**Pre Visit 1**
**River Critter Round Up**
**6-8**

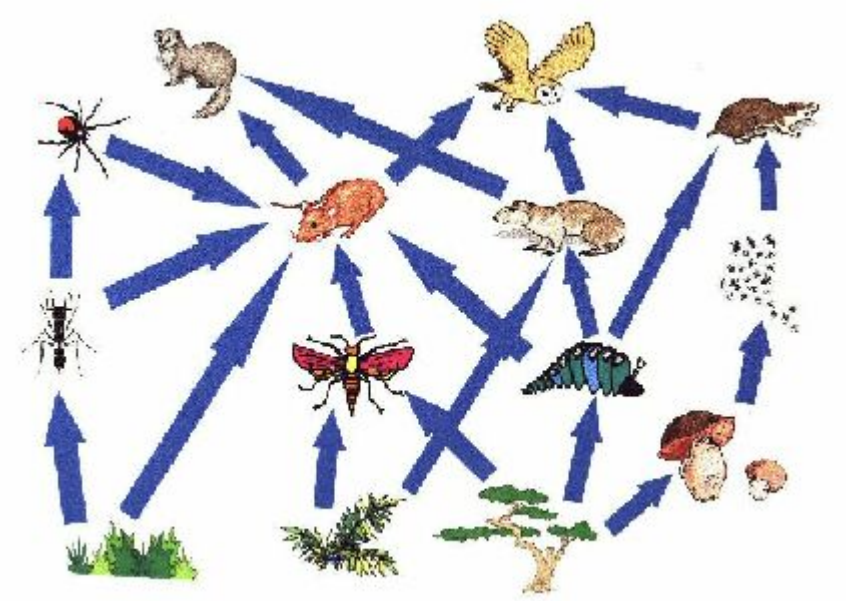
# Food Web

## Purpose/Objective

To understand the interaction between organisms and the ecosystem in which they live.
Explore how small changes can cause a ripple effect among organisms.
To understand how humans can affect wildlife directly and indirectly.

## Materials

String
Organism cards



http://library.thinkquest.org/J0113170/forest/images/foodweb.jpg

Food Chain: a sequence of events between plants and animals that shows who eats what.
Food Web: Interconnected food chains.

If there are too many links in a single food chain the animals cannot get enough of their energy requirements to stay alive, thus most animals are apart of multiple food chains or a food web.

## Procedure

1. Have each student make a card with the name and a picture of the animal/ organism they are representing and attach a string to make a nametag.
2. Hang the nametags around the student's neck and have them stand in a circle.
3. Begin the game by taking the roll of string and giving it to the student representing the sun.
4. Have that student look for something that he/ she might eat or be eaten by and pass the roll to that student while continuing to hold the end of the string.
5. Continue until the roll can't be passed anymore or all of the students are holding a piece of the string.
6. Have the students pull their string tight.
7. Propose different situations to see the effects.
    a. Ex. A drought will reduce or kill grass
    b. Pesticides sprayed kills off insects
    c. Fertilizing your yard can runoff into the stream and kill off fish
    d. Development can eliminate gopher tortoise habitat
8. Have the students drop the string as they are affected.
9. When students feel that part of their string has been dropped they should drop their string as well.
10. This will continue until no one is holding anymore string.

River Critter Roundup Vocabulary

**Ecosystem** - The interaction between organisms and their environment.
**Wetland** - a lowland area, such as a marsh or swamp that is saturated with moisture,
**Aquifer** - any geologic formation of sand, soil and gravel where groundwater is stored.
**Macroinverebrate -**
**Biodiversity** - A term that describes the number of different species that live within a particular ecosystem.
**Amphibian** - An animal capable of living both on land and in water.
**Reptile** - any cold-blooded vertebrate comprising the turtles/ tortoises, snakes, lizards, crocodilians, tuatara, and various extinct members including the dinosaurs that lay eggs and has scales.
**Habitat** - Any native and non-native species that heavily take over an area.
**Invasive** - Any native and non-native species that heavily take over an area.
**Native** - originating naturally in a particular country or region.
**Exotic** - Something not found in the area naturally; may have originated from another country.
**Aquatic** – Living or growing in the water.
**Predator** – Any animal that preys upon other animals.
**Prey** – An animal that is hunted by another animal.
**Environment** – the air, water, minerals, organisms, and all other external factors surrounding and affecting a given organism at any time.
**Niche -** the position or function of an organism in a community of plants and animals.
**Karst topography -** an area of limestone terrain characterized by sinks, ravines, and underground streams.
**Topography –** The surface features of a place or region. Ex: mountains, rivers, valleys.