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**Level 5 – 3rd April 2023**

## **Scientists say plants 'scream' when stressed**

**FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:**

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2304/230403-plants-scream-5.html>

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

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2304/230403-plants-scream-5.html>

Plant lovers talk to plants to help them grow. Scientists believe plants may be able to talk back. Researchers found that plants emit sounds when they are stressed. The noises are similar to a human scream. The sounds are specific enough for us to be able to interpret and attend to a plant's needs. Unfortunately, the sounds are at a frequency that the human ear cannot hear. We can only hear frequencies of up to 16 kilohertz. Special AI algorithms detected ultrasonic sounds from plants that were up to 250 kilohertz. The AI also detected different types of plant sounds.

The research was done in an acoustic chamber in an adapted greenhouse in Israel. Scientists found that vibrations from stressed tomato plants turned into sound waves. A researcher said: "Plants usually emit sounds when they are under stress. Each plant and each type of stress is associated with a specific identifiable sound." She said animals and insects could hear the sounds. Understanding these sounds could help us understand when crops are dehydrated. Farmers could irrigate their fields more efficiently. This could conserve water.

Sources: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/plants-emit-a-rather-noisy-cry-for-help-when-under-stress-scientists-find/>  
<https://www.sciencealert.com/plants-really-do-scream-out-loud-we-just-never-heard-it-until-now>  
<https://gizmodo.com/plants-make-popping-sounds-when-stressed-study-1850283774>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2304/230403-plants-scream-5.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Plant                           | a. kilohertz          |
| 2. plants emit                     | b. ear cannot hear    |
| 3. at a frequency that the human   | c. algorithms         |
| 4. We can only hear frequencies of | d. different types    |
| 5. Special AI                      | e. sounds             |
| 6. detected ultrasonic             | f. lovers             |
| 7. up to 250                       | g. up to 16 kilohertz |
| 8. The AI also detected            | h. sounds from plants |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. done in an acoustic        | a. stressed tomato plants |
| 2. vibrations from            | b. are dehydrated         |
| 3. sound                      | c. water                  |
| 4. Plants usually             | d. identifiable sound     |
| 5. associated with a specific | e. waves                  |
| 6. understand when crops      | f. more efficiently       |
| 7. irrigate their fields      | g. emit sounds            |
| 8. This could conserve        | h. chamber                |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2304/230403-plants-scream-5.html>

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ to plants to help them grow. Scientists believe plants may be able (2) \_\_\_\_\_. Researchers found that plants emit sounds when they are stressed. The noises are similar to a human scream. The sounds (3) \_\_\_\_\_ for us to be able to interpret and attend to a plant's needs. Unfortunately, the sounds are (4) \_\_\_\_\_ that the human ear cannot hear. We can only hear frequencies of up to 16 kilohertz. (5) \_\_\_\_\_ detected ultrasonic sounds from plants that were up to 250 kilohertz. The AI (6) \_\_\_\_\_ types of plant sounds.

The research was done (7) \_\_\_\_\_ chamber in an adapted greenhouse in Israel. Scientists found that vibrations from stressed tomato plants (8) \_\_\_\_\_ waves. A researcher said: "Plants usually (9) \_\_\_\_\_ they are under stress. Each plant and each type of stress (10) \_\_\_\_\_ a specific identifiable sound." She said animals and insects could hear the sounds. Understanding these sounds could help us (11) \_\_\_\_\_ are dehydrated. Farmers could irrigate their fields more efficiently. (12) \_\_\_\_\_ water.

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2304/230403-plants-scream-5.html>

Plantloverstalktoplantstohelpthemgrow.Scientistsbelieveplantsmaybeabletotalkback.Researchersfoundthatplantsemitsoundswhentheyearestressed.Thenoisesaresimilartoahumanscream.Thesoundsarespecificenoughforustobeabletointerpretandattendtoaplant'sneeds.Unfortunately,thesoundsareatafrequencythatthehumanearcannothear.Wecanonlyhearfrequenciesofupto16kilohertz.SpecialAIalgorithmsdetectedultrasonicsoundsfromplantsthatwereupto250kilohertz.TheAIalsodetecteddifferenttypesofplantsounds.TheresearchwasdoneinanacousticchamberinanadaptedgreenhouseinIsrael.Scientistsfoundthatvibrationsfromstressedtomatoplantsturnedintosoundwaves.Aresearchersaid:"Plantsusuallyemitsoundswhentheyareunderstress.Eachplantandeachtypeofstressisassociatedwithaspecificidentifiablesound."Shesaidanimalsandinsectscouldhearthesounds.Understandingthesesoundscouldhelpusunderstandwhencropsaredehydrated.Farmerscouldirrigatetheirfieldsmoreefficiently.Thiscouldconserve water.

# PLANTS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2304/230403-plants-scream-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about plants 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<br>_____ | STUDENT 2<br>_____ | STUDENT 3<br>_____ |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 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) \_\_\_\_\_

*Scientists say plants 'scream' when stressed – 3rd April 2023*  
More free lessons at [breakingnewsenglish.com](https://breakingnewsenglish.com)

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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 <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2304/230403-plants-scream-5.html>

Write about **plants** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner’s paper.

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