

FOOD CHAINS WEEK

Are you a **living thing**? Wonderful! That means you have a lot in common with your grown-ups, your teacher, trees, birds, insects, and so many other things. We have spent the last few weeks learning about specific types of living things like birds, trees, and mammals as well as how those things change over time (phenology). Last week we focused on the Earth, which is home to all the **living things** we know.

Now think about what you have in common with your grown-ups, with an animal, with a plant. Some connections are easier to make than others, but a major connection is that all **living things** need to eat. Eating gives living things the **energy** they need to survive. This week we are going to examine the way that energy moves through **living things**. By following this movement, we will be creating and learning more about **food chains**.

TERMS

Energy: The power needed to do work like staying alive, running, or playing.

Living Thing: Something that is alive and needs energy to survive. Living things usually eat, grow, move, and reproduce.

Nonliving Thing: Something that is not alive.

Food Chain: A model (or example) of the way energy moves between living things.

Food Web: A model (or example) of the way energy moves between food chains.

Habitat: Where a living thing lives. Needs to provide enough food, water, shelter and space for the plant or animal.

Producer: a living thing that gets its energy from the sun. (ex. Plants or green algae)

Primary Consumer: a living thing that eats a producer to get its energy. (ex. Plant eaters or Herbivores)

Secondary Consumer: a living thing that eats a primary consumer to get its energy. (ex. Coyote or Skunk)

Decomposer: a living thing that gets its energy from what is left over from producers and consumers. (ex. Mushroom)

WHAT IS A SIT SPOT?

This week we are going to be using sit spots each day to reflect on how the parts of the food chain fit into the world. For your sit spot find a place that is easy to go to. A spot outside would be best but an inside spot by a window will work too. Please go to the same place every day for your reflections. When you first sit down take three deep breaths, then find 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can feel, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you could taste. Then reflect on the questions list for each day.



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DAY 1

Living Things vs Nonliving Things

To start at the very beginning we need to examine what things can be part of a food chain. To do that we are going to look at objects and answer a few questions. These questions help to determine whether the object is a living thing, or something that is alive and needs energy to survive. Usually only living things will find a place in the food chain.

Here are the questions:

1. Does it move?
2. Does it grow?
3. Does it eat?
4. Does it reproduce (make more of itself)?

Now, find items in and around your house (don't forget to look outside) and use the questions above to determine if each item should go in the living list or nonliving list on the next page. We will come back to these lists throughout the week so creating longer lists will help you later

SIT SPOT REFLECTION QUESTIONS

After you have completed your lists, find your sit spot (explained on the first page) and take some time to compare the lists. What do you notice about the things on your lists? How are they different? Are they the same in any way? Is there anything on your nonliving things list that could have once been on your living things list? Now take 5 minutes to notice the things around you in your sit spot!



FOOD CHAINS WEEK

LIVING THINGS

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NONLIVING THINGS

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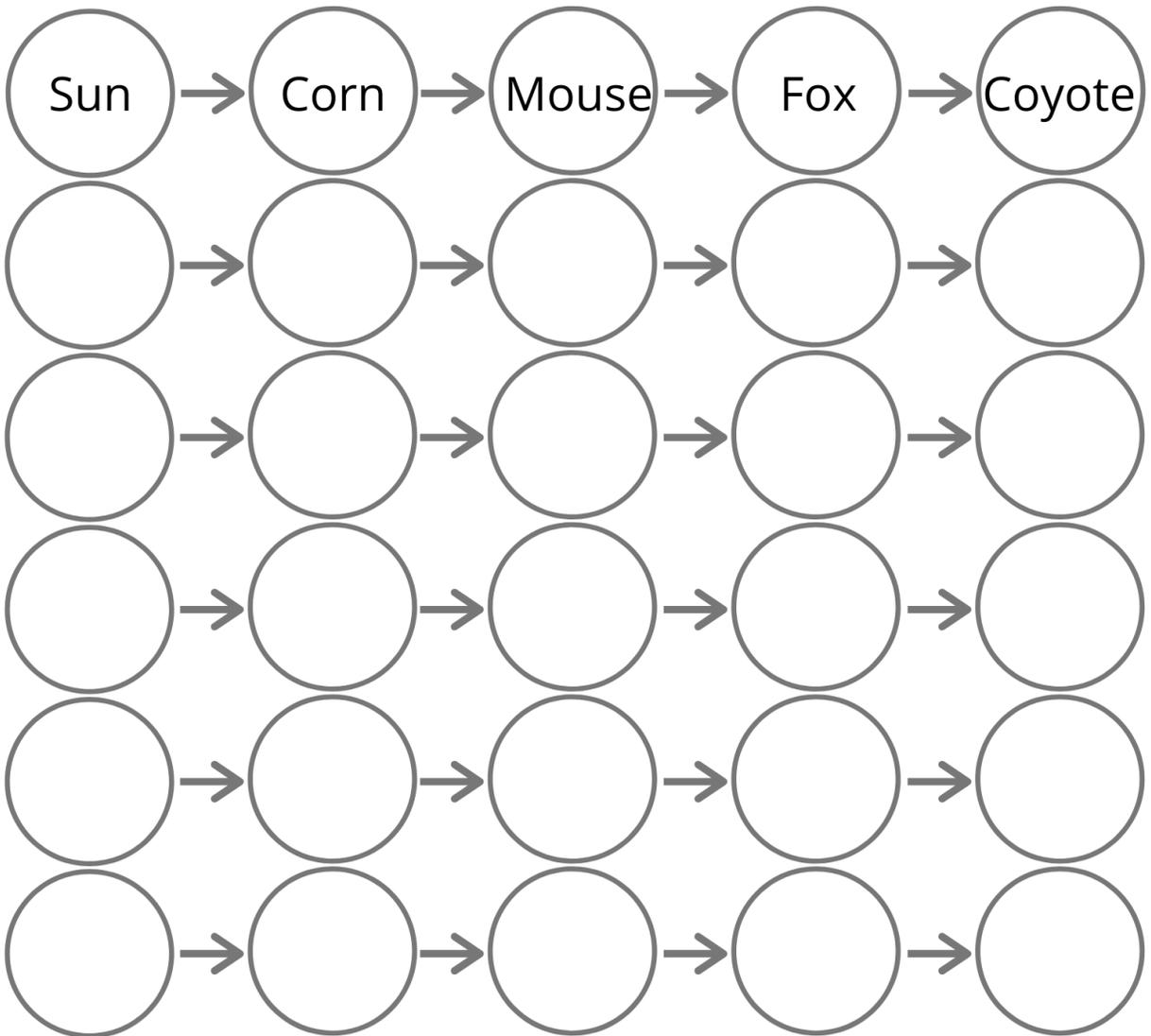
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FOOD CHAINS WEEK

DAY 3

Now let's link together the producers and consumers to make a food chain! Fill the circles below with items from your day one list. Place things in the circles that would take energy from the circle before. For example, circle one would contain the sun, circle two a producer, circle three a primary consumer, circle four a secondary consumer, and circle five can contain something that eats your secondary consumer (or a tertiary consumer). Feel free to use items from your list in more than one set of circles. If you don't have something on your list that fits, imagine what would fit and write that. Use the example below as a guide.



SIT SPOT REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Remember to find your sit spot and take a moment to calm yourself before answering these questions. Was one living thing used more than others? Were there any living things that didn't fit? Could more than one living thing have fit in some circles? Where do people fit in the circles? Can you find three examples of food chains from your sit spot?

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DAY 4

Today we are going to focus on a new group of living things. They are called decomposers, or living things that get their energy from what is left over from producers and consumers. Their main job is to turn the leftovers into nutrients that can be used to help plants grow. Some examples of decomposers are mushrooms, worms, some beetles, and bacteria. Today, let's go on a hunt for decomposers. Look around your neighborhood or even around your house to try to find signs of decomposers. Draw what you find below.

DECOMPOSERS

SIT SPOT REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What did you see that was different between a decomposer and a producer or consumer? Where did you find your decomposer? What made the place you found your decomposer special or different? Does a decomposer need different things to survive than other living things? Imagine yourself as a decomposer, do you think you would like being a decomposer?

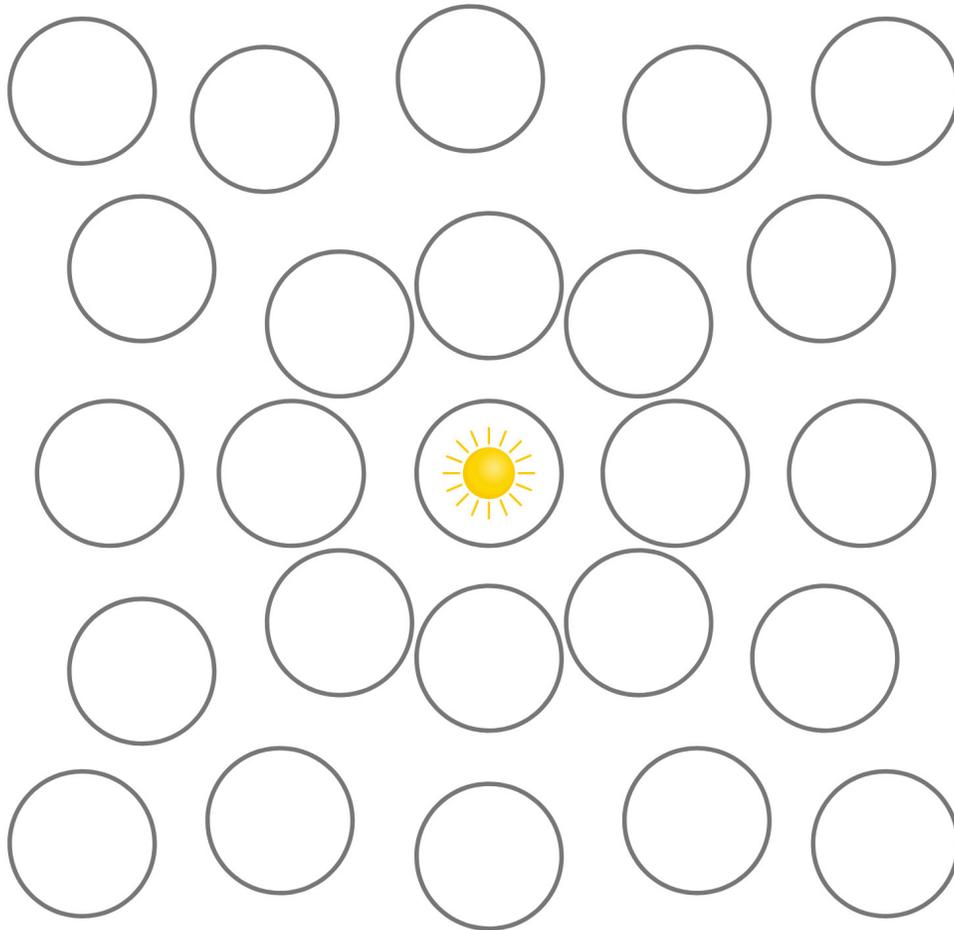


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DAY 5

On Day 3 you may have found that some of the living things you added to your food chain could be used more than once. In nature, that is usually the case; food chains often overlap. When the overlap of food chains is mapped out, a food web is created. A food web is a model of the way that energy moves between food chains. Today we are going to create a food web from our list of items from Day 1. Use the circles below to add living things from the list you created on day one.

The sun is in the middle, producers in the first circles out from the sun, and the consumers in the circles that are left. After you add your living things to the circles, draw lines between the circles to trace the energy. For example, I could draw a line from the sun to grass. I could then draw lines from grass to cow, goat, and deer because they all eat grass. You will draw many lines that will show the ways food chains overlap. This overlap is what creates a food web!



SIT SPOT REFLECTION QUESTIONS

As you sit in your sit spot today, look for connections. See how many connections you can find between living and non-living things. Think about the way things fit into a food chain or into a food web. For the last 60 seconds you are in your sit spot, close your eyes and listen. Did you hear anything new that you might have missed with your eyes open?

FOOD CHAINS WEEK

CRAFT

Supplies

Ribbon

Food with holes- cheerios, fruit loops, pretzels, candy, dried fruit

Large needle

Instructions

Cut ribbon to about 3ft, use needle if your child needs extra help getting the food on the ribbon. Thread the food onto the ribbon and tie the ends together. This craft is fun to do before going out for a hike! Your child may enjoy their snack on the trail or maybe they want to enjoy the pretty creation they made.

Add variety, see what patterns your child can make or add a theme to your necklace.

