

A Kink in the Food Chain

WebQuest Description: Students explore interdependence in ecosystems by examining the relationships of producer/consumer and predator/prey in a food chain.

Grade Level: 6-8

Curriculum: Science

Keywords: consumer, ecosystem, equilibrium, food chain, population, predator, prey, producer

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Introduction

An ecosystem is a group of living things and their physical environment. One cycle of relationships in an ecosystem is the food chain, made of producers and consumers. What happens to the ecosystem when the food chain is changed? Can the results of changes be predicted?

Tasks

Bunnies, bunnies, bunnies, bunnies everywhere! Rangers at Government Canyon State Natural Area have noticed an explosion in the rabbit population! They need your help to find out what has caused this explosion. What might happen as a result of the high rabbit population? Use the Web to research the issue and prepare a Power Point presentation to help the rangers.

Process

With your partner/group, you will prepare a Power Point presentation to explain the causes and effects of a sudden rise in rabbit population. Your presentation should include the following information:1. Identify the ecosystems at Government Canyon State Natural Area.2. Describe the relationship between producers, primary consumers and secondary consumers.3. Identify and describe two possible causes of the rabbit population explosion.4. Identify and describe two possible effects of the rabbit population explosion.5. Propose a course of action for the rangers. 6. Include charts, graphs and illustrations to explain your content.Have paper ready to use concept maps for notes as you research the information you will need.

Evaluation

Your project will be evaluated on content, language and teamwork. (Rubrics are being developed for these three areas.)

Category and Score					Score
				Total Score	

Conclusion

Yay! You are now a junior ranger.

Teacher Page

8th Grade TEKS:

(E) Organisms and environments. In studies of living systems, students explore the interdependence between these systems. Interactions between organisms in ecosystems, including producer/consumer, predator/prey, and parasite/host relationships, are investigated in aquatic and terrestrial systems. Students describe how biotic and abiotic factors affect the number of organisms and populations present in an ecosystem. In addition, students explore how organisms and their populations respond to short- and long-term environmental changes, including those caused by human activities.

Credits

Other