

Name: _____

The Sensitive Plant: A Magic Show at Your Fingertips



By Liana Mahoney

Sensitive people are everywhere. Some have sensitive feet or skin. Others may have a hard time laughing at their own mistakes. Perhaps you live with someone like this. But



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fingers gently across the leaves of the sensitive plant and the leaves instantly fold up like tiny green fingers. The stems, called petioles, droop as if ready to fall off the plant. About ten minutes later, the leaves reopen, and the petioles rise again! The unusual behavior of this houseplant has earned it other common names, such as the "humble plant" and the "touch-me-not."

Sensitive plants are easy to grow inside your house. They simply need to get plenty of water and sunlight. But touching the plant too often can cause the plant to lose its leaves. A sensitive plant that loses many of its leaves may become unhealthy.

Having such a unique plant in your house is like having a magic show at your fingertips. Imagine the fun you can have introducing a friend to your plant! Have your friend lean close to the plant to tell it a joke. Then instruct your plant to be the judge of your friend's joke. Give your plant a gentle nudge, and watch your friend's reaction as the plant seems to nod in disapproval. Be sure to tell your friend the true cause of the plant's behavior later, though. You don't want your friend to become overly sensitive about his jokes!

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1. What makes a sensitive plant a very unusual type of plant?



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4. How long does it take a sensitive plant's leaves to reopen after they've folded up?

5. What two other names is the sensitive plant commonly known by?

Something extra: With a parent or teacher's help, search for a video of a sensitive plant online.

The Sensitive Plant: A Magic



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**The sensitive plant is also referred to as the “humble plant”
and the “touch-me-not.”**

Something extra: With a parent or teacher’s help, search for a video of a sensitive plant online.