



Forest Web of Life

Introduction

The ancient temperate forest ecosystem described in Carol Reed-Jones' *The Tree in the Ancient Forest* is a complex web of relationships. All the plants and animals are interdependent. In this activity, students explore the interactions between the various plants and animals in an ancient forest.

Materials Needed

- ◆ Large piece of paper, or several feet of white butcher paper if this is a group project
- ◆ Crayons or colored markers

Key Concepts

- ◆ A system is an organized group of related objects or components.
- ◆ Interactions occur in systems.

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. Have the students brainstorm a list of plants and animals which can be found in an ancient forest.
2. Each student or group of students draws a picture of a large old-growth fir tree.
3. Surrounding the tree, or even on it, draw the plants and animals from the brainstormed list.
4. Draw an arrow from each animal to something it eats or from which it draws nourishment. Do any of the animals or plants have more than one arrow? Do any of the arrows point both ways (for example, the tree's roots and the truffles)? How are these animals and plants interdependent?

Nature Connections

- ◆ These are only some of the interactions in an ancient forest. What other animals and plants are in an ancient forest which did not appear in the book? Draw them and arrows to their food sources. Are any of them food sources themselves?
- ◆ Research to locate the ancient forest which is closest to where you live. Are there photographs or videos of it online?

Additional Resources

Animals Found in Temperate Deciduous Forests

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/biomes/tempdecid/tempdecidshtml>

Animals & Vegetation

<http://ths.sps.lane.edu/biomes/deciduous3/deciduous3.html>

Temperate Deciduous Forest Animals

<http://www.mbgnet.net/sets/temp/animals/>

