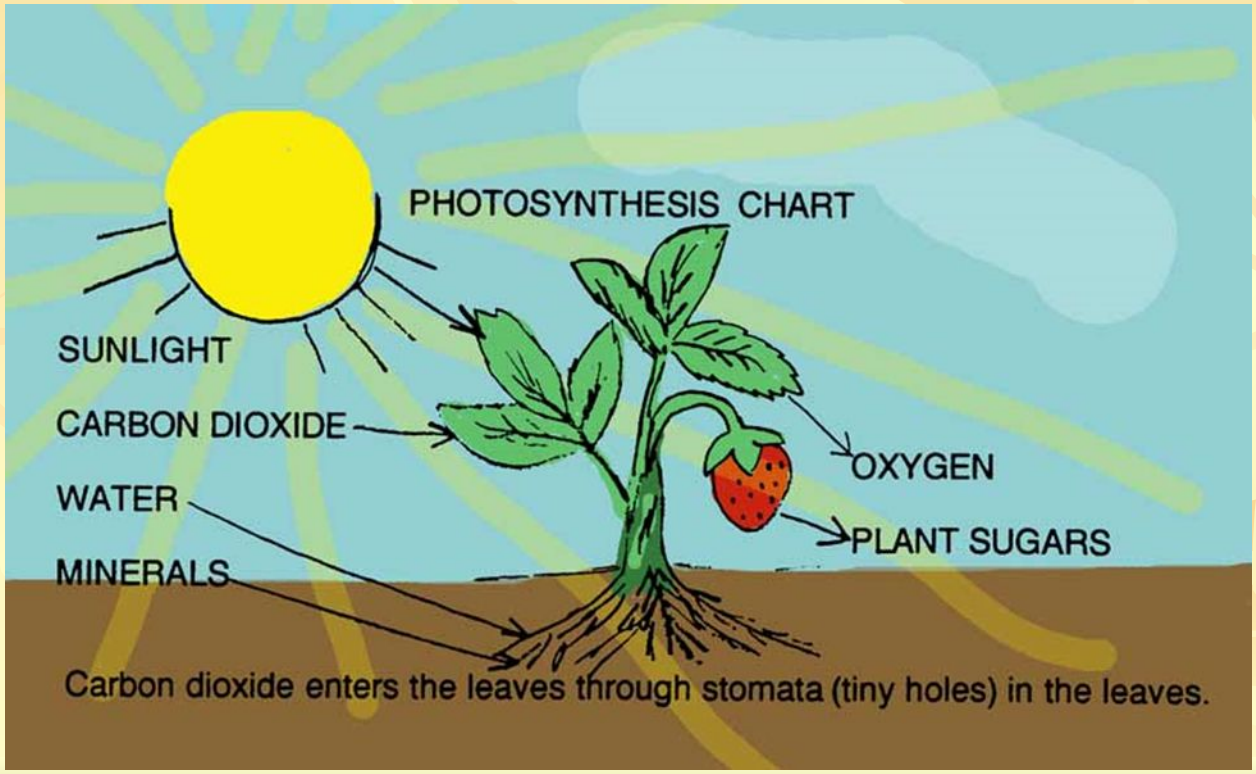
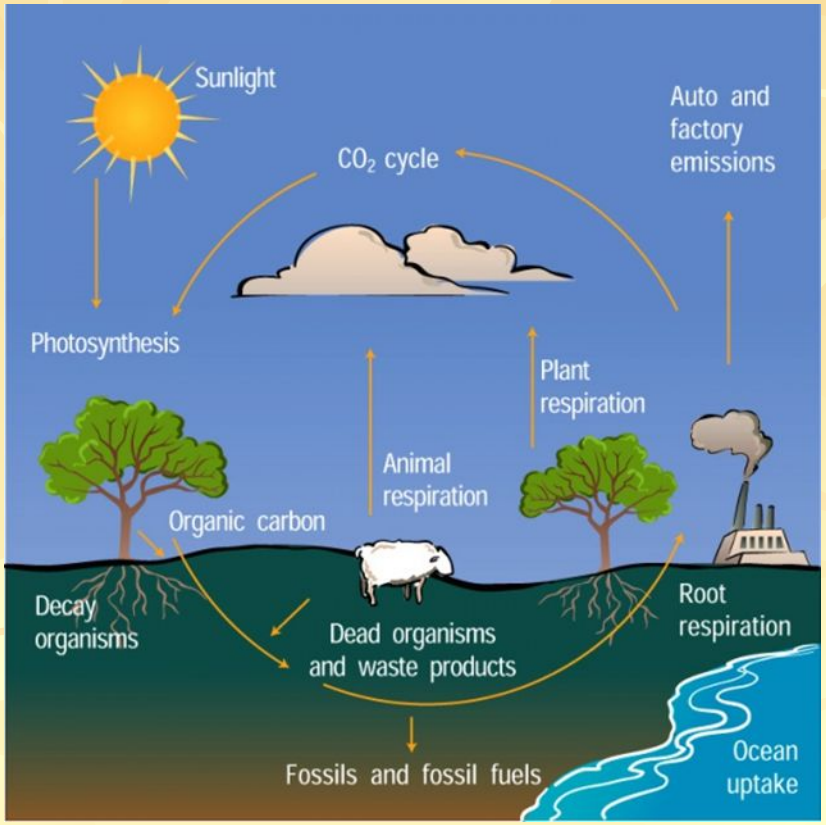
PHOTOSYNTHESIS



WHAT IS PHOTOSYNTHESIS?

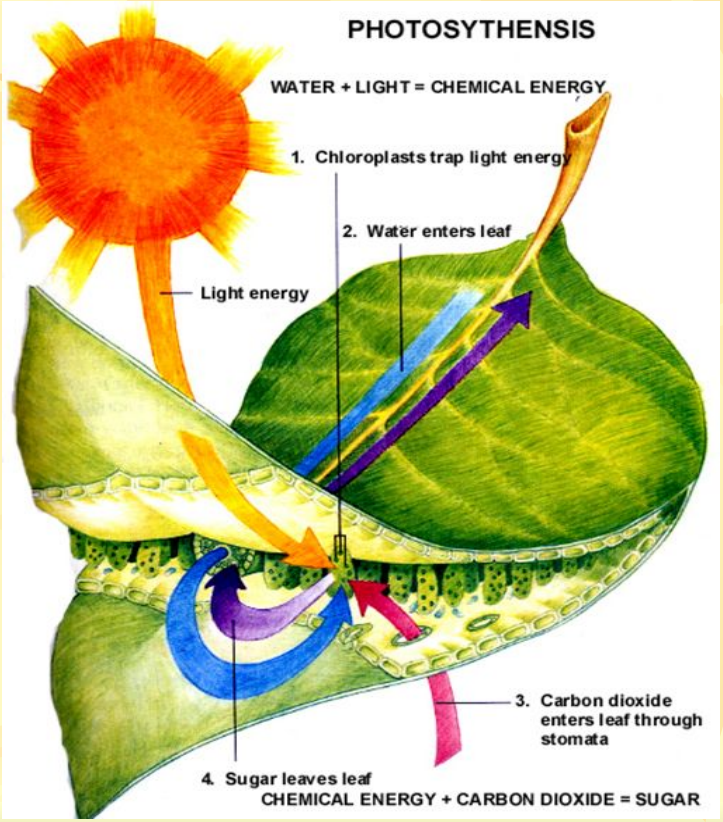


Some animals eat plants to get energy. Other animals eat these animals to obtain the energy they need. Plants produce their own food using energy from the sun. This process is called «photosynthesis».

FOOD FROM THE SUN.

Photosynthesis uses energy from the sun to change carbon dioxide and water into carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are chemicals that contain hydrogen, carbon and oxygen and they are the plants' food.

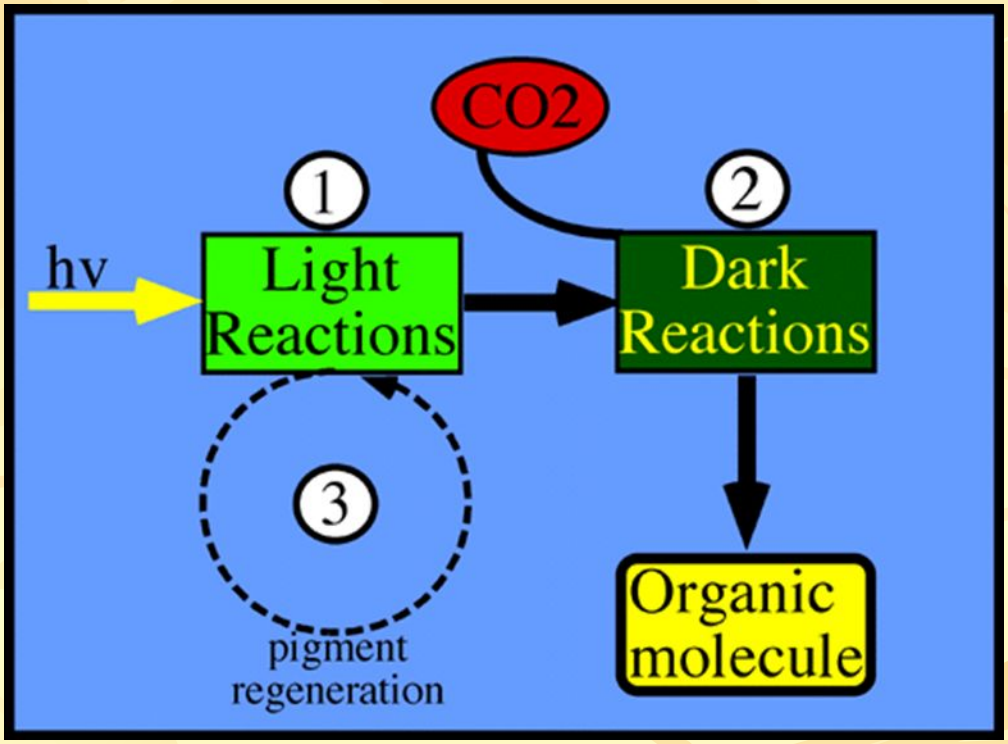
The plant absorbs carbon dioxide through tiny holes in it's leaves and sucks up water from the soil through it's roots. A green substance in the plants leaves called chlorophyll absorbs energy from the sun.



THE LIGHT AND DARK REACTIONS.

THERE ARE TWO STAGES TO THE PHOTOSYNTHESIS PROCESS.

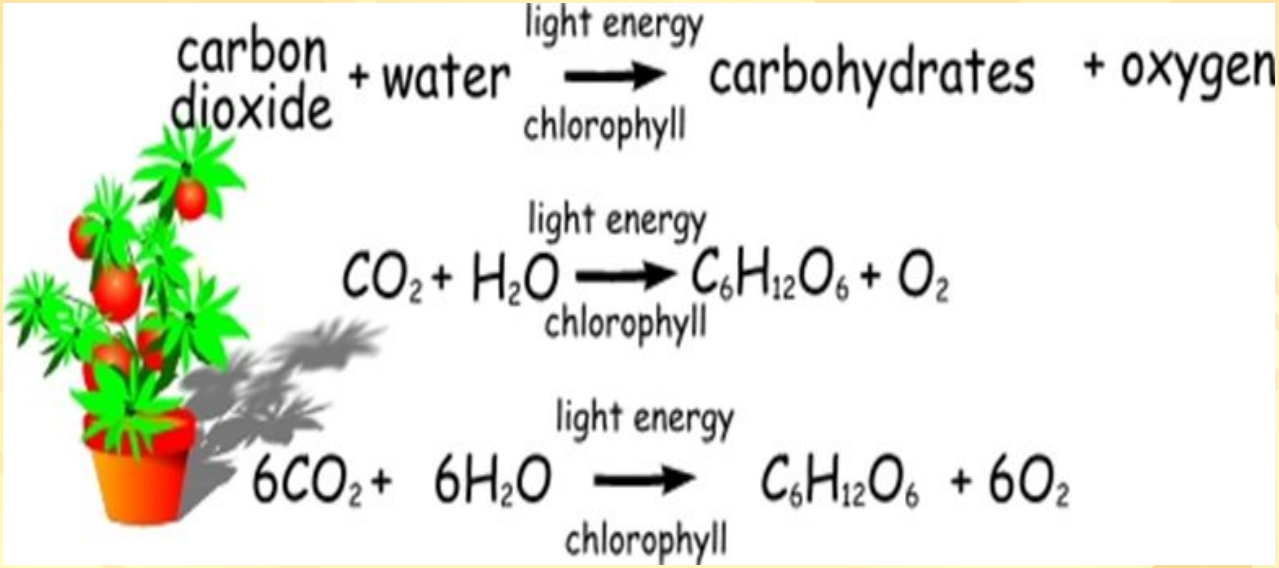
The first stage is called the light reaction, light energy from the sun is converted into chemical energy. This energy is stored in a chemical called ATP (adenosine triphosphate).



The second stage of the process is the dark reaction. The plant converts the carbon dioxide and water into carbohydrates. Carbohydrates provide the plant with the energy it needs in order to grow.

A BIT OF SCIENCE!

This chemical reaction involved in photosynthesis can be summarized by these equations:



The equation shows how important photosynthesis is for life. As well as providing food for the plant from the sun's energy, the equation shows that the reaction also produces the oxygen that animals need to breathe.

A LIFE-GIVING PROCESS.

WITHOUT PHOTOSYNTHESIS OUR PLANET COULD NOT SUPPORT LIFE AS WE KNOW IT.