

# Web of Life

Students will learn about the major components in the Everglades web of life.

## Objectives:

Students will be able to name at least three living and three non-living components of the web of life and will be able to identify which web of life categories three different Everglades species fit into.

## Materials:

A ball, the alphabet picture cards included in this guide, copies of the pictures of: producers, consumers, decomposers, non-living, sun, soil, air, and water included in this activity.

## Methods:

Physical and mental activity to find out which category Everglades plants and animals occupy in the web of life.

## Subjects:

Art, Science, P.E.

## Duration:

30 to 45 minutes

## Location:

Outdoors, cafeteria, or gym.

## Related Activities:

Mosquito Swat, Chaos To Order, Food Chain Gang

## Florida Sunshine State Standards:

SC.G.1.1.1 SC.H.1.1.1



## Background

In the web of life there are two major components: living and non-living things. The living things include producers, consumers, and decomposers. **Producers** are plants which utilize the sun, water, and carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and nutrients from the soil, to make chlorophyll, thus producing their own food and providing oxygen and food for animals. **Consumers** are animals which provide carbon dioxide for plants and are dependent on plants and other animals for energy. Consumers can be further divided into **herbivores** (plant eaters), **carnivores** (meat eaters), and **omnivores** (plant and meat eaters). **Decomposers**, including **fungi** and **bacteria**, cause other organisms or physical elements to break apart and/or rot.

The **non-living** components of the web of life include the **sun**, which provides energy for plants; the **atmosphere (air)**, which contains oxygen and carbon dioxide; **water**, which is necessary for the life of both producers and consumers; and **soil**. The soil contains minerals from the weathering of non-living material such as rocks, and nutrients from living material that has been broken down by decomposers.

## Procedure

1. Discuss the terms producer, consumer, decomposer, non-living, herbivore, carnivore, and omnivore. Set boundaries for the play area, labeling four corners of the area as producer, consumer, decomposer, and non-living. (See adjacent pages.)
2. Randomly pass out alphabet picture cards along with cards labeled sun, air, soil, and water. Each student should have a card. Tell them they should not let anyone else know what card they are holding.

3. Have the student with the sun card stand in the middle of the four cornered area. He/she calls out one component of the Web of Life, either producer, consumer, decomposer, or non-living. All species that fit in the component named, must run to that corner. For example, if "producer" is called, then all plants go to the corner where the producer sign is. The "Sun" repeats this procedure until all groups are separated into the four corners.
4. Still standing in the center of the area, the "Sun" tosses the ball in the air and calls out one of the names on the alphabet picture cards. Example: "egret". The student with the egret card runs to retrieve the ball. All other students scatter over the field, as long as they stay within the boundaries. As soon as the "egret" has the ball, that student calls out the web of life component that the egret is (i.e. producer, consumer, decomposer, or non-living). The egret is a "**consumer**". As soon as the "egret" speaks, all students must freeze in place.
5. The student with the ball must tell something about its species/object in terms of food, shelter, role in nature, or adaptations (i.e. what kind of food it eats, if it is an herbivore, carnivore, or omnivore; where it lives - what type of habitat; or if it has feathers, fur, or scales etc.) Play resumes with the "egret" student throwing the ball in the air and calling out another name on one of the alphabet picture cards or soil, air, or water.
6. As soon as the new student retrieves the ball and calls out the web of life component of his/her picture then all other students freeze in place. Continue as in Procedure #5.

### Extension

Discuss with students the meaning of the Web of Life and its components. Ask students if they can give an example of each component. What would happen if there were more consumers than producers? More carnivores than herbivores or omnivores? What if there were no decomposers? Have students organize some of the alphabet picture cards in a Web of Life pattern. Have them draw the web of life they just created for a bulletin board display.



## Important Words

Web of Life  
 Sun  
 Air  
 Soil  
 Water  
 Atmosphere  
 Producer  
 Consumer  
 Decomposer  
 Herbivore  
 Carnivore  
 Omnivore



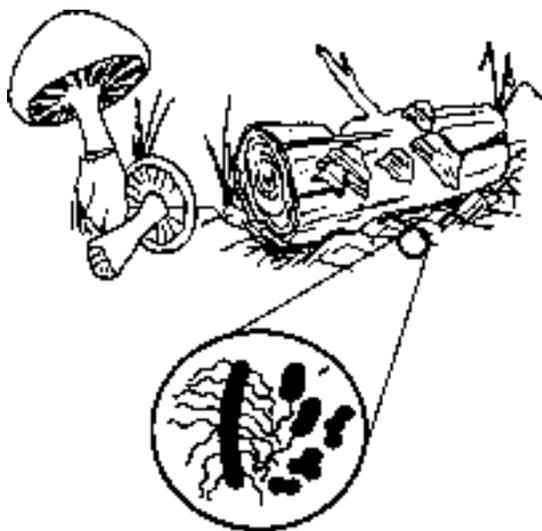
# Producers



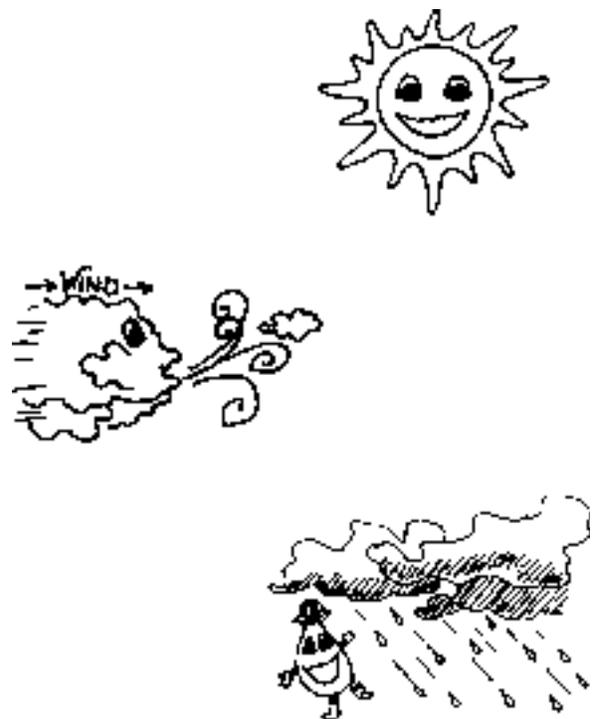
# Consumers



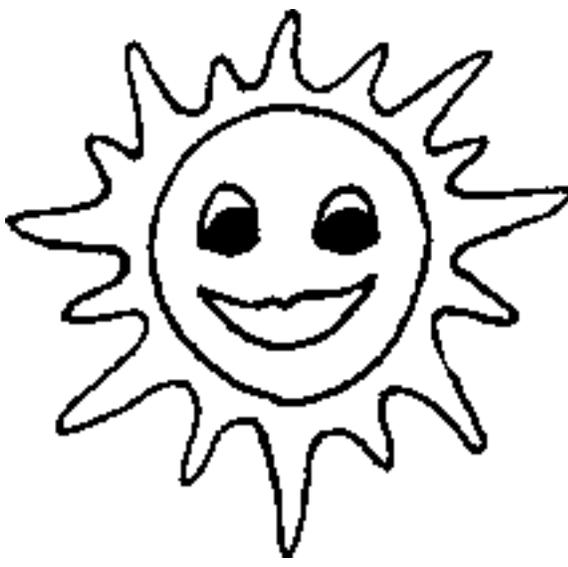
# Decomposers



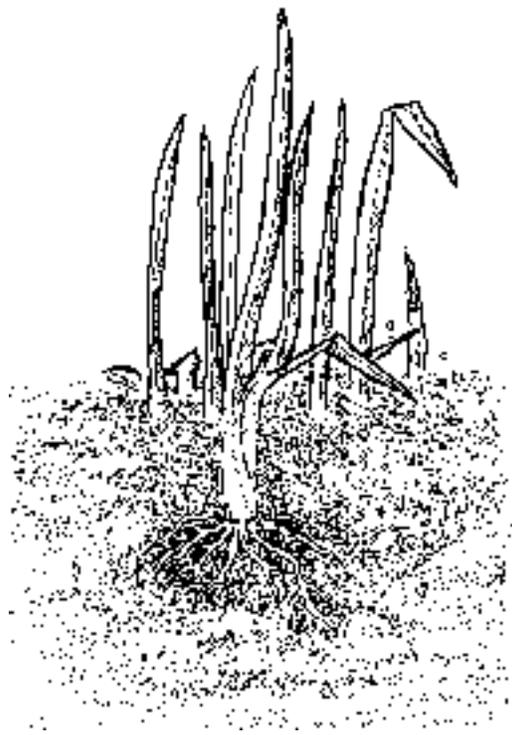
# Non-Living



**Sun**



**Soil**



**Air**



**Water**

