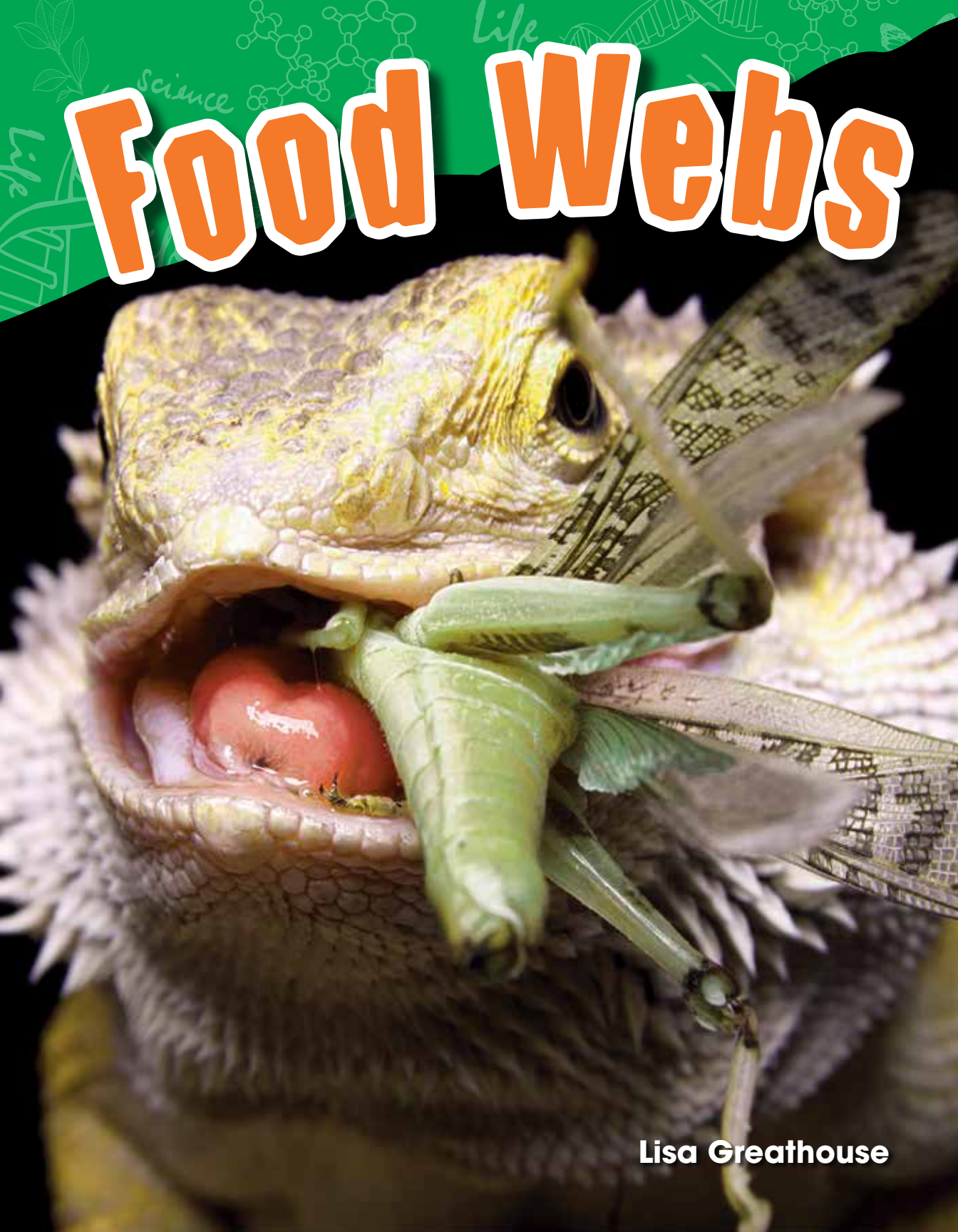
Food Webs



Lisa Greathouse

For teachers' inspection ONLY

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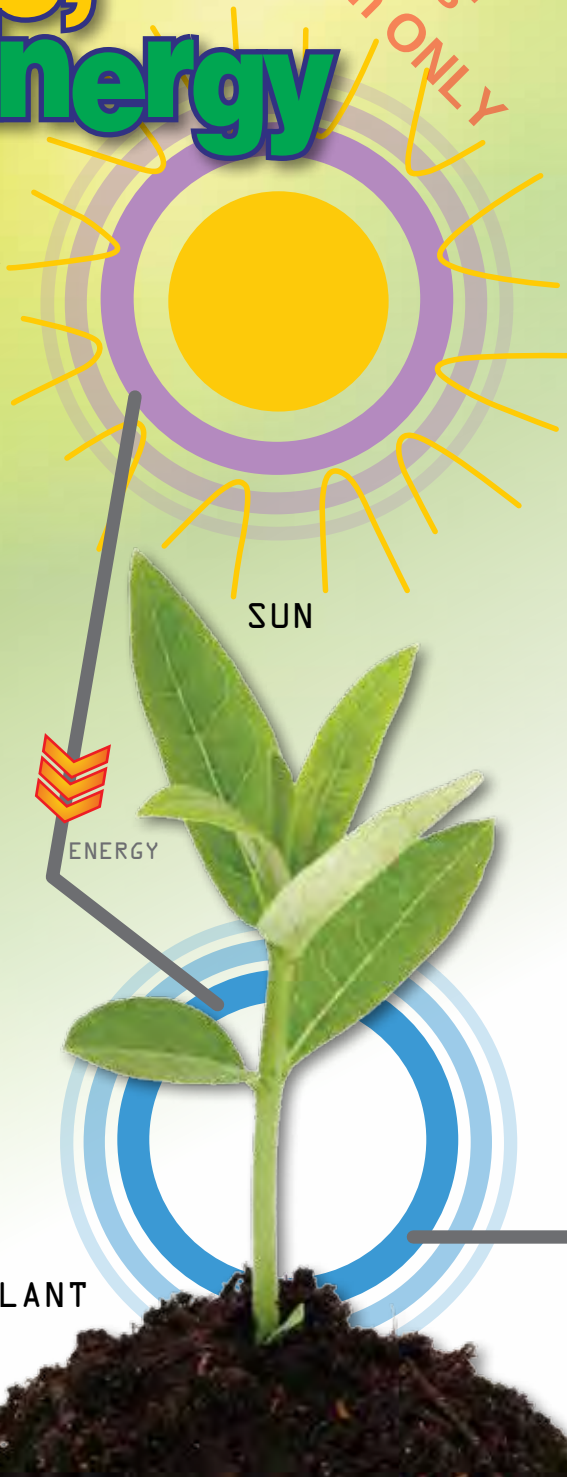
Your Turn! 32

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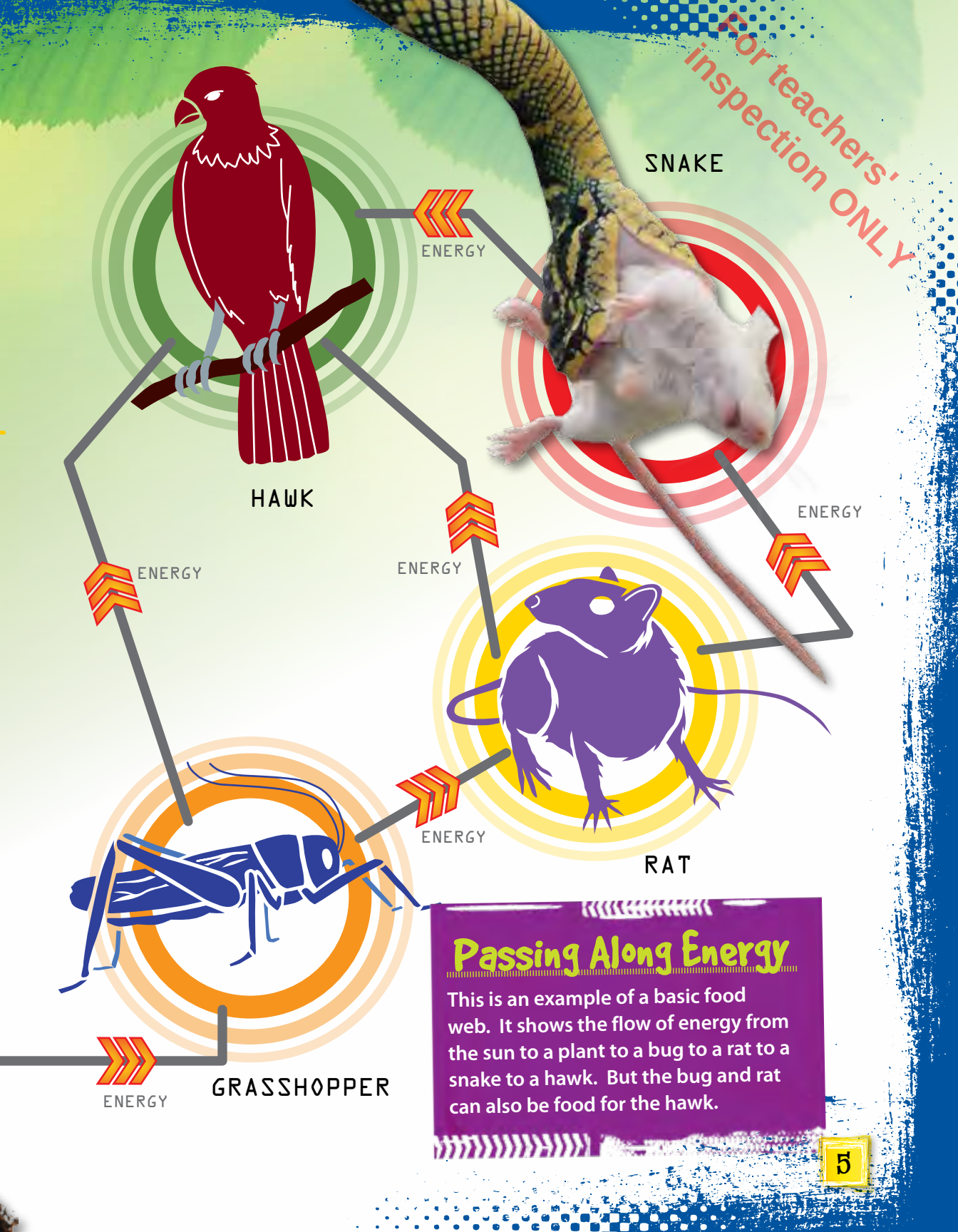
If It's Alive, It Needs Energy

Is it lunchtime yet? By the time the lunch bell rings, you are probably hungry. That's because your body needs **energy** to get through the day. The energy you get from the food you eat helps you run at recess. It helps you focus while you're doing homework. It helps you fight off the flu and other illnesses. The energy from the food you eat even keeps your heart beating and your blood pumping.

In other words, you couldn't live without energy from food. The same is true for all living things on Earth. All living plants and animals need energy to live. Plants get their energy from air, soil, water, and the sun. Animals get their energy by eating plants and other animals. That flow of energy from one living thing to another is called a *food chain*. A food chain branches out to many animals. As it grows, it starts to look like a web—a food web!



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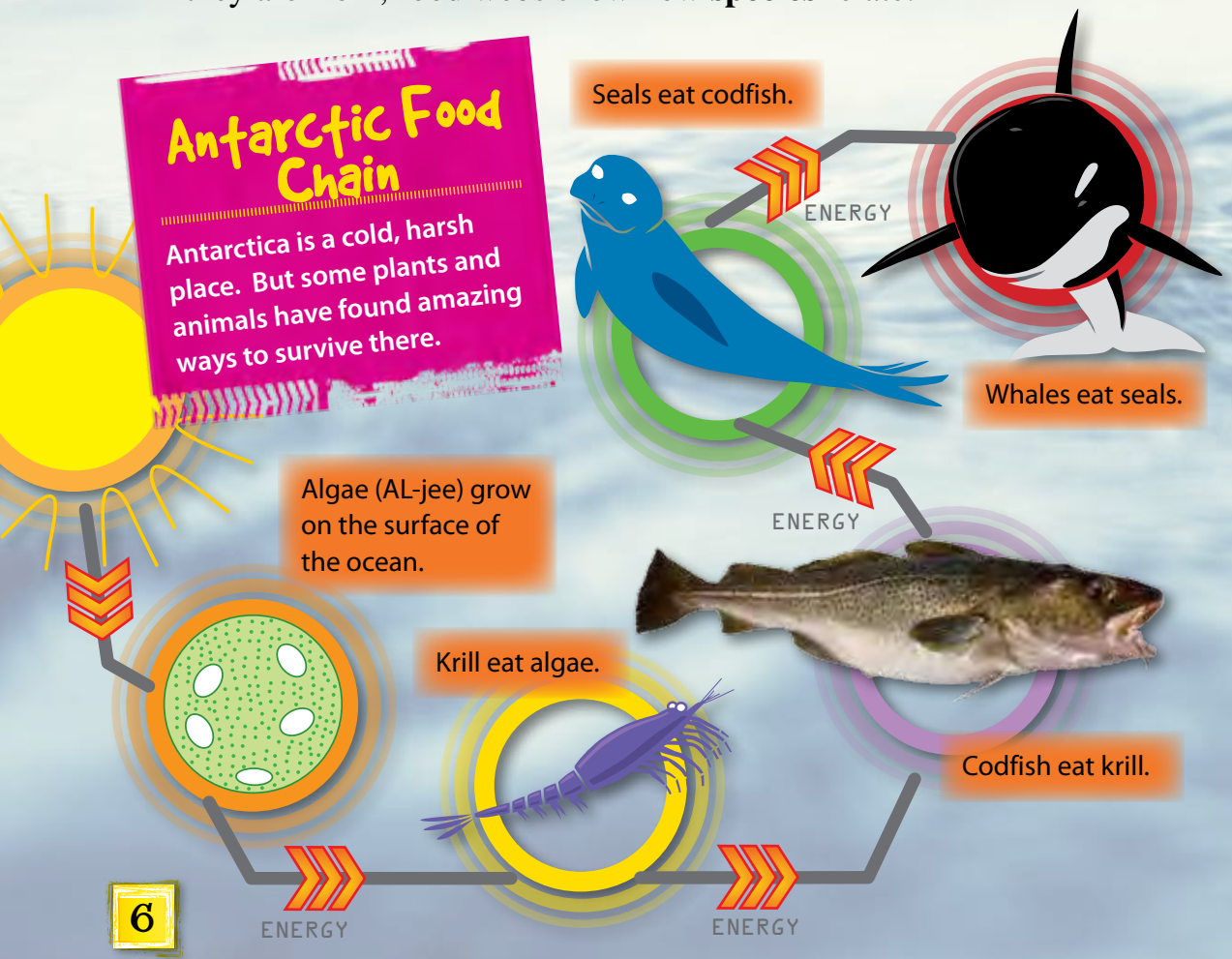
Passing Along Energy

This is an example of a basic food web. It shows the flow of energy from the sun to a plant to a bug to a rat to a snake to a hawk. But the bug and rat can also be food for the hawk.

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Food webs show how animals get energy from other **organisms**. They show who eats who. They are a simple way to understand a complex process. It may be difficult to see how a plant in one place gives energy to an animal far away. But a food web can show how they connect.

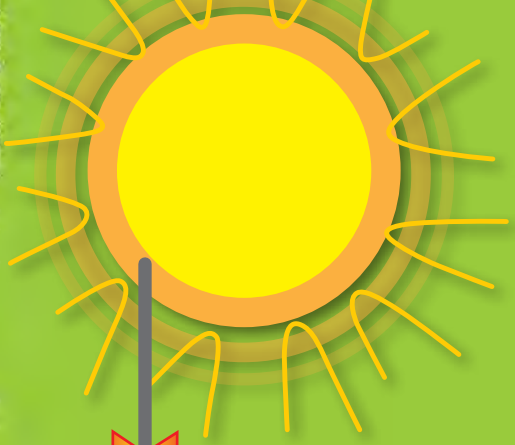
There are many types of food webs. They vary based on the part of the world you are in. You wouldn't see an African lion or a polar bear in an American food web—except at the zoo! A food web from Greece might have olives, goats, and bears in it. A food web from China might have grass, birds, and alligators. Wherever they are from, food webs show how **species** relate.



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North American Food Chain

North America is home to many different types of plants and animals. This is one example of a food chain in North America.



ENERGY



A plant gets energy from the sun and the soil.

ENERGY



A grasshopper eats the plant.

ENERGY



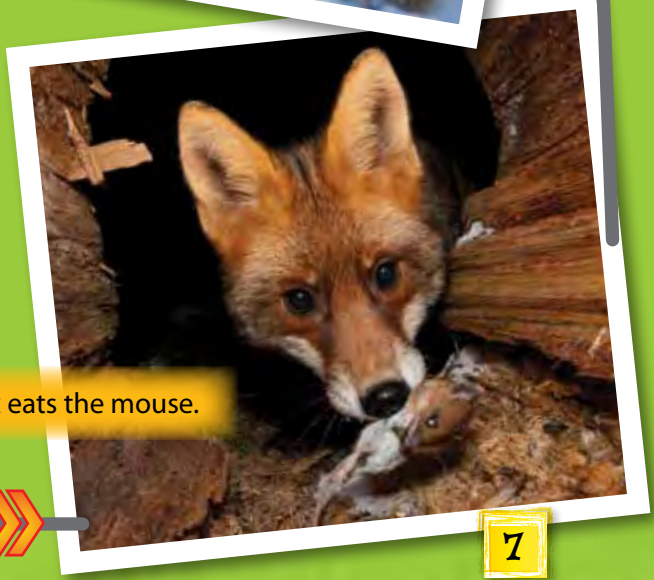
A mouse eats the grasshopper.

ENERGY



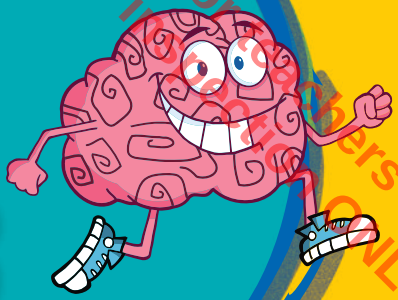
A cougar eats the fox.

ENERGY



A fox eats the mouse.

Think Like a Scientist



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How can a change in one part of a food web affect the entire web? Experiment and find out!

What to Get

- craft sticks
- glue
- shoe box, tray, or other small box

