

# Web of Life Game



## You will need:

A ball of string

Cards with the names of each of the following organisms written on them:

sun

earthworm

dead leaf

snail

bumblebee

ant

butterfly

living leaf

mushroom

spider

flower

owl

rock

river

tree

squirrel

grass

woodpecker

snake

soil

mouse

rain

frog

deer

## How to play:

Sit in a circle.

Each player takes a card from a pile in the middle and holds it up so that everyone can see the name of the organism on the card.

The person with the Tree card starts off the game by tossing the ball of twine to someone else in the circle.

The person who catches the ball tries to explain how the organism on his or her card interacts with the Tree. Anyone in the group can join in to help out.

Next, the person who caught the ball holds onto the string and tosses the ball to a third person.

The third person explains how the organism on his or her card interacts with the second person's organism. If the player gets stuck, anyone in the game can make a guess.

The game continues until everyone has had a turn at catching the twine.

The twine is now complex and tangled—everyone in the group is connected to everyone else.

Players can also talk about how their organisms are connected to others that came up earlier in the game.



Choose one of the organisms in the game. Can anyone predict what would happen if it was removed from the web? Which other organisms would be affected?

What would happen if you cut the twine with scissors? What effect would this have on the ecosystem?

The tangled ball of twine has formed a web, just like the complicated web of life in an ecosystem. The web shows how closely organisms in an ecosystem interact with one another. Anything that happens to part of the web has an effect on the whole system.