



What if?

Introduction

In the book *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders*, author Anthony Fredericks introduces children to the animals that reside in a rotting log habitat. In this activity, students explore the consequences of removing components of the habitat.

Materials Needed

- ◆ *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders* - by Anthony Fredericks
- ◆ Notepaper
- ◆ Pen or Pencil

Key Concepts

- ◆ Plants are the base of an ecosystem.
- ◆ All animals depend on plants.
- ◆ Plants and animals have life cycles.

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. Ask students to write about the importance of a rotting log. Why is it important for the animals living there? Why is it important for humans?
2. Now, invite students to put on their thinking caps and decide what some of the consequences might be for each situation below.
 - ◆ What if all the rotting logs in the world were eliminated? What would the effect be for the animals living on each one?
 - ◆ What if all "rotting log" animals become extinct? What would be the overall effect on forest life?
 - ◆ What if all the forests in the world were to suddenly disappear. What would be the consequences?
 - ◆ What if there were no more insects? What effect would that have on life in the forest?
3. Invite students to share their thoughts in front of the class.

Nature Connections

- ◆ Invite students to imagine that they are in a forest. What types of plants or animals do they see? What are some of the geographical or geological features in that forest? Invite students to assemble a "forest information book" that could be distributed to local travel agencies, other classes in the school, or community organizations.

Additional Resources

Find out more about rotting logs from these websites:

A Rotting Log Habitat

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/nr/wildlife/animalinn/activity-log.htm>

How Rotting Wood Effects the Environment

<http://www.mamashealth.com/saveearth/>

The 5 Stages of Rotting Logs

<http://peasemt.pbworks.com/w/page/15444992/The-Rotting-Log>