

# Web of Life

## Post-visit Activities



Your fun at Ijams can continue back in your classroom. These Post-visit activities are designed to enhance the learning experience that children gained on their field trip. The activities focus on relationships in nature, and how all organisms in an ecosystem are connected through these relationships.

Be sure to complete at least one of these activities after your field trip to evaluate the effectiveness of your learning experience at Ijams. Participating in this evaluation process helps Ijams Nature Center staff continue to provide quality programs for area schools.

### Food Web Scavenger Hunt

Materials: Scavenger Hunt worksheet (provided), pencils/pens

Tell students they will be going on a scavenger hunt to look for examples of the different components and relationships within an ecosystem. Give each student a copy of the Student Activity Sheet and be sure all students have a pencil or pen. Divide students into groups of four and tell the groups they will be working together to find the items on the scavenger hunt.

Take students outside. Describe the boundaries for the scavenger hunt and remind students to leave natural areas undisturbed. Tell students to meet you at a designated area when they are finished or when they need help, and begin the scavenger hunt. Return to the classroom. Review each item on the scavenger hunt list, asking students what examples they were able to find.

### Links in the Chain

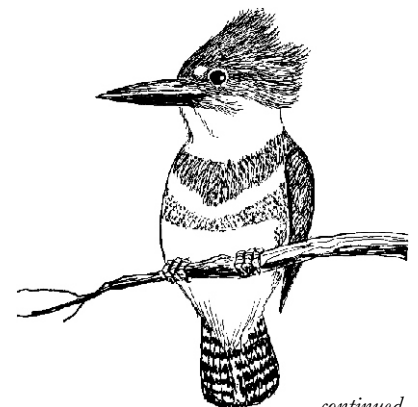
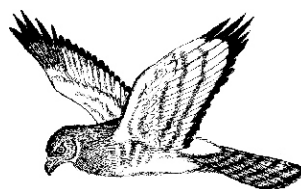
Materials: Index cards, markers, tape or magnets

Prepare the following index cards and tape them to one side of the chalkboard. (Magnets could also be used.)

- One card labeled “sun”
- Four cards labeled “grass”
- Three cards labeled “grasshopper”
- Two cards labeled “frog”
- One card labeled “mouse”
- Three cards labeled “snake”
- Two cards labeled “hawk”

In this warm-up activity, you will make four food chains on the board using index cards. Each food chain will be a bit different, so that all of the organisms above will be used. Once the food chains are made, discuss the food web and draw arrows connecting the predators and prey between the food chains.

Begin by asking children about the major source of energy for the Earth. Place the sun at the bottom of the board. Next, ask children what type of organisms need the sun's energy to produce food. Place the four grass cards on the board, over the sun. Be sure to emphasize that the plants are producers because they produce their own food. They are in the greatest amount in an ecosystem because they serve as the base for all food chains.



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Ask children which animals eat only plants. Place the grasshopper cards above three of the grass cards. Explain that grasshoppers are herbivores because they only eat plants. Tell the children that you are beginning to build food chains, which show the flow of energy through an ecosystem. Ask children what the frogs eat and where they should be placed on the board. Place the frogs above the grasshoppers. Frogs are carnivores because they only eat other animals.

Continue the discussion with each of the remaining animals until there are four food chains on the board. (Remember that mice are omnivores and snakes and hawks are carnivores). Be sure to discuss that fact that herbivores, omnivores, and carnivores are all consumers because they get their energy by consuming other food sources. You may want to point out the fact that omnivores have more food sources to choose from than carnivores or herbivores.

Once the food chains are on the board, discuss which animals are predators, which ones are prey, and which ones are both. Then draw arrows showing the flow of energy through the food chain. In nature, all of these food chains are connected in a **food web**. To demonstrate the food web, draw lines between the food chains showing all animals that eat one another. Discuss the differences between the **food web** and the **food chain**.

### Recipe for a Forest

Materials: Paper, pens/pencils

Give each child an imaginary deed to one square mile of land. On this land, students will be free to create their dream forest, complete with as many animals, trees, mountains, and rivers as they desire. Allow them to be creative. For example, they may want to add rainbows and waterfalls to make the forest beautiful. Have them list the ingredients of their forest, and then have them draw a picture of it.

End by discussing whether or not their individual forests are able to sustain themselves year after year. For instance, see if they have chosen representatives of the food web: plants, herbivores, carnivores, and decomposers. Also encourage them to think about abiotic factors such as soil and climate. Have they chosen animals that will be able to survive in their selected climate?

### Web of Life Worksheets

Materials: Worksheets (provided)

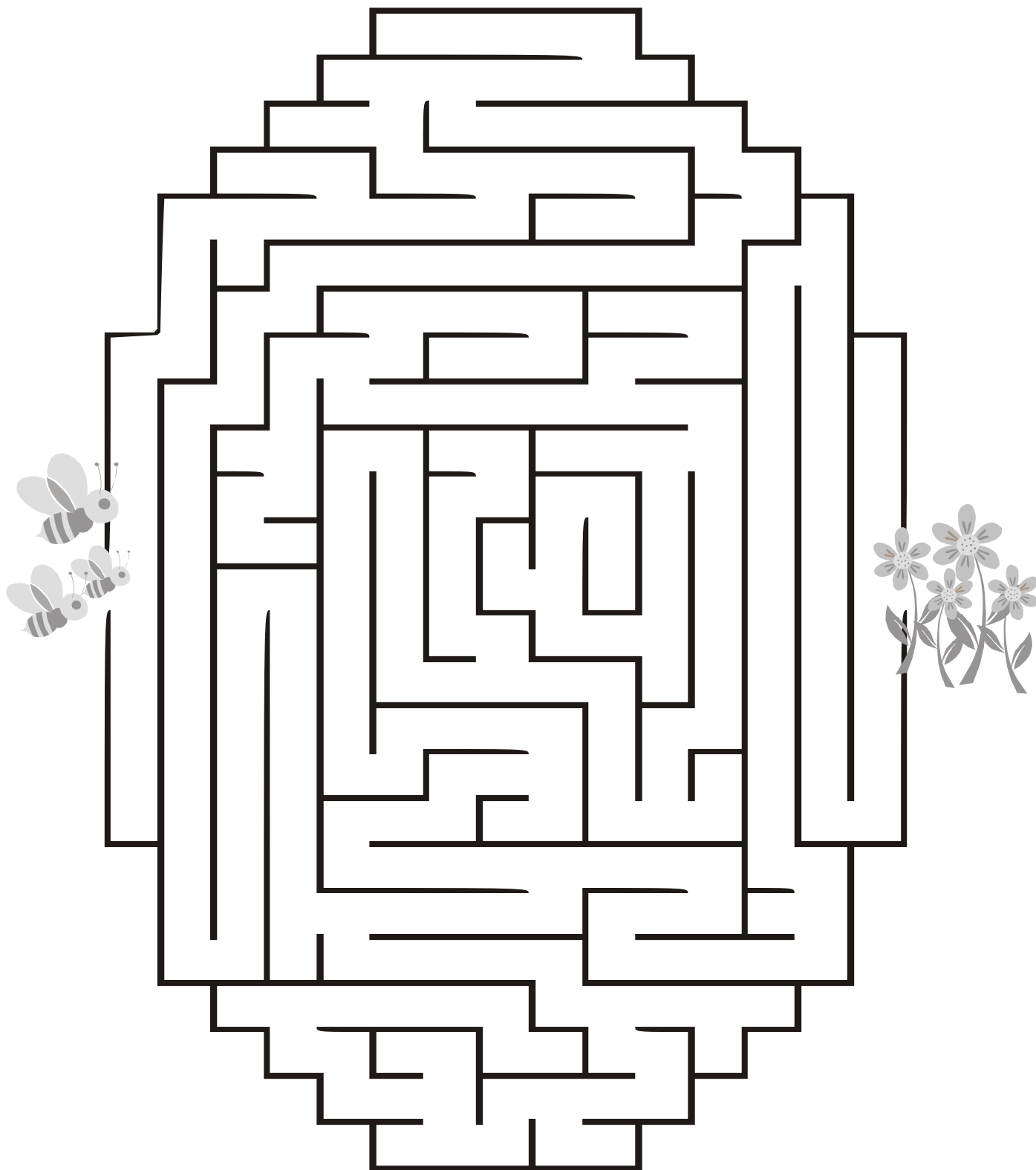
Several worksheets have been provided that illustrate food web concepts. These can be copied for the class and used either before or after your GO! Hikes field trip to reinforce the material presented.





# Honey Bee Maze

Help the honey bees find the wildflower meadow.



# Moth-matics

Try to fill in the missing numbers, using the following rules:

- Use the numbers 1 through 9 to complete the equations.
- Each number is only used once.
- Each row is a math equation. Each column is a math equation.
- Remember that multiplication and division are performed before addition and subtraction.

	+		+		14
+		+		+	
	+		-		5
-		-		-	
	+		+		12
10		3		8	

	-		+		9
+		-		+	
	-		+		6
+		+		+	
	+		-		8
14		10		13	

	+		-		8
+		+		+	
	+		+		18
-		+		-	
	-		+		9
10		16		5	

# Food Web Scavenger Hunt

Find one example of a producer.		Find one example of a decomposer.	
Find one example of a consumer.		Find one example of a plant that has been eaten by insects.	
Find one example of an herbivore.		Find one example of symbiosis.	
Find one example of a carnivore.		Find one example of a predator/prey relationship.	
Find one example of an omnivore.		Find one example of human activity.	