

# The Rafflesia: World's Stinkiest Flower

by Lill Pluta

The Rafflesia is the world's largest flower, but you will not find it at your local florist shop. This bloom is too large and too smelly to be included in any bouquet. It grows to be about a yard wide, and it smells like rotting meat. The horrid odor helps this rare plant to survive. The stench draws flies, which in turn pollinate the Rafflesia. This is how the Rafflesia reproduces itself.



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this extraordinary flower is around for future generations to admire.

## Stinky Parasite

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The Rafflesia is a parasite.  
It doesn't sting; it doesn't bite.  
Instead it smells like rotten meat  
or dirty, grubby, sweaty feet.  
It's putrid smell entices flies  
into a bloom of giant size  
that's wider than a traffic sign  
and stuck onto a jungle vine.  
The flies aren't on its dinner plate;  
instead, the insects pollinate.  
And when they're done, they're free to go  
to help more stinky blossoms grow.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# The Rafflesia

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1. Tell whether each fact can be learned from reading the poem, the article, or both. On each line below, write the word *poem*, *article*, or *both*.

\_\_\_\_\_ A Rafflesia flower smells like rotten meat.

\_\_\_\_\_ Rafflesia plants are endangered.

\_\_\_\_\_ Rafflesias do not have roots or stems.



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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. List two reasons why the Rafflesia is in danger of becoming extinct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. How does the terrible smell of the Rafflesia help it survive?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Rafflesia - Vocabulary

by Lill Pluta

Match the vocabulary word on the left with the best definition on the right.

Use a dictionary if you need help.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. florist

a. to attract

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. stench

b. terrible smell

3. chlorophyll

c. person who works with and sells flowers



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\_\_\_\_\_ 6. entice

f. moving pollen from one flower to another  
so the plant can reproduce

Fill in each of the the blank lines, using the one vocabulary words above.

7. Grandma is trying to \_\_\_\_\_ us to visit her by baking cookies.

8. When Bill took off his shoes, a terrible \_\_\_\_\_ filled the room.

9. The bees will buzz in and out of the apple blossoms, which will \_\_\_\_\_  
the apple tree.

10. In autumn, maple tree leaves lose their \_\_\_\_\_, change color, and fall to  
the ground.

# ANSWER KEY

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both A Rafflesia flower smells like rotten meat.

article Rafflesia plants are endangered.

article Rafflesias do not have roots or stems.



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# ANSWER KEY

## The Rafflesia - Vocabulary

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Match the vocabulary word on the left with the best definition on the right.

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**c** 1. florist

**a.** to attract

**b** 2. stench

**b.** terrible smell



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ground.