

How a Pumpkin Grows



Read the passage. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

A pumpkin starts as a flat seed. Pumpkin seeds will not sprout in cold soil, so they are planted in late spring or early summer, once there is no more frost. After 7 to 10 days, a shoot pushes up out of the soil.

The plant grows into a long vine with big leaves. Then flowers open on the vine. The first flowers are almost always male. Each one blooms for just one day and then drops off. A week or two later, female flowers open. A female flower has a tiny pumpkin at its base.

Bees visit the flowers and carry pollen from the male flowers to the female ones. Then the tiny pumpkin starts to grow. It is green at first and turns orange as it ripens.

Most pumpkins need more than 100 days to ripen. That is why people who want pumpkins for Halloween plant them from late May to early July. Inside each pumpkin are the seeds for new plants.

1. How many days does it take for a pumpkin shoot to push up out of the soil?

2. What does a female flower have at its base?

3. Why does a pumpkin plant need bees?

4. If you wanted your own pumpkin for Halloween, when would you plant the seed? Why?

Answer key

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1. How many days does it take for a pumpkin shoot to push up out of the soil?
7 to 10 days.
2. What does a female flower have at its base?
A tiny pumpkin.
3. Why does a pumpkin plant need bees?
The bees carry pollen from the male flowers to the female flowers, and then the tiny pumpkins can grow.
4. If you wanted your own pumpkin for Halloween, when would you plant the seed? Why?
Sample answer: in late May or June, because most pumpkins need more than 100 days to ripen, and the seed needs warm soil with no more frost.