

In the fall, green leaves of maple trees turn red, yellow, and orange. These bright colors are in the leaves all summer, but the green blocks them out.

When the leaves begin to die in the fall, the green disappears and bright shades appear. The leaves soon drop to the ground.







The maple tree stands bare all winter. In early spring, clusters of bright red buds appear at the tips of its branches.

Soon the buds open into small red flowers. Look closely and you will see their beauty. Can you tell why this maple is called a red maple?





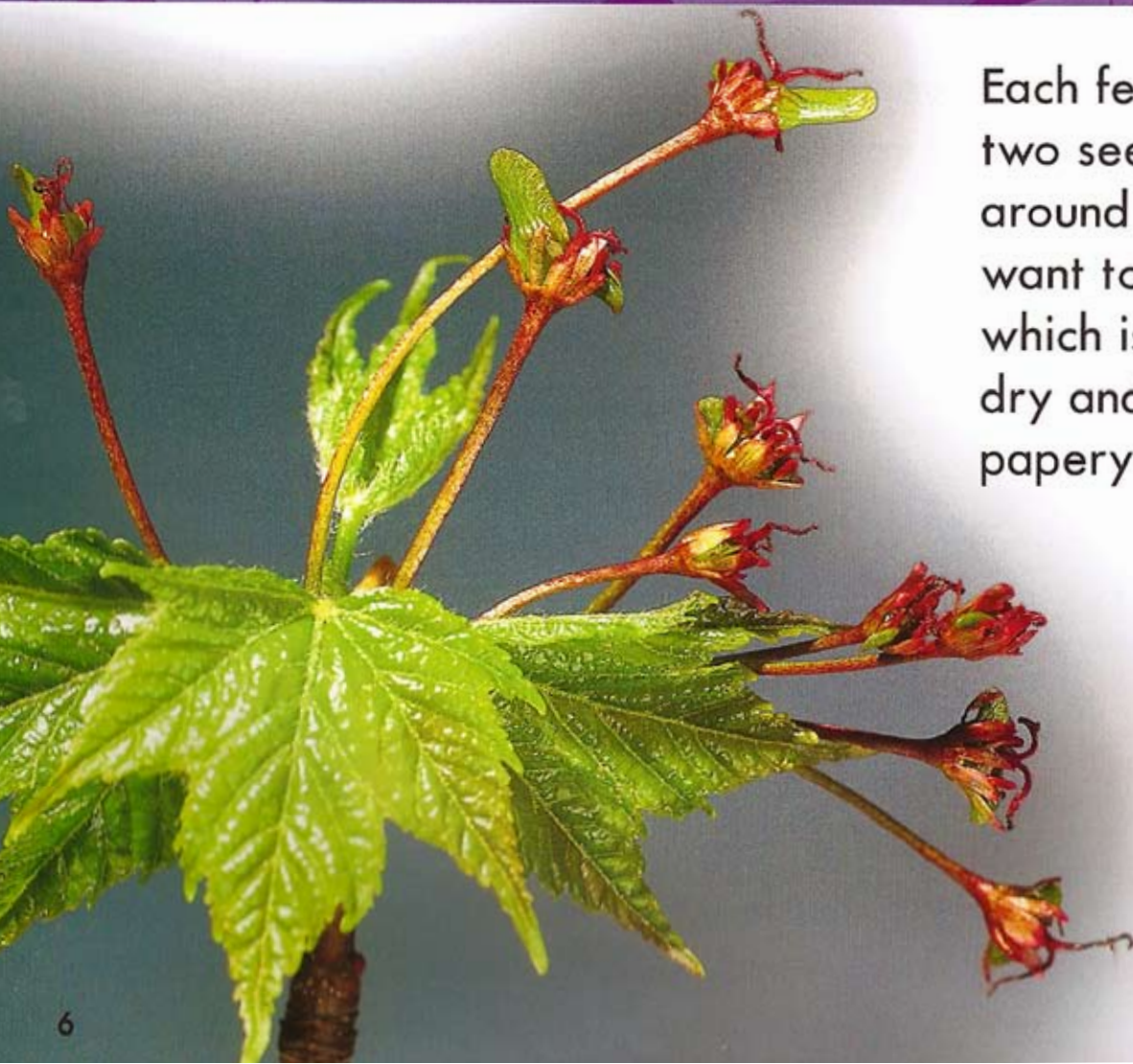


Maple trees have two types of flowers. Male flowers have many stalks called stamens. On each stamen is a little knob called an anther. Anthers produce a fine yellow powder called pollen.

The pollen lands on female flowers. Wind blows it there, or insects move it as they visit the flowers to feed on nectar. On the female flower, pollen sticks to a Y-shaped stalk called the stigma. Now seeds can form.







Each female flower makes two seeds. A fruit grows around them. You would not want to eat this kind of fruit, which is called a samara. It is dry and hard, and it has a papery wing on each side.

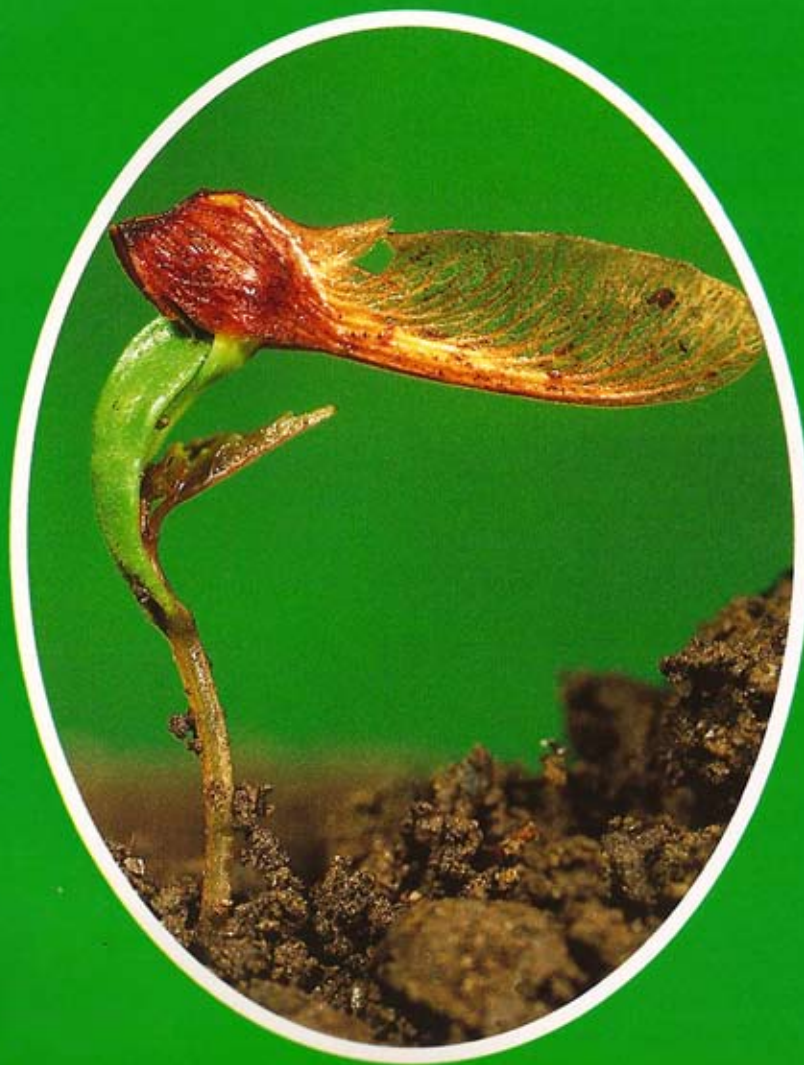
The samaras begin growing when the tree puts out its new spring leaves. By early summer, they hang in ripe clusters. When wind shakes them from the tree, their wings carry the seeds spinning to the ground.






In moist ground, a maple seed sprouts in just a few days. A root takes hold in the soil. A stem grows up, lifting the samara's wing into the air.

The wing falls off and the first two leaves open. They are called seed leaves. Soon other leaves open. The seed has become a seedling.









More leaves appear as the seedling grows upward.  
The leaves make food for the whole plant. New leaves  
grow from a bud at the very top of the plant. They always  
come in pairs, one right across the stem from the other.







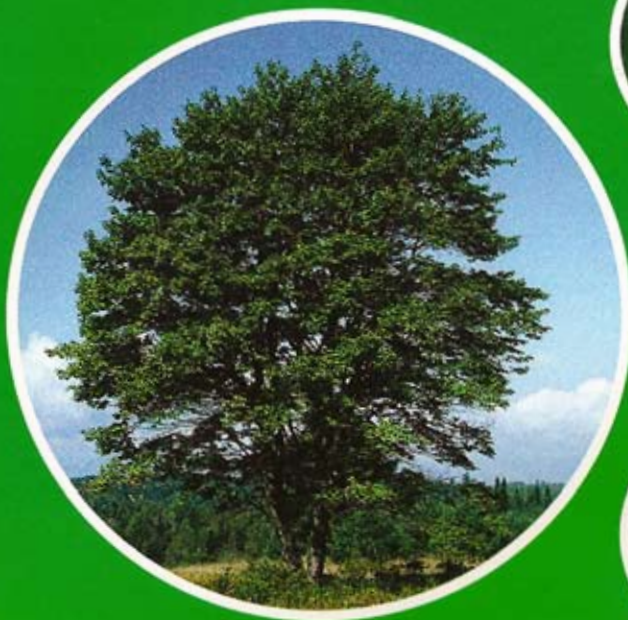
It takes many years for a maple seedling to become a full-grown tree. Its trunk grows taller and thicker. Branches grow from the trunk. Twigs grow from the branches, and leaves grow on the twigs. In the fall, when the maple leaves drop to the ground, buds remain on the twigs.



New leaves, flowers, and seeds will form in the spring. The maple tree life cycle will begin again.



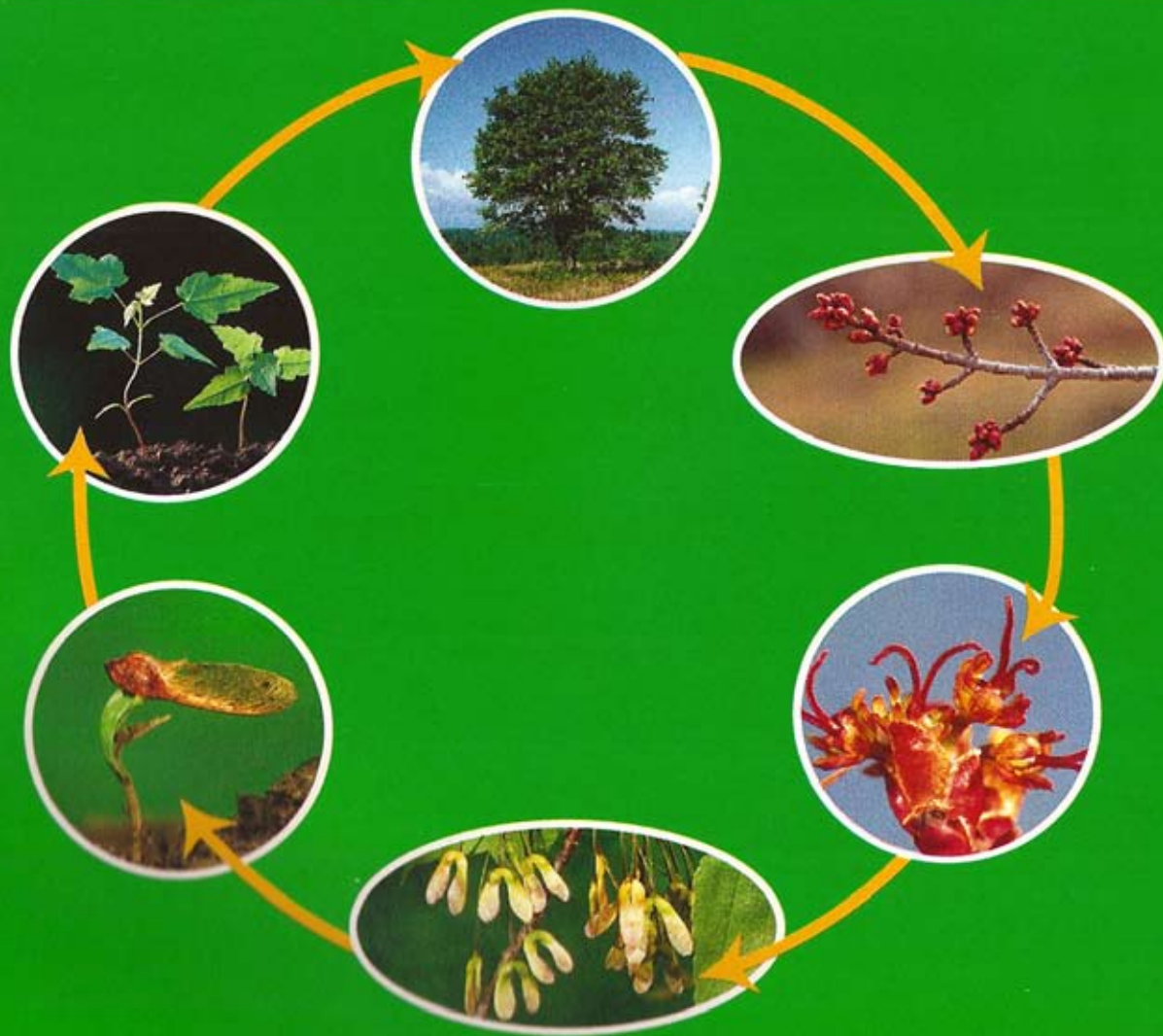
Can you put these in order?







Answer





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