

Skills Worksheet

Directed Reading

Section: Ecology

1. Define *ecology*.

2. What word also means "nonliving"?

ECOSYSTEMS

In the space provided, write the letter of the description that best matches the term or phrase.

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|----------------------|---|
| _____ 3. ecosystem | a. organisms that get their energy from eating other organisms |
| _____ 4. producers | b. a community of organisms and their abiotic environment |
| _____ 5. consumers | c. organisms that make their own food; a source of food for other organisms |
| _____ 6. decomposers | d. organisms that get energy by breaking down dead organisms |

BALANCING FORCES IN ECOSYSTEMS

7. What else becomes limited because amounts of matter and energy in an ecosystem are limited?

8. The largest population that an environment can support at any given time is called the _____.

9. In general, ecosystems react to changes in ways that maintain or restore _____ in the ecosystem.

Directed Reading *continued*

10. When might an ecosystem be unable to restore a community of organisms to its original state?

ENERGY TRANSFER

11. The ultimate source of energy for almost every ecosystem is the

12. Plants capture solar energy by a chemical process called

13. Chemical changes that take place as energy flows and matter cycles through an ecosystem result in what?

14. On the energy pyramid, where is the least amount of energy available to organisms found?

15. The sequence in which organisms consume other organisms can be represented by a(n) _____.

16. A diagram that shows the complex feeding relationships among organisms in an ecosystem is a(n) _____.

HUMAN STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT

17. What effect might changes in an ecosystem have on a human population?

Directed Reading *continued*

18. Identify three ways in which human activity can disrupt ecological balances.

19. Define *pollution*.

20. How can people help keep Earth's ecosystems in balance?
