

BIOLOGY

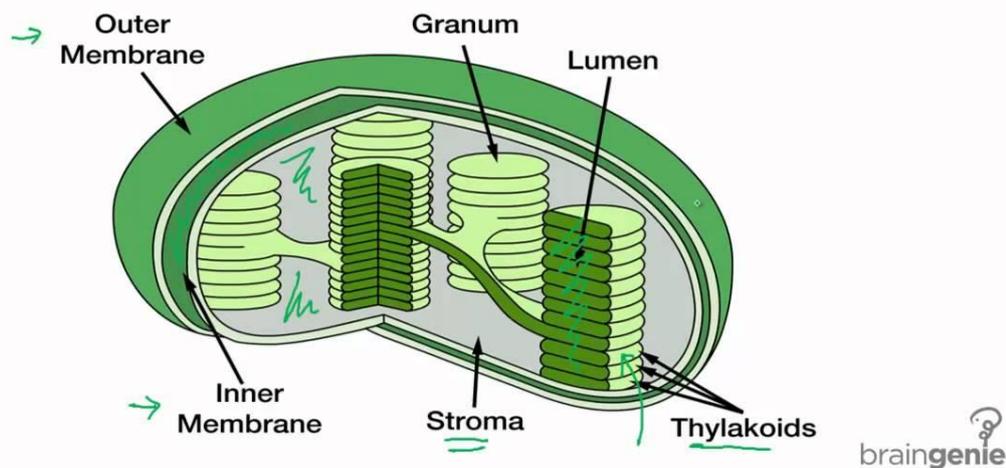
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PHOTOSYNTHESIS

PHOTOSYNTHESIS- it is the process of synthesis of food from carbon dioxide and water in the presence of chlorophyll and sunlight.

STRUCTURE OF CHLOROPLAST

What is the structure of a chloroplast?



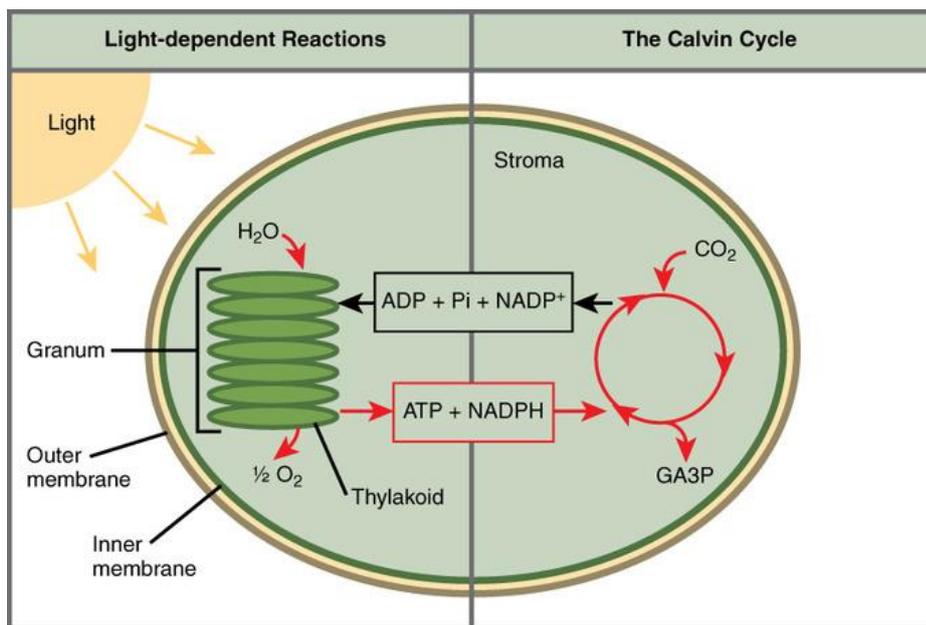
There is a clear division of labour within the chloroplast. The membrane system is responsible for trapping the light energy and also for the synthesis of ATP and NADPH. In stroma, enzymatic reactions synthesise sugar, which in turn forms starch. The former set of reactions, since they are directly light driven are called light reactions (photochemical reactions). The latter are not directly light driven but are dependent on the products of light reactions (ATP and NADPH). Hence, to distinguish the latter they are called, by convention, as dark reactions (carbon reactions). However, this should not be construed to mean that they occur in darkness or that they are not light independent .

Photosynthesis takes place in two sequential stages:

1. The light-dependent reactions;
2. The light-independent reactions, or Calvin Cycle.

Light-Dependent Reactions

Just as the name implies, light-dependent reactions require sunlight. In the light-dependent reactions, energy from sunlight is absorbed by chlorophyll and converted into stored chemical energy, in the form of the electron carrier molecule NADPH (nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate) and the energy currency molecule ATP (adenosine triphosphate). The light-dependent reactions take place in the thylakoid membranes in the granum (stack of thylakoids), within the chloroplast.



The two stages of photosynthesis: Photosynthesis takes place in two stages: light-dependent reactions and the Calvin cycle (light-independent reactions). Light-dependent reactions, which take place in the thylakoid membrane, use light energy to make ATP and NADPH. The Calvin cycle, which takes place in the stroma, uses energy derived from these compounds to make GA3P from CO_2 .

Photosystems

The process that converts light energy into chemical energy takes place in a multi-protein complex called a photosystem. Two types of photosystems are embedded in the thylakoid membrane: photosystem II (PSII) and photosystem I (PSI). Each photosystem plays a key role in capturing the energy from sunlight by exciting electrons. These energized electrons are transported by “energy carrier” molecules, which power the light-independent reactions.

Photosystems consist of a light-harvesting complex and a reaction center. Pigments in the light-harvesting complex pass light energy to two special chlorophyll *a* molecules in the reaction center. The light excites an electron from the chlorophyll *a* pair, which passes to the primary electron acceptor. The excited electron must then be replaced. In photosystem II, the electron comes from the splitting of water, which releases oxygen as a waste product. In photosystem I, the electron comes from the chloroplast electron transport chain.

The two photosystems oxidize different sources of the low-energy electron supply, deliver their energized electrons to different places, and respond to different wavelengths of light.