

Deep in the Heart of a Tree

Read.

Each year, a tree keeps a detailed record of the environment it lives in. The tree is constantly forming new cells. These cells are arranged in circles called *annual growth rings*. Each ring displays how much wood was produced during one growing season. Each year of growth is documented by a light and a dark ring. The light part of the ring documents the spring growing season. The darker part documents the end of the summer season. Believe it or not, the thin layer of cells called the *cambium* (where growth occurs) is completely inactive in winter months. The oldest rings are closest to the center of the tree. As the years pass, the tree continues to manufacture new cells around its circumference, resulting in the widening of the tree's diameter.



Trees are the main raw material used to make paper. With respected forestry management standards, for every tree harvested, several more are planted or grow naturally in its place.

Refer to the text to answer the questions.

1. What is the main idea of the selection? How do you know?

2. What are annual growth rings? Why are they important?

3. When does the light part of a growth ring form? Circle this information in the text.

4. When does the darker part of a growth ring form? Circle this information in the text.

5. Based on the selection, what does the word *cambium* mean? Underline the text that supports your answer.

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Answer Key

1. Trees constantly form annual growth rings.
2. cells arranged in circles that display how much wood was produced during one growing season; They give a detailed record of the environment.
3. during the spring growing season
4. during the end of the summer season
5. the thin layer of cells in the growth ring where growth occurs

