

# Super Seeds

Seeds are the beginnings of new trees! Even the tiny pips inside an apple have the potential to grow into a whole new apple tree. Each seed is unique and they come in a huge variety of shapes, sizes, and colors, depending on the type of tree.

## But what came first, the seed or the tree? Have a guess!

Long ago, trees didn't have seeds—plants would use tiny spores to spread and sprout, just like ferns and mosses do today. Spores are like dust that is blown around by the wind, but they are sensitive and need a lot of water to grow. Seeds developed about 360 million years ago: they are much stronger than spores and have a solid shell that protects them, which has helped trees survive better. So that is how trees came to exist before seeds.

### DID YOU KNOW?

A seed forms when a tree's flower is pollinated. Inside the seed is a tiny plant and the food it needs to start growing if it lands in soil. Amazing! From the small seeds of a birch tree to the large acorns of an oak, these little packages all carry the potential for new trees.

If a seed lands close to its parent tree, it may struggle to get enough sunlight. However, the older tree can share nutrients with the seedling through its root system, helping it grow.

Seeds that fall from a tree often land next to their parent tree. The wind, the rain or even animals then carry the seeds further away. Some seeds, like those of the maple tree, are designed to spin through the air like tiny helicopters, while others may be buried by squirrels who sometimes forget where they've hidden them, giving them the chance to sprout into a new tree!

Maple seeds