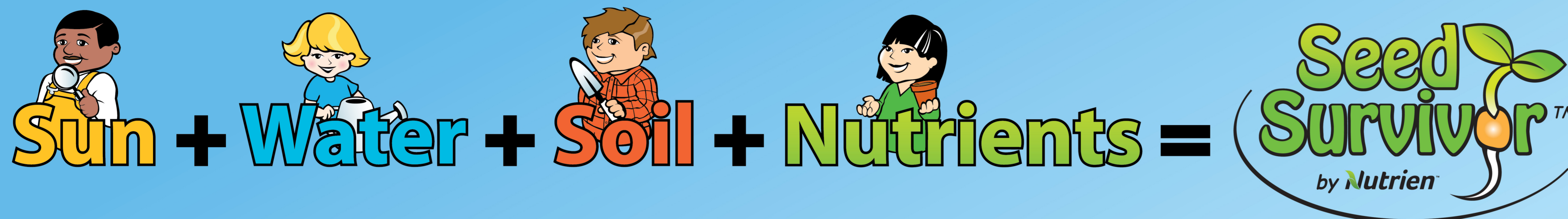
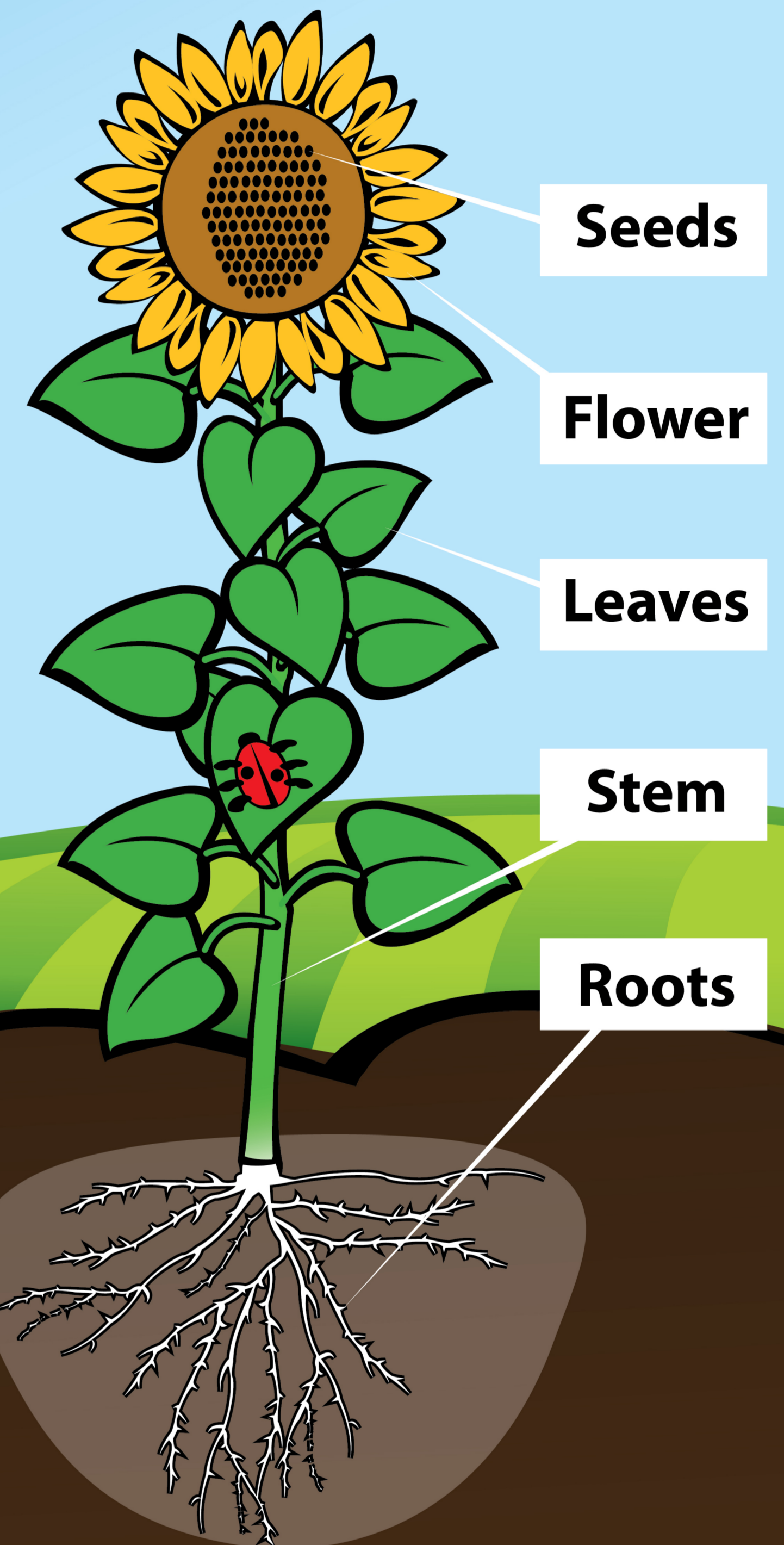


Plant Growth Stages



PLANT PARTS



Seed Germination

The first stage in the life of a sunflower is germination, which can take between 2 and 10 days. As the ground gets warmer, and the roots give the plant nutrients, a sprout shoots toward the top of the soil.

Seedling

The seedling stage begins when the sprout has small leaves, no longer than 1½ inches. The seedling stage only lasts about two weeks after the sprout pops through the ground.

Vegetative

The vegetative stage means the sunflower stem has leaves that are longer than 1½ inches. This is when all the main growth occurs, with the stem thickening and growing taller, and producing leaves at regular intervals on the stem.

Bud Stage

This stage begins as soon as the bud begins to show at the top of the stem. Once this happens, the sunflower starts to perform heliotropism, which means the leaves and bud move to follow the course of the sun throughout the day.

Flowering

Once the bud begins to open, the flower remains facing east and no longer performs heliotropism. The complete opening of the bud can take up to 7 days, and proceeds from the outside toward the middle of the sunflower.

Ripening

The final stage of the sunflower plant allows the seeds to fall and become planted in the ground. At this time, the back of the sunflower's head, petals and leaves begin to turn yellow and then brown. The stem and head begin to dry out and eventually all of the seeds are loosened and fall out.