

Scavengers, Decomposers & Matter

Scavenger Bluff with Chompling

Learning target

Distinguish feeding roles and explain matter recycling.



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

Dead material; scavengers; decomposers; returning materials to the environment

Open Scavenger Bluff - 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.



Scavengers, Decomposers & Matter - key ideas

1. The first clues

Scavengers eat dead organisms or remains. Decomposers, including many fungi and bacteria, break down dead material and wastes.

2. How the clues connect

Decomposition returns materials to the environment where they can be used again. Matter cycles; energy flows and spreads, including as heat.

3. Our evidence record

Our model follows dead leaves, decomposers, materials in soil and plant uptake. It does not send the same energy back into sunlight.

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-Is2-1-ecosystems-interactions-energy-and-dynamics>

Talk through the evidence

1. Which role breaks down dead material?

Expected answer: Decomposer

Reasoning: Scavengers eat dead organisms or remains. Decomposers, including many fungi and bacteria, break down dead material and wastes.

2. What can a scavenger eat?

Expected answer: Dead remains

Reasoning: Scavengers eat dead organisms or remains. Decomposers, including many fungi and bacteria, break down dead material and wastes.

3. What can cycle through the soil and plants?

Expected answer: Matter

Reasoning: Decomposition returns materials to the environment where they can be used again. Matter cycles; energy flows and spreads, including as heat.

4. Which pathway fits our model?

Expected answer: Dead leaves to decomposition to reusable materials

Reasoning: Our model follows dead leaves, decomposers, materials in soil and plant uptake. It does not send the same energy back into sunlight.

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.