

A SCIENTIST JUST LIKE ME



Emma Williams
Botanist

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Hi there! I am Emma Williams – A botanist



Where do I work?

I work at Kew Gardens in London in the Science Department.

What did I like doing when I was at school?

I liked biology, learning about plants and animals and how the human body works. I also loved playing the piano, reading books and learning how to cook.

What do I like doing in my spare time?

I like to go to the park for walks with my young children, growing flowers in my garden, reading and knitting.

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What do I do as a botanist?

I research plants that are threatened by international trade. This includes rainforest trees, which are used for timber to make furniture, herbs, which are used to make medicines, and flowers, which are popular as houseplants.



How does what I do make the world a better place?

We need to protect our wild plants and forests! Plants are so useful for people for lots of things, including food, medicine, and wellbeing. Cutting down too many trees affects the whole forest and removes the habitat for other plants, animals and insects that rely on trees.

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What I like about my job

I love working at Kew. I'm lucky to have worked on many great projects, from collecting seeds in Africa to presenting at conferences in Panama. I work with a variety of people in UK government and scientists in other countries and it's great to share our knowledge of plants and help protect them.



Challenges I have faced

I am naturally a quiet person and always found giving talks hard. But the more you practise, the more confident and happier you will be giving presentations. You don't have to be the loudest, most chatty person to be successful in science. Being quiet means that you can listen and learn lots!

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If you want to be a Botanist, you need:

- ✿ **to be curious** and find out the names of the plants you see around you
- ✿ **to be good at writing** to share information on plants
- ✿ **to enjoy learning** - with 380,000 plant species there is always a new plant to study
- ✿ **to like meeting new people**, the best science happens when you are working together with other scientists



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Discussion time

☀ Would you like to be a botanist like Emma Williams?

Why? Why not?

☀ What skills and interests do you already have that would help you become a botanist?

☀ What new skills and knowledge would you need to develop?



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Free supporting resources for botany

[Science for One](#) – for ages 5-7 see 'Box', 'Playdough', 'Egg Box' and 'Coat-hanger'

[Growing Music](#) – find out how to grow bamboo and what it is used for

[I bet you didn't know...](#) articles use cutting-edge science research as a context for learning. Teacher Guides describing the research and activities and investigations for children can be used as classroom presentations. For more about plants see:

- Can plants hear and respond to sound?
- How plants know good microbes from bad ones
- Bees and caterpillars can change the evolution of plants
- Tree restoration – it's now or never
- Plastics in the soil affect the survival of plants and worms

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