

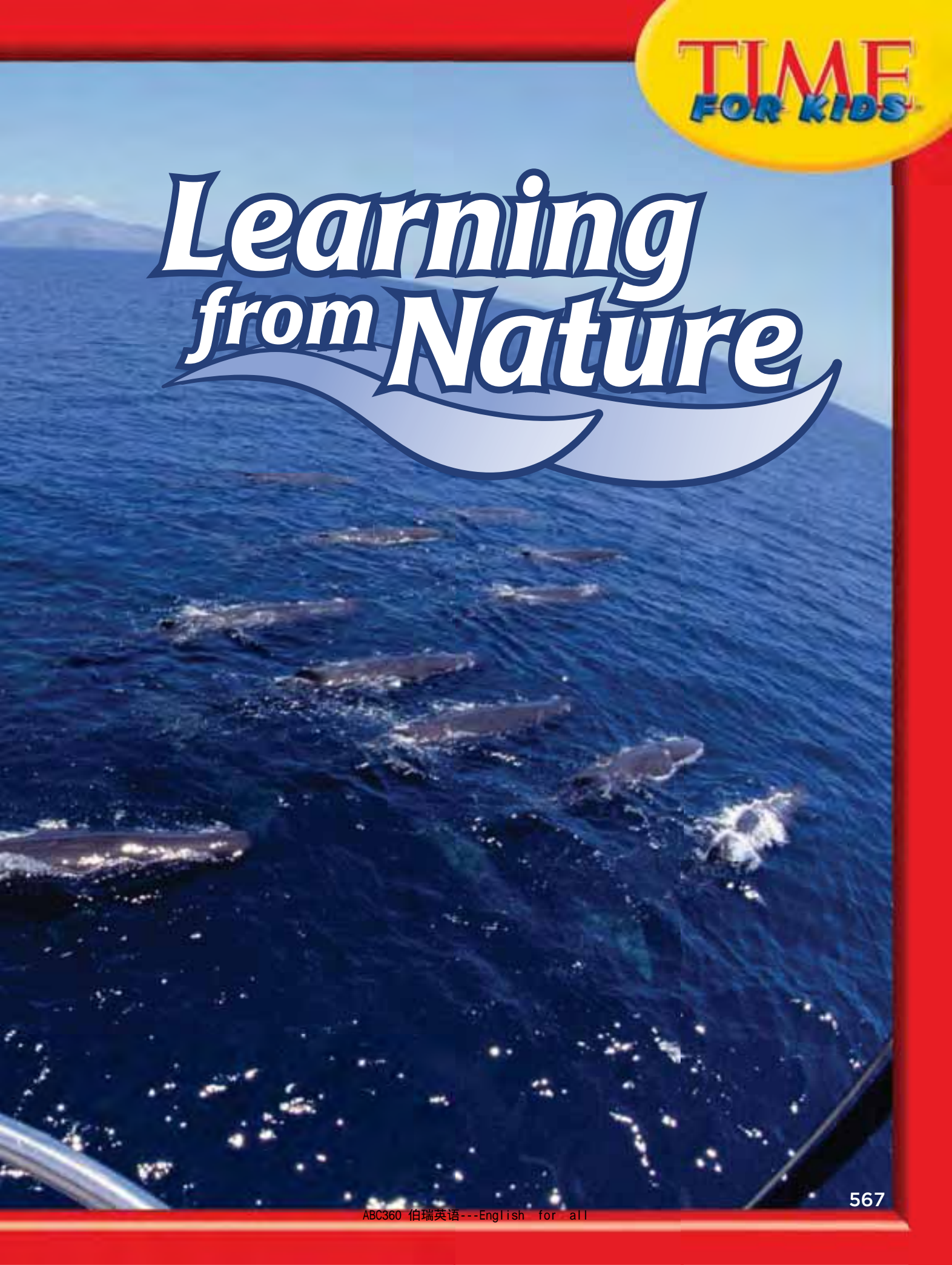
Talk About It

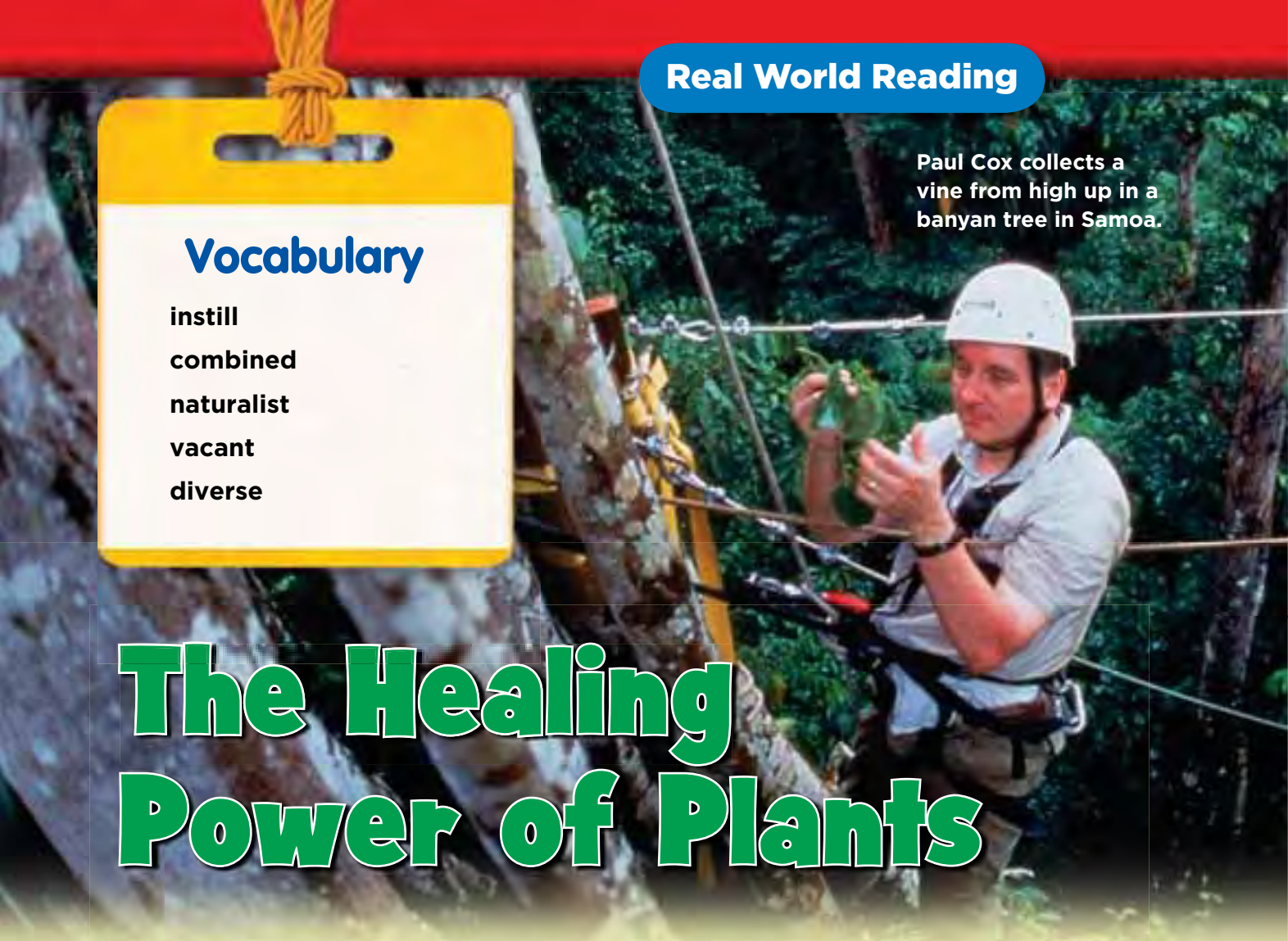
What can people gain by learning about nature?



Find out more about studying nature at www.macmillanmh.com

Learning from Nature



A photograph of Paul Cox, a man wearing a white hard hat and a light-colored shirt, climbing a large tree trunk. He is holding a green vine in his hands. The background shows a dense forest with many trees.

Paul Cox collects a vine from high up in a banyan tree in Samoa.

Vocabulary

instill

combined

naturalist

vacant

diverse

The Healing Power of Plants

Even as a kid in Utah, Paul Cox was wild about plants. He built a greenhouse and collected weird, insect-eating plants.

Cox studied to become an ethnobotanist (eth•no•BOT•uh•nist). This, he explains, “is someone who loves plants and people and studies the relationship between them.” Cox is most interested in how to use plants for healing.

When he won an important science award, Cox decided to use the money to “go live with native healers to learn from them.” He, his wife, and their

four kids moved to a remote village in Samoa, an island nation in the South Pacific. They lived for a year in a hut without running water or electricity.

Cox studied how the people of Samoa use plants to treat illness. One tree he learned about from a native healer could someday be used to make a valuable drug. If so, “the [native healer’s] whole village will share the riches,” says Cox. The leafy kingdom of plants is full of such treasures. Cox’s work and the knowledge of native healers may ultimately lead to medicines that save many lives.



All the earthkeepers pitched in to help build an outdoor seating area and nature trails.

Teaching “EARTHKEEPING”

For more than 27 years, Joseph Andrews has tried to **instill** a love of nature in his students. “I try to tie nature into every subject,” he explains. Andrews teaches a **combined** fourth- and fifth-grade class at Jones Lane Elementary School in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

One year his students helped build an outdoor classroom for the school. There students can enjoy a view of a meadow and stream while they learn. Language arts, social studies, and Earth science all come to life in the outdoor classroom. Sometimes the students read poetry and Native American tales. At other times they simply listen to the sounds of nature and hope to catch a glimpse of the deer and foxes that make their homes near the school.

“Mr. Andrews calls us his earthkeepers,” says fifth-grader Emmanuel Maru. Andrews says giving students that title helps them understand that they have an important role in helping to protect the environment.

THE “BIODIVERSITY” MAN

Edward Osborne Wilson was a **naturalist** from the start. As a child growing up in Alabama and northern Florida, he loved to study nature. He made his first important scientific discovery when he was 13. In a **vacant** lot in Mobile, Alabama, he found the first known U.S. colonies of fire ants. Starting as an entomologist—a scientist who studies insects—E.O. Wilson went on to become one of the most respected scientists in the world. He is most well known for making the world aware of the importance of biodiversity. “Bio” means “life.” “Diversity” comes from the word “**diverse**,” which means “different from one another.” Biodiversity describes the complex web of life, with many different plant and animal species, that is necessary to keep Earth healthy.



Find out more about biodiversity at www.macmillanmh.com