

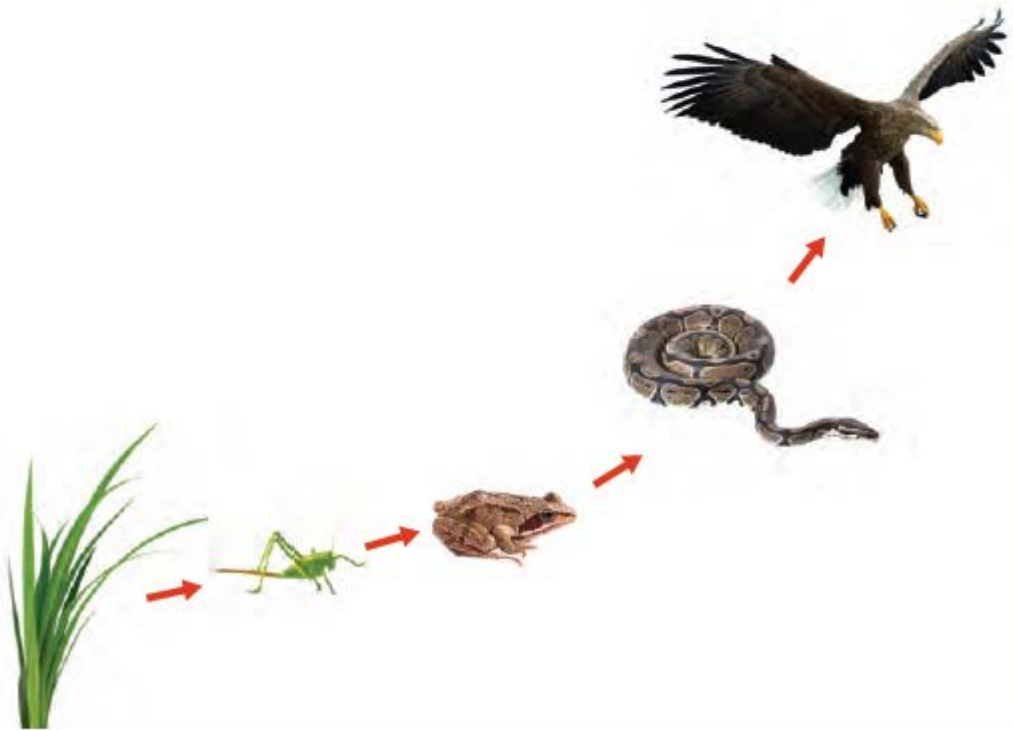
The Food Chain

All living things require energy. Plants usually get their energy from the sun. Animals usually get their energy from eating plants or other animals.

A food chain shows how the energy in each plant or animal is passed on to the things that consume it.

Here's a simple example:

grass → grasshopper → frog → snake → eagle



The grass gets its energy from the sun.



The grasshopper gets its energy by eating the grass.



The frog gets its energy by eating the insect.



The snake gets its energy by eating the frog.



The eagle gets its energy by eating the snake.

You can see that the animals get bigger at each stage of the food chain. This means that food chains need lots of the small plants and animals at the start of the chain to make enough energy for one animal at the end of it.

All animals and plants are connected in chains like this. Different environments have different chains because different things live there.

There are three kinds of plants and animals in a food chain:

Producers: Plants are the only producers because only they can make energy from sunlight, carbon dioxide and water.

Consumers: Animals are consumers because they use (or consume) energy. Consumers can be herbivores, carnivores or omnivores. Herbivores (e.g. grasshoppers) only eat plants. Carnivores (e.g. eagles) only eat animals. Omnivores (e.g. frogs) eat both plants and animals.

Decomposers: They eat dead plants and animals and then put the nutrients back into the soil. Mushrooms and bacteria are decomposers.



Now that you know all about food chains, search online to learn about food webs! What can a food web show us?



GLOSSARY

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----|---|
| bacteria | (n.) | 細菌 | very small organisms, some of which make us get sick |
| environment | (n.) | 環境 | the surrounding area; usually referring to the air, water or land |
| external | (adj.) | 外部 | on the outside |
| feature | (n.) | 特徵 | an important or distinctive part of something |
| gill | (n.) | 鰓 | a fish's body part which allows it to get oxygen from the water |
| moist | (adj.) | 濕潤 | a little bit wet |
| pass on | (phr. v.) | 傳遞 | to give something to someone |
| require | (v.) | 需要 | to need |
| scaly | (adj.) | 有鱗片 | being covered with scales |
| stage | (n.) | 階段 | a certain point or period in a process |