Introduction Questions: Why Study Plants?

1)	Small seeds often germinate to form very large plants. Sometimes these plants are over 300 feet high, 100 feet in circumference and weigh hundreds of tons. Question- what is the source of this weight gain? That is, from where is the woody-mass derived?
2)	Van Helmont's experimental results were first published in 1648. He planted a 5-pound willow tree, carefully weighed the soil in which it was planted, and grew the tree for 5 years, only adding water to the soil. After 5 years, the tree weighed 169 pounds! The soil lost a few ounces.
	Van Helmont concluded that the 164 lb. weight-gain came from the water that he added.
	Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Do you have an alternate interpretation? If so, what is it?