

READ THE PASSAGE Focus on the most important information.

Inside a Seed

Seeds are everywhere. They can glide through the air or hitch a ride on an animal's fur. Seeds come in different shapes and sizes. But they are the same in one way. Inside each seed is the beginning of a new plant. Take a look inside a bean to see for yourself.

First, get several dried beans such as lima beans or pinto beans. Notice how hard the beans feel. Now, place the beans in a container and cover them with water. Let the beans soak overnight. They are bigger and softer now. Next, gently peel off the seed coating. This covering protects the baby plant inside, just as a jacket protects you from the cold. Then, open the bean into its two halves. With a magnifying lens, you can see the little plant that is waiting to grow. Do you see a root and tiny leaves? Around the tiny plant is food. It will use this food as it sprouts and starts to grow. Finally, plant the other beans in potting soil and watch them become bean plants.

SKILL PRACTICE Read the item. Write your response.

1. How does the author say you can soften lima beans?

2. What can you see with a magnifying glass?

3. In what way do seeds differ?

STRATEGY PRACTICE Draw a box around the words in the passage that signal steps in a sequence.