

Changes in Ecosystems

Fill in the blanks.  Reading Skill: Compare and Contrast - question 1

What Causes Ecosystems to Change?

1. Sunlight is a resource that can never run out, but _____ is a resource that can run out.
2. A long period of time with little or no precipitation, such as rain, is called a _____.
3. When _____ burns a rain forest, animals lose their food sources and homes.
4. Too many of at least one kind of living thing in an ecosystem is called _____.

How Can People Change Ecosystems?

5. When harmful substances are added to Earth's water, air, or land, we call the problem _____.
6. Sometimes wastes from homes or factories are dumped into rivers, lakes, and oceans, causing _____ pollution.
7. One terrible example of water pollution occurred in Alaska when a(n) _____ ran aground.
8. Cars and factories cause most of the _____ pollution.
9. When acids mix with water in the air and fall to Earth, it is called _____.
10. _____ occurs when waste gases combine with water in the air.

How Can Humans Fight Pollution?

11. To not waste electricity, people can _____ appliances when they are not using them.
12. The _____ is a federal law that sets limits on different kinds of air pollution.
13. To lower land pollution, people can _____ and _____ materials.
15. The _____ requires states to clean up polluted waters and to prevent further pollution.
16. To keep water clean, people should not dump _____ that could harm the water or throw things that do not belong there into rivers or lakes.

How Does Fire Affect an Ecosystem?

Every ecosystem has a special balance of living things. The trees of a forest provide food and shelter for many animals. Birds and other animals live in the treetops where they find leaves, fruit, and insects to eat. A large fire can upset the balance of the forest ecosystem.



Answer these questions about the diagram above.

1. Why can fire spread very quickly in a forest?

2. How would forest animals be affected by a fire?

3. How would forest plants be affected by a fire and the loss of the tall trees?

Can We Clean Up Our Environment?

The large bodies of water in our environment help sustain life in many food chains. When toxic chemicals or litter runs into streams and rivers, it drains into lakes, bays, and oceans. That affects the plants and animals that live in the water. It also affects animals that drink the water or that feed on water plants and animals.



At one time the Chesapeake Bay was very polluted. The efforts of many people have made it a much cleaner place today.

Answer these questions about the two pictures above.

1. What kinds of things could have caused the condition of the bay shown in the picture on the left?

2. Compare the picture on the left to the picture on the right. What steps do you think people took in order to cause the changes you see?

Changes in Ecosystems

Fill in the blanks.

1. The problem of having too many of at least one kind of living thing in an ecosystem is called _____.
2. The acids mix with water in the air and fall to Earth as _____.
3. A long period of time when there is little or no precipitation, such as rain, is called a(n) _____.
4. When harmful substances are put into the air, land, or water, they cause _____.

Vocabulary

drought
overpopula-
tion
pollution
acid rain

Answer each question.

5. How does burning gasoline and coal cause acid rain?

6. How can overpopulation cause an ecosystem to change?

7. What happens when an ecosystem has a drought?

8. What pollution problems are caused by large cities?

Changes in Ecosystems

Vocabulary

homes

resources

crowded

polluted

ecosystem

drought

Fill in the blanks.

Changes can cause problems for the plants and animals that live together in a(n) _____. Organisms need the right amount of each of the _____ that help support life. When organisms become _____ because of overpopulation, they may die from lack of water, food, and space. In a(n) _____, plants and animals suffer because there is not enough water. A fire can destroy food sources and animal _____ and hiding places. Water, soil, and air can become harmful to plants and animals if they are _____ by chemicals or waste.