Name & Surname: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

WEB OF MATTER EXPLORERS

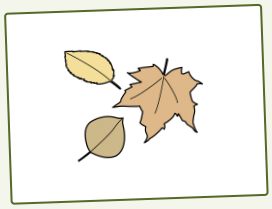
Follow matter through plants, animals, and decomposers.



About 40 minutes Level ★★★☆☆

FOOD WEB RECYCLING

Plants make food from sunlight, water and carbon dioxide. Animals eat **plants** or other animals, so **matter** moves along the web.



- Producers like green plants make **food** that holds matter and energy.
- Consumers eat plants or animals and use **matter** for growth.
- Decomposers like fungi and **bacteria** break down dead matter and wastes.
- Recycled minerals, water and air return to **soil** and air for plants to reuse.

TASK A

/3

Read the garden story and answer about matter.

A student finds a pile of fallen leaves behind the school garden in October. Two weeks later the pile is smaller, damp, and smells earthy. Tiny white threads and small bugs are working in the **leaves**. No one has moved the **pile**.

1. **What are the tiny threads and bugs doing with the matter in the leaves?**
   They are breaking...

2. **Where does the rest of the matter go after decay?**
   It returns to...

3. **Why is this recycling important for new plants?**
   New plants need...

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WEB WORDS PUZZLE

Learn key words, then solve the crossword.

KEY WORDS

producer: a living thing that makes its own food

consumer: a living thing that eats other living things

decomposer: a living thing that breaks down dead matter

matter: what all living and nonliving things are made of

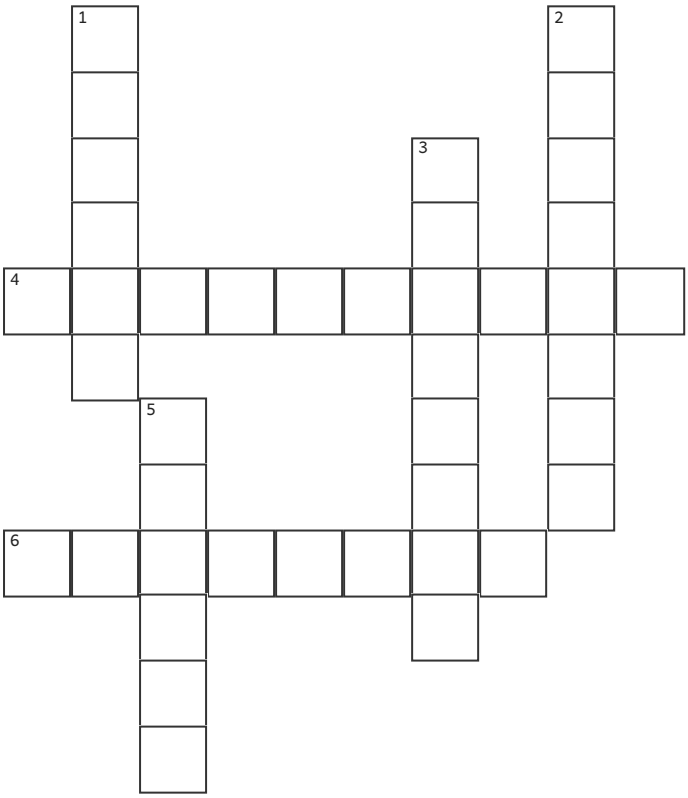
photosynthesis: how green plants make food from sunlight, water and air

nutrient: a useful material that helps living things grow

TASK B

/6

Solve the crossword using the clues below.



Across

4. breaks down dead plants and animals (10)
6. eats plants or animals for energy (8)

Down

1. what moves through the web and is recycled (6)
2. tiny decomposers in soil and air (8)
3. makes its own food from sunlight (8)
5. mold and mushrooms belong to this group (6)

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MATCH THE PAIRS

Cut out cards and find the matching pairs.

TASK C

Cut out the cards and match each word pair.

✂ Cut out the cards.

animal that eats plants or animals	 **carbon dioxide**	green plant that makes food	**consumer**
plants make food from sunlight, water and air	recycled matter in soil for plants	**producer**	 **decomposer**
 **minerals**	 **photosynthesis**	recycled gas in air for plants	fungus or bacteria that breaks down dead matter

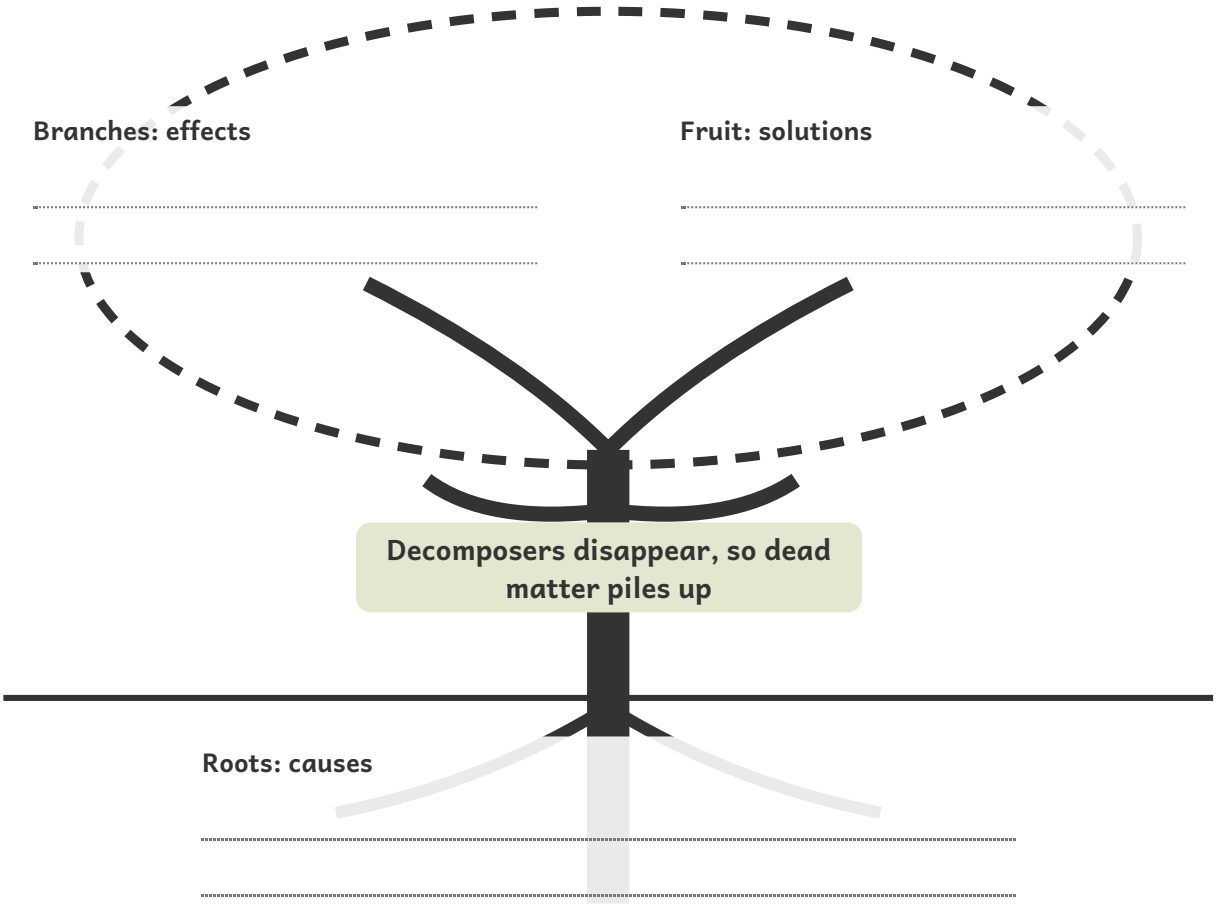
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IF DECAY STOPPED

Map what happens when decomposers disappear.

TASK D

Complete the tree to show what happens without decay.



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know? A handful of healthy **soil** can hold more **bacteria** than people on Earth.

CHALLENGE TIME!

Can you spot three **signs** of decay outside? Tell a **partner**.

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CHECK YOUR MODEL

Show what you know about moving matter.

TASK E

Example done for you

/3

Tick the best answer for each question.

1. **Where does new matter in plants come from?**
   - [x] From water and air
   - [ ] From animals eating plants
   - [ ] From rocks that turn into leaves
2. **What do arrows in a food web show?**
   - [ ] Which animal is biggest
   - [ ] How energy and matter move when one thing is eaten
   - [ ] Where animals sleep
3. **What do decomposers do after plants and animals die?**
   - [ ] Make sunlight from dead leaves
   - [ ] Eat only living plants
   - [ ] Break down dead matter and release nutrients
4. **Why can matter be recycled but energy cannot?**
   - [ ] Energy turns back into sunlight
   - [ ] Matter returns to soil and air for reuse
   - [ ] Animals make new matter from nothing

TASK F

Example done for you

/7

Color each box by its group in the web.

● **Producers and consumers**: color it blue or draw ● ▲ **Decomposers**: color it orange or draw ▲

grass ●	rabbit	oak seedling	mouse
mushroom	mold	bacteria	earthworm

HOW DID I DO?

Circle a face for each line.

I can trace matter through producers, consumers and decomposers.	☹	😐	☺
I can explain how decomposers recycle nutrients.	☹	😐	☺
I can build a model of a food web.	☹	😐	☺

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Answer sheet: Web of Matter Explorers

Task A

1. They are breaking down dead matter and using some as food.
2. It returns to soil and air as minerals, water and carbon dioxide for plants.
3. New plants need recycled minerals, water and carbon dioxide to make food and grow.

Task B

1 down: MATTER
2 down: BACTERIA
3 down: PRODUCER
4 across: DECOMPOSER
5 down: FUNGUS
6 across: CONSUMER

Task C

producer = green plant that makes food
consumer = animal that eats plants or animals
decomposer = fungus or bacteria that breaks down dead matter
photosynthesis = plants make food from sunlight, water and air
minerals = recycled matter in soil for plants
carbon dioxide = recycled gas in air for plants

Task D

Answers will vary, e.g. causes: soil sprayed with strong chemicals kills fungi and bacteria; effects: plants run low on minerals and grow poorly; solutions: leave fallen leaves to rot and protect soil life

Task E

1. a) From water and air
2. b) How energy and matter move when one thing is eaten
3. c) Break down dead matter and release nutrients
4. b) Matter returns to soil and air for reuse

Task F

Producers and consumers (blue ●): grass, rabbit, oak seedling, mouse
Decomposers (orange ▲): mushroom, mold, bacteria, earthworm

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