

Plants can feel!

A simple yet fascinating experiment that shows very clearly that plants are attracted to light.

You need

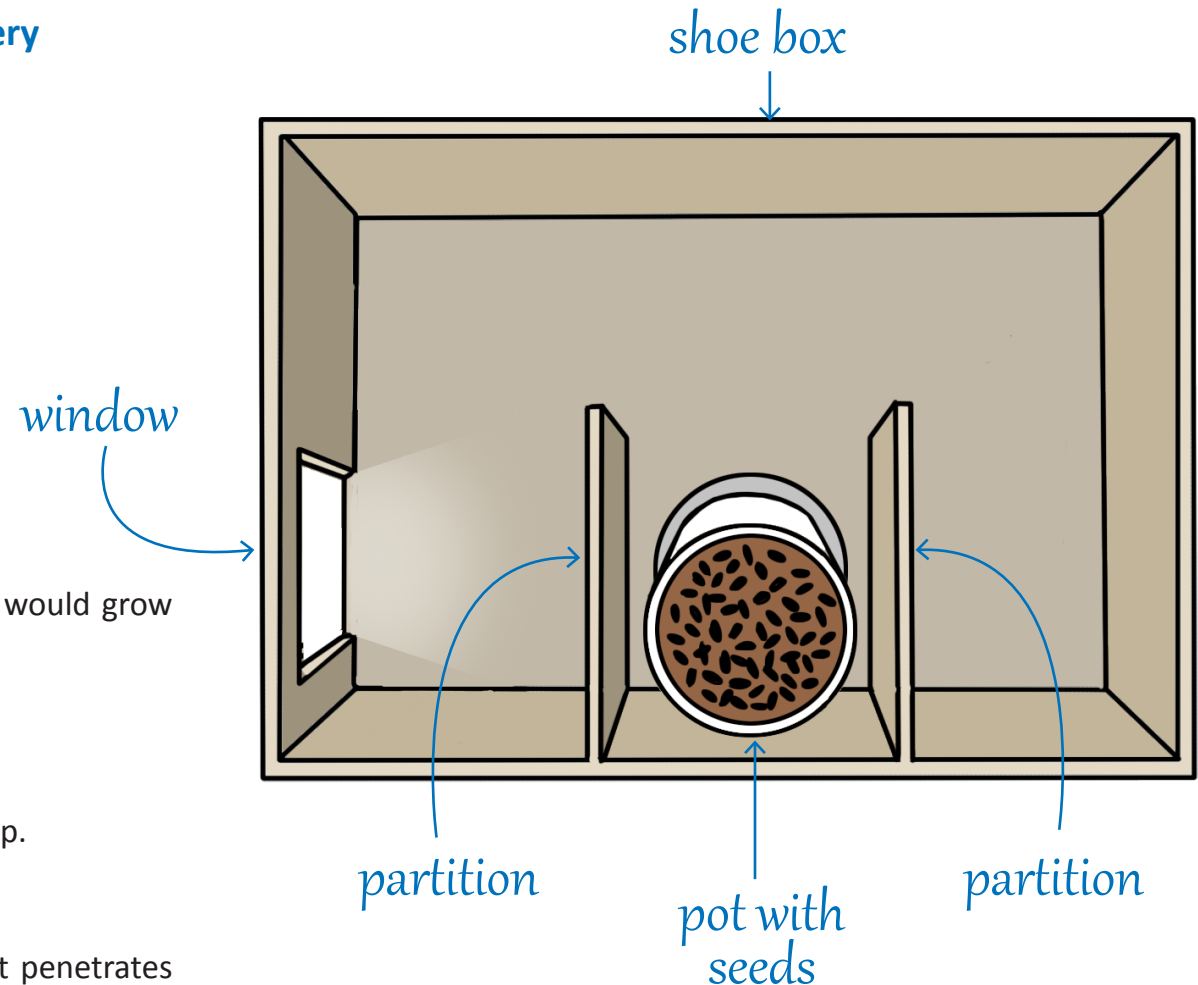
- 1 shoe box (with lid)
- 2 pieces of stiff card or carton
- 1 small pot or container
- soil or cotton wool
- common vetch (*ġilbiena*) seeds
- scissors or cutting knife
- sticky tape

The aim is to find out whether, given the choice, a plant would grow towards light, towards dark or if it's all the same for it!

Set up the arrangement as shown in the diagram

- Cut out a window in one side of box
- Stick two cardboard partitions (see diagram)
- Fill pot with soil or cotton wool and sprinkle seeds on top.
- Moisten soil or cotton wool with water.
- Place pot between partitions
- Cover box with lid and place it somewhere where light penetrates the box's 'window'.

Let the children check progress every day. Watching the seeds sprout is exciting, but even more exciting will be the part where the plant 'decides' which way to turn. Once the vetch peeps out of the window it starts to grow green leaves!



Through this experiment the children also learn that the familiar Christmas *ġilbiena* is actually a green plant, and that it grows like white threads only because people grow it in the dark to look like straw in the manger.

