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## What is an environment?

Where do you live? What do you eat? Your home and your food are parts of your environment. All the living and nonliving things in a place make up an **environment**.

Plants and animals need air and water. They also need space to live and grow. Animals need shelter for protection. They need food to eat. These are all parts of their environments.



This woodpecker uses its strong beak to make a shelter in a tall tree.

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## How do plants and animals depend on each other?

Animals depend on plants for food and shelter. Deer feed on grass, flowers, and shrubs. Deer also sleep among trees. They hide in tall grass.

Beavers live on land and in water. They eat tree bark, twigs, leaves, and roots.

Beaver families live in lodges. They use nearby trees and mud to build these homes.



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Butterflies carry pollen from flower to flower as they feed.



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You have learned how animals use plants for food and shelter. Plants use animals, too. They use animals in a different way.

Watch a butterfly feed at a flower. The butterfly drinks a sweet liquid called nectar. As the butterfly drinks, a powder sticks to its body. The powder is called **pollen**.

The butterfly carries the pollen to the next flower it visits. The pollen rubs off on this second flower. The flower uses the pollen to make seeds.



lodge

Beavers use logs and branches to make a lodge.

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## What is a food chain?

Plants and animals link together in an important way. They make up a food chain. A **food chain** is the path that shows how energy moves from plants to animals.

Sunlight is part of the first step in any food chain. Plants use sunlight to make their own food.

step 1 in a food chain

Plants make their own food from sunlight.



Next, some animals, such as rabbits, eat grass and other plants. This is the second step in a food chain.

Other animals, such as hawks, eat the plant-eating animals. This is the third step in a food chain.

step 2 in a food chain

A rabbit eats grass.

step 3 in a food chain

A hawk eats the rabbit.