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# CARBON GUZZLER GM TREES

## GM Trees: A Climate Solution or Forest Threat?

Tara was still pondering the coffee plantation when she came across an article in the Sunday Times about Living Carbon, a San Francisco-based biotech firm. The company had developed genetically modified poplar trees that were engineered to grow quickly while consuming large amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The company claimed that these trees could be a viable solution to climate change on a large scale. Tara was aware that growing trees was the most

Hi!  
I am Tara



cost-effective way to remove carbon dioxide from the air, but she also knew that 25 million acres of forests were lost every year, rather than new trees being planted.

According to Maddie Hall, CEO of Living Carbon, the company's genetically modified trees captured



27% more carbon dioxide and grew 50% faster than regular trees. In 2023-2024, the company planned to supply 4-5 million seedlings throughout the US. Tara remembered her uncle, who worked as a software engineer in Georgia, telling her that rows of poplar seedlings were being planted in the pine-belt, including some genetically modified trees with names like Kookaburra and Baboon, which indicated their parent tree. However, an environmental group called The Global Justice Ecology Project considered these GM trees to be a "growing threat" to forests, as Living Carbon had only introduced them after a six-month greenhouse trial.

So far, China was the only country where GM trees had been planted. Tara couldn't help but think that China seemed to come up in many climate change issues.

**SAVE TREE**  
SAVE ENVIRONMENT



## New Words

1. **Pondering**- thinking deeply about something
2. **Viable**- capable of working successfully
3. **Seedlings**- young plants grown from seeds

Find other new and interesting words for each other, and write their meanings in your notebooks.

## Comprehension

1. What is Living Carbon?
2. Name two varieties of Living Carbon's GM poplar trees.
3. Who is the CEO of Living Carbon?
4. Do the genetically modified trees grow slower than ordinary trees? (True/False)
5. Which country has planted GM trees first: USA or China?
6. Why is the introduction of these trees being criticized?

Take turns to make more questions like these above for each other and answer them.

## Prompts Pair up

1. **Create a Tree Collage**
  - a. Working together, gather old magazines, newspapers, or other colorful paper materials.
  - b. Cut out tree shapes, leaves, branches, and other tree elements from the collected materials.
  - c. On a large piece of paper or poster board, create a beautiful tree collage by gluing your cutouts in place. Discuss the importance of trees while creating your artwork.
2. **Tree Skit**
  - a. Together, write a short skit about the pros and cons of genetically modified trees.
  - b. Practice your lines and act out the skit, playing the roles of different characters involved in the discussion.
  - c. You can even invite friends or family to watch your performance.

Watch the video on the Carbon Guzzler using the QR code.



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