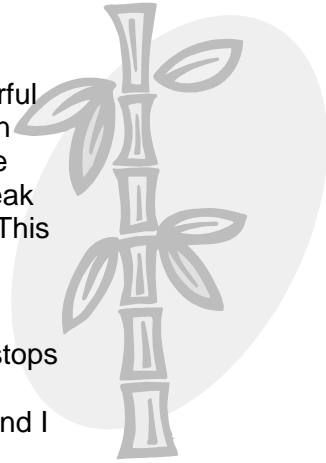


Bamboo: reading

I'm in a beautiful garden. There are many different plants, colourful flowers and trees. Some of the trees are very tall with long green leaves, and some are fruit trees. I know the names of a lot of the plants, but not all of them. My name is Anna and I'm here to speak to Robert Butler who is a botanist and a professional gardener. This is Robert's garden so he knows the names of all the plants.



"Which plant do you like the best?" I ask Robert.

"That's easy," he says and walks away. I walk with him and he stops in front of a tall plant. "This is my favourite plant."

The plant is very thin with lots of little leaves. I think it's pretty. And I know the name of this plant. "It's a bamboo," I say.

"Correct," says the gardener. "And it's my favourite plant. I have many kinds of bamboo growing in my garden. I love it! I think it's the most important plant in the world. My friends call me *Bamboo Bob!*" he laughs.

"So why do you think this is the most important tree in the world?" I ask Bamboo Bob.

"It's not a tree," says Bob. "It's a grass."

"Really? It's a grass, not a tree?" I'm surprised.

"Correct," says Bob. "And there are hundreds of things you can do with it."

"Hundreds?"

"Correct."

Bamboo Bob walks away. "Come with me and see." We walk through his lovely garden together. On the left there are many more plants. On the right there's a lake with an island in the middle. On the island is a little house. There's a bridge over the lake to the house. "This is my summer house," says Bob. "Come and have a look."

We walk across the bridge; Bob walks in front of me. I can see orange and yellow fish swimming in the water. "You can make bridges from bamboo," says Bob. I look down at the bridge - it's not wood.

"It's a bamboo bridge!"

"Correct."

There's a short ladder up to the door of the house, we climb the ladder and go inside. It's dark so he walks to the window and opens the blind. Now I can see a sofa and two armchairs. In front of the sofa there's a small table and next to the armchairs there's a lamp. I can also see a bookcase, some bowls on the table and a basket in the corner.

"It's all bamboo! The ladder, the roof, the walls, the floor, all the furniture! Everything!"

"_____!" says Bamboo Bob.