

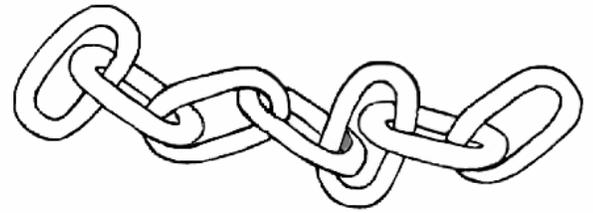
# The Food Web

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## Florida Sunshine State Standards:

SC.G.1.2, 1.3; SC.D.2.3

**Time:** 15 - 25 minutes



## Objectives:

The students will be able to: define the concept of a food web and describe at least one food chain found within Biscayne National Park.

## Materials:

Large ball of yarn, organism necklaces for each participant.

### Did you know?

*Understanding food webs demonstrates the interrelationship of all living things on earth, from the tiny single-celled organisms to the giant whales.*

## Procedure:

1. Discuss the concept of a food chain. Ask students to give examples.
2. Discuss how different food chains can be woven together to form a food web.
3. Have students stand in a circle wearing their organism necklaces. Ask the students to read the name of their organism and the descriptions to themselves.
4. Ask students where the energy comes from that fuels the base of all food chains. Most will respond plants. But where do plants get their energy? The sun. It is the sun's energy that is a defining factor between plants and animals. Animals must capture their food and plants make their own food.
5. Beginning your web with "Sunshine" hand that student the ball of string.



6. Instruct the students to carefully throw the ball of string to an organism that uses or is used by the organism on their necklace. It doesn't simply need to be what eats that organism for lunch. For example, the fish might throw the ball of string to the red mangrove because it uses the roots of the mangrove to hide from predators. One student or organism may be passed the string multiple times to include everyone in the web.
7. Once all organisms are included in the food web, discuss the interdependence of all organisms. Share a scenario in which one organism may be destroyed. For example: boaters tearing through sea grass beds or the killing of mosquitoes with insecticide. Remember insecticide will kill butterflies too. Have the one or two organisms that were affected tug on the string. Those that feel the tug should also tug and so on. Ask how many organisms were affected (felt a tug on the string).

**Wrap up:**

What would happen if we sprayed the mosquitoes and killed them all so we would not get bitten any longer? Though the biting insects and the poisonous plants can create discomfort for people, both play a role in the food webs of Biscayne National Park.

