

Food Webs

River Snatch Run with Chompling

Learning target

Explain why a food web is more connected than one chain.



Before you begin

Use the reference page and discussion prompts on their own, or open the optional browser adventure. No earlier lesson or physical kit is required.

For online play: use an internet-connected current browser with local storage enabled. Read the three-part Gemling briefing, answer the quick check, and apply the evidence at three checkpoints. Retry feedback supports review; results are not a secure test or gradebook.

Use for teacher-led review, science centers or partner practice. Independent readers may need support with the vocabulary below. The design target is grades 3-5; choose support based on the learner.

Vocabulary and concepts to discuss

Overlapping chains; multiple food sources; interconnected organisms

Open River Snatch Run - direct lesson link

Scan the QR code or use the clickable link. This guide is usable offline; the adventure runs on an external educational website.



Food Webs - key ideas

1. The first clues

A food web joins overlapping food chains. Organisms may have several food sources and may be eaten by more than one consumer.

2. How the clues connect

Arrows still point from food to eater. More connections can reveal alternative pathways for energy.

3. Our evidence record

Our web has grass feeding rabbits and insects; birds eat insects; foxes eat rabbits and some birds. Two paths reach the fox, so one straight chain misses part of the evidence.

Keep the science accurate

Arrows show energy moving from food to eater. Energy flows while matter cycles. Include decomposers; avoid rigid one-food-per-animal rules.

Apply the evidence

Use a specific observation from this lesson to explain one choice. Point to a clue, then connect that clue to a scientific idea.

Curriculum reference: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/pe/5-ls2-1-ecosystems-interactions-energy-and-dynamics>

Talk through the evidence

1. Why use a food web?

Expected answer: To show connected feeding paths

Reasoning: A food web joins overlapping food chains. Organisms may have several food sources and may be eaten by more than one consumer.

2. Which path is in our model?

Expected answer: Grass to insect to bird to fox

Reasoning: Our web has grass feeding rabbits and insects; birds eat insects; foxes eat rabbits and some birds. Two paths reach the fox, so one straight chain misses part of the evidence.

3. What other path reaches the fox?

Expected answer: Grass to rabbit to fox

Reasoning: Our web has grass feeding rabbits and insects; birds eat insects; foxes eat rabbits and some birds. Two paths reach the fox, so one straight chain misses part of the evidence.

4. Do arrows change meaning in a web?

Expected answer: No, they still show food-to-eater energy transfer

Reasoning: Arrows still point from food to eater. More connections can reveal alternative pathways for energy.

Guide the discussion

Ask learners to name the evidence that supports their answer. If an answer differs, revisit the matching key idea on page 2 and invite a revised explanation.

Online rewards: this lesson grants one fixed digital Expedition Discovery. Five saved digital Gemling friends become available only after all six distinct subject lessons are complete, in any order. Digital rewards do not establish physical ownership.