

# UNDERSTANDING FOOD WEBS

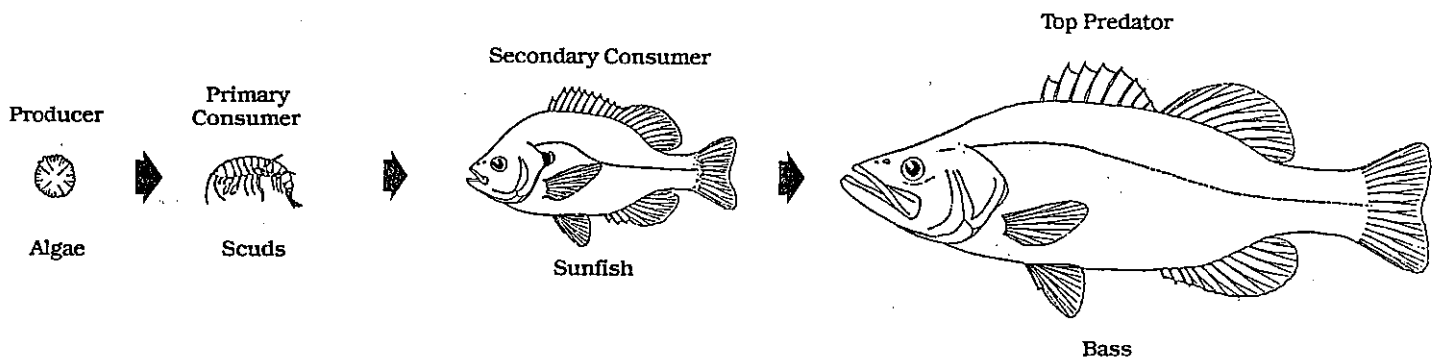
## Vocabulary

*producer*  
*primary consumer*  
*secondary consumer*  
*predator*

*omnivore*  
*habitat*  
*ecosystem*  
*herbivore*

## You Are Part of a Food Chain

In this simple food chain Algae get energy from the sun. The Algae are then eaten by the Scuds, who are eaten by Sunfish, who are eaten by Bass.



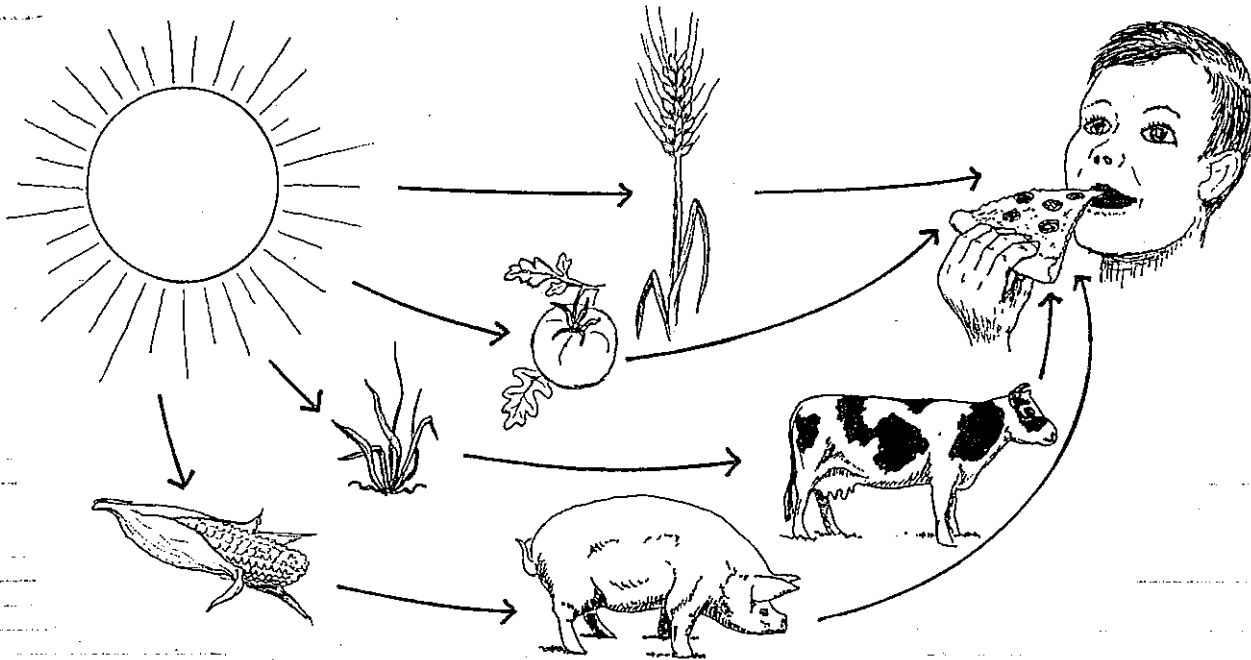
Algae are called “producers” because they make food from the sun’s energy. Zooplankton like Scuds cannot produce energy for themselves. They are “primary consumers” because they eat plants like Algae to get the energy they need. Sunfish are “secondary consumers” because they eat the organisms that eat the producers. Bass are “top predators” because they prey on other organisms and, in this particular food chain, no one eats them.

## Which are you?

Draw a food chain of which you are a part. Label each part using your new vocabulary words.

## Where Does Your Food Come From?

Think of food you like to eat, such as PIZZA. Pizza is made up of a number of different ingredients: cheese, flour, tomatoes and sausage. Cheese is a milk product which comes from cows, sausage comes from pigs, flour is ground wheat, and tomatoes are plants. So in one serving of pizza, you are eating food from several sources.



As in every other food chain, this one starts with the SUN.

When you eat fruit, grains or vegetables, you are a primary consumer because these foods got their energy directly from the SUN.

**What ingredients of pizza make you a "primary consumer?"**

If you eat meat or animal products like milk, you are a secondary consumer.

**What ingredients of pizza make you a "secondary consumer?"**

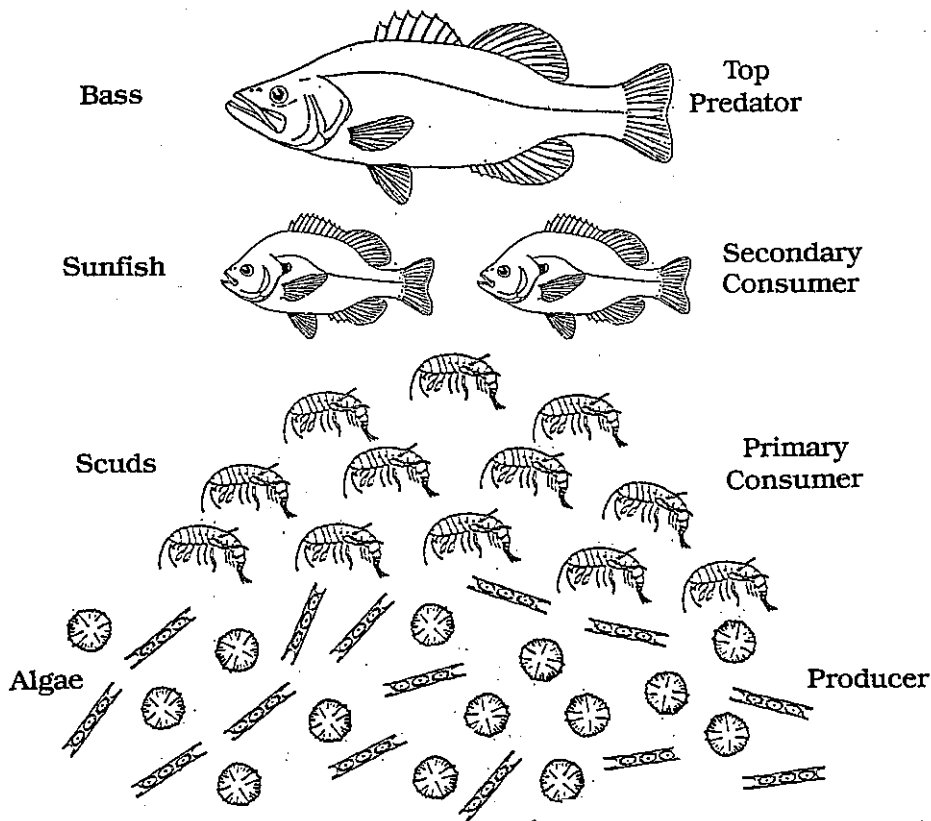
Humans are often "omnivores" because we eat both plants and animals.

**Are you an "omnivore" when you eat pizza?**

Think of another food you might eat and draw a picture tracing each ingredient from the SUN to YOU.

## Pyramid of Numbers

To be more accurate, this food chain should really be drawn as a pyramid like this:



Which level is the largest in terms of number?

Which is the smallest in terms of number?

Is this pyramid accurate for every healthy food chain?

Are there more plants on the earth or more animals?

### It Takes a Lot of Producers to Support One Predator

Let's say that a Bass eats 10 Sunfish a day, each Sunfish eats 10 Scuds and each Scud eats 10 Algae.

How many Scuds does it take to support a Bass?

How many Algae does it take to support a Sunfish?

How many Algae does it take to support a Bass?

What would happen if there were more consumers than producers?