

Learn About Apple Trees



Apple trees, along with cherry, peach, apricot, plum, and pear trees, are part of the rose family. Members of the rose family are mostly found in the Northern Hemisphere, as we here in the United States are well aware. Apple trees are found in nearly every part of North America. However, scientists believe that apples originated in Asia. For certain, China is world's leading producer of apples.

There are more than 7500 different types of apples in the world. This makes apples one of the most widely grown tree fruits. Some of the varieties of apple include Fuji, Gala, Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, Pink Lady, McIntosh, and Granny Smith.

It takes at least 3 years for a tree to become mature enough to bear apples. Mature apple trees blossom in spring and fruit in autumn. The spring blossoms, which vary in color from white to pink to yellow, are very important in the fruiting process. Bees fly from flower to flower collecting nectar. As they collect the nectar, pollen catches on their feet and body. Pollen is tiny yellow grains that come from the flower's center to fertilize other flowers. When they fly to another apple tree to gather nectar from its flowers, some of the pollen drops off onto the new flowers. This pollen from a separate tree is necessary for the creation of an apple. So if you want to grow apples, you have to have at least 2 trees. If you only have one tree, it will never fruit because bees will never bring the right pollen to it.

During the summer, the petals fall from the pollinated flowers and the fruit begins to grow. It takes several months for the fruit to reach maturity. It takes the energy of 50 leaves to produce one apple, so there is a lot of work going on even when it doesn't look like much is happening. The right amount of water, sunlight, and nutrients must feed the tree to produce good apples.

Autumn is when the magic happens—the fruits mature and are ready to eat. But apples aren't just food. They contain the seeds to make new trees. The seeds, also known as pips, are found in small pockets within the apple's core called carpels. There are about 8 pips in an apple, though it varies due to the tree's health and variety.

Apple seeds contain a small amount of the poison cyanide. But don't worry; the human body has a natural defense against small doses of cyanide. You would have to eat more

than 100 seeds to be poisoned, so if you accidentally swallow 1 or two, no harm will be done.

Winter is a time of rest and rejuvenation for the apple tree. Some orchard growers prune their trees during this time. This helps remove dead or dying growth and encourage apple growth during the next season. The tree needs to get a certain amount of hours at the chilly temperature of 33-45 degrees Fahrenheit or it won't produce fruit the next year. Winter is also a good time of year for planting apple trees, so long as the ground hasn't frozen.

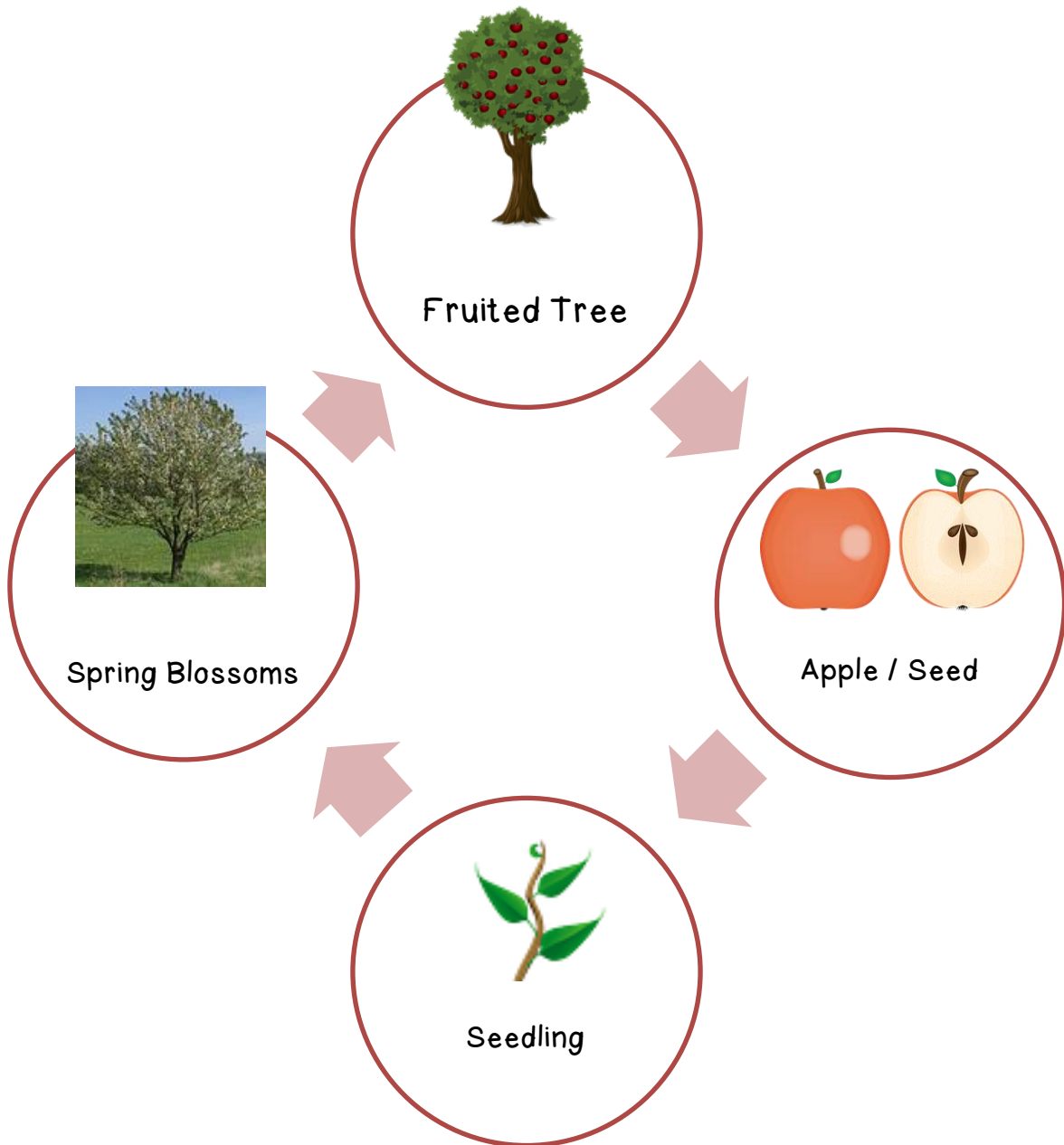
Apples trees work hard to produce the fruit we love. Apples are fat-free, sodium-free, and cholesterol-free while being full of fiber and antioxidants. So even though an apple a day might not really keep the doctor away, they are still a very healthy snack.

Write the definition:

1. Pollen: _____
2. Nectar: _____
3. Pip: _____
4. Pollinate: _____
5. Maturity: _____
6. Carpels: _____
7. Rejuvenation: _____
8. Orchard: _____
9. Prune: _____

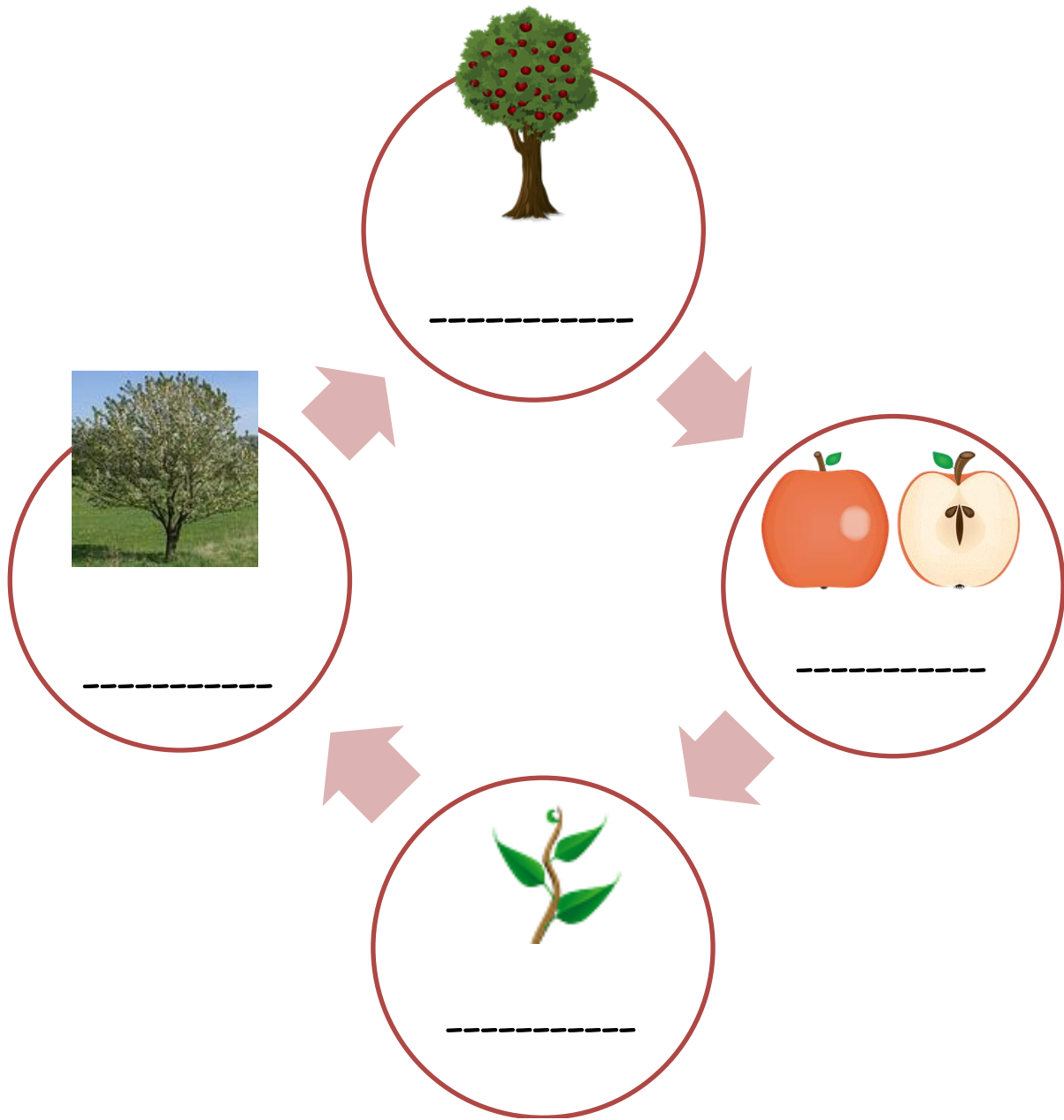
List 5 varieties of apple:

Life Cycle of an Apple Tree

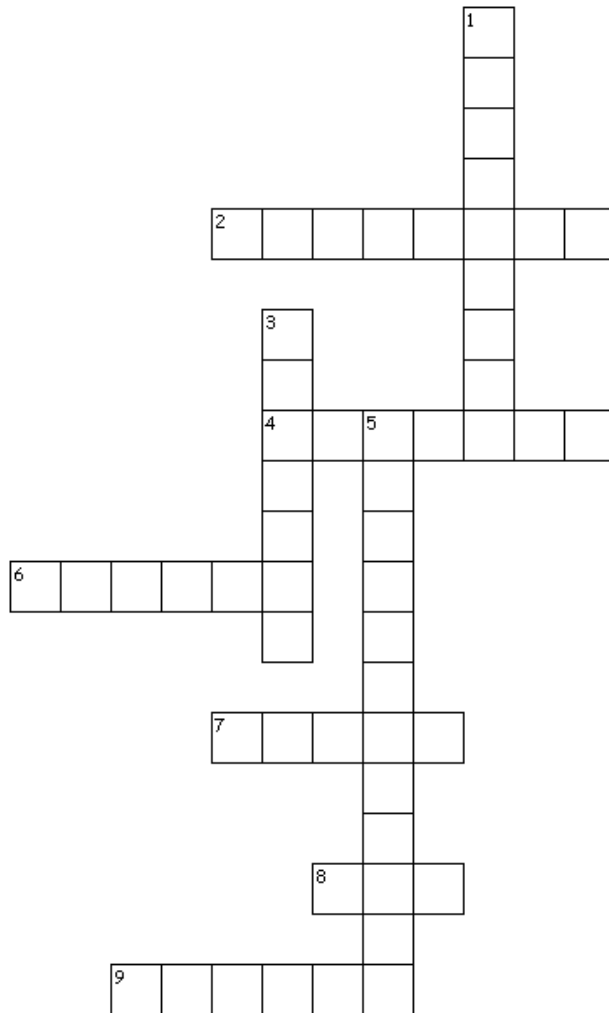


Life Cycle of an Apple Tree

Fill in the blanks



Apple Tree Crossword Puzzle



Across

- 2. Completely grown
- 4. Small pockets in an apple's core where seeds are found
- 6. What bees collect from flowers
- 7. Remove dead or dying growth from a tree in order to shape it and encourage new growth
- 8. Another name for apple seed
- 9. Tiny yellow grains from flower's center

Down

- 1. Carry pollen to a flower in order to fertilize it
- 3. A fruit tree farm
- 5. Restoring to feel fresh and lively

| Word Bank | | |
|--------------|-----------|----------|
| Carpel | Nectar | Pollen |
| Orchard | Pip | Prune |
| Rejuvenation | Pollinate | Maturity |

Apple Tree Word Search

C K C D P J X C K A M R P I B
S P A R B F J N U O E C B I C
U B R A E F L T S J B E E S P
L F P H S C U S U N E C T A R
Z I E C K M O V L B S O E K O
E Y L R N L E T A N I L L O P
E S T O B N P D T Y H V X E R
R K Z I A O E O G N I R P S U
T M W T R E E S L V U R R T U
O O I T S U D P K L R D L K A
C O U E B O T Q I J E A D J U
N J P N N U A A Q P I N M R W
X Z M K M U X B M Y F U M U Q
B H W C U Y R K H Y O N G M B
D L A G G E T P N K F K L H T

AUTUMN
CARPEL
ORCHARD
POLLINATE
SEED

BEEES
MATURITY
PIP
PRUNE
SPRING

BLOSSOM
NECTAR
POLLEN
REJUVENATION
TREE