

## Grab 'N Go Kit Web of Life

### Web of Life Overview:

In this activity, students will take a close look at one particular ecosystem (a forest) and will discover the ways that plants and animals are connected to each other. Students will create food chains and food webs.

### Items in kit:

- 32 laminated colored animal pictures
- Directions
- Twine

This activity is from Project Learning Tree's Pre K-8 Activity Guide, Activity #45



## Directions for Web of Life Game

1. Review consumer, producer, decomposer, herbivore, carnivore and omnivore.
2. Distribute pictures of a forest ecosystem.
3. Assemble all students into a circle, standing shoulder to shoulder. Have each student show the group their picture and say what they are.
4. Ask "What is necessary for all living parts of our ecosystem to exist?" (Sun). The food chain converts the sun's energy into forms that every living thing can use.
5. Ask, "Which of you uses the sun's energy directly?" (Any plant/tree). Give the ball of yarn to a student who is a plant. The plant tosses the ball of yarn to anything that directly eats it, while holding onto a piece of the yarn. The plant and primary consumer hold the yarn taut between them.
6. The primary consumer now has the ball of yarn. They pick something that eats them or something they eat to pass the ball to. The student tosses the ball of yarn to this new student, holding the yarn taut between them.
7. Continue in this way until all parts of the ecosystem are connected with the yarn.
8. Have everyone step back a bit so that the yarn is taut. Ask them for words to describe the pattern of the yarn. (Connected, web, etc.)
9. Tell them this represents the web of life in a forest, explaining how each part is very important to the other parts, even if these parts are not directly connected to each other. Have the person who started off, gently tug on the yard, ask each person to gently tug on the yarn if they feel a tug. Give it about a minute. Ask if everyone felt a tug. They all should because everyone is connected.
10. Explain that there has been a late frost and many of the apples were affected. Ask the person with the apple card to drop their yarn. Ask students to describe how this would affect those connected to them.
11. When the game is complete, have students drop the yarn. Gather up the yarn for detangling so you can use it again. Have a different ball of yarn for every group so you don't have to stop to detangle in between groups.
12. There are 8 food chains that make up this food web. If time permits, have the students look at the color of the border around their picture. Ask everyone of one color group to come forward (All dark blue, all light green, etc.). Have them organize themselves in the order they would be consumed. Every group should start with a producer, the next should be a primary consumer (a plant eater), the next two will either be secondary and tertiary consumers or secondary consumer and decomposer. You can explain about top of the food chain animals and the roll of decomposers.
13. Here is the grid for the food chains within the Web of Life Game:

Food Chains for Web of Life Game					
Color	Producer	Primary Consumer	Secondary Consumer	Tertiary Consumer	Decomposer
	willow bud	porcupine	grey wolf		fungus
	apples	grasshopper	opossum		mushrooms
	clover	rabbit	red fox	mountain lion	
	cherries	nuthatch	timber rattlesnake	badger	
	lettuce	caterpillar	sparrow	golden eagle	
	peanuts	caterpillar	eastern grey squirrel	black bear	
	acorns	chipmunk	owl	coyote	
	corn	field mouse	raccoon	red-tailed hawk	





