

AQUATIC FOOD WEB:

All living things (organisms) need a constant supply of energy which starts with the sun. In an aquatic habitat, the sun gives energy to tiny plants (algae or phytoplankton) to grow. Algae feed tiny aquatic animals (zooplankton), which feed aquatic insects, which feed minnows and other small fish. The small fish feed larger predatory fish. The plants and animals are linked together. This is called a food web which is a simple way to show how the sun's energy is passed on to all living things through their food. When you eat fish, you become part of the aquatic food web.

Create an aquatic food web in your backyard

Paint different fish, insects, and aquatic plants on rocks (or draw with chalk/colored pencils) and arrange different aquatic species into a food web. Be creative and paint each component of a food web. Include producers, primary consumers, secondary consumers, and tertiary consumers. Have students explain the predator-prey relationship between each. Students can also learn about some defense mechanisms that animals use to deter predators. Get creative and use sticks or other objects to connect the different organisms. Learn about aquatic food webs using the resources below.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: <https://www.noaa.gov/education/resource-collections/marine-life-education-resources/aquatic-food-webs>