



## REVIEW

Sequence is the order in which things are done or events happen.

- Look for clue words that suggest order, such as *first*, *next*, *then*, *last*, *finally*, *before*, and *after*.
- Look for clues that tell about time, such as the time of day, the day of the week, the month, the season, and the year.
- When there are no clue words, think about the order in which things happen.

**Read this science article which describes the five steps in the soil cycle. As you read, think about the clue words that tell the order of the steps. Then answer the questions.**

### The Soil Cycle

Soil is a mixture of inorganic and organic materials—rock and minerals, as well as decaying animal and plant matter. The soil cycle explains how soil stays healthy by the recycling of nutrients in soil with the help of plants. Plants are key to the soil cycle.

During the warm months, the air, water, and nutrients in the soil promote plant growth. As water seeps into the ground, it breaks down soil particles, releasing nutrients. The nutrients remain dissolved in the water. Plants then absorb the nutrient-enriched water through their roots and grow new leaves.

When plants become dormant in the cold months, the leaves fall to the soil. This plant litter builds up and begins to decompose. Next, soil animals like beetles and earthworms eat the plant litter and digest it in their body. Finally, the animals' waste, called castings, becomes nutrients for the soil. The castings mix with soil to create humus, the nutrient-rich soil ideal for crops.

The soil cycle begins again, and new plant growth takes place in the soil. This way, the soil stays healthy, and plants can continue to grow. Humans can't survive without plants, so we can't survive without soil either!



3. Which of these steps happens second in the soil cycle?

- Ⓐ Leaves fall to the soil and begin to rot.
- Ⓑ Soil animals digest the leaves, turning them into humus.
- Ⓒ Water releases nutrients in the soil.
- Ⓓ Plants absorb nutrients and grow new leaves.

4. Which clue word indicates the fourth step in the soil cycle?

- Ⓐ next
- Ⓑ then
- Ⓒ last
- Ⓓ finally