

# Key facts about our Ecosystem

All living things need energy to feed, grow, move and reproduce. Ecosystems are made up of living organisms, like plants and animals, which rely on non-living things, like the sun and the weather, to survive and thrive.



## BUDDIES

Ecosystems are constantly changing. The plants and animals as well as the environment are continually adapting to changes caused by the plants, animals, humans and nature.

### Living things consist of three main groups:

- Producers
- Consumers
- Decomposers

### 1. Producers

Plants are called **Producers**. This is because they produce their own food. They do this by using light energy from the sun, carbon dioxide from the air, and water from the soil to produce food - in the form of glucose/sugar.

The process is called **photosynthesis**.

### 2. Consumers

Animals are called **Consumers**. This is because they cannot make their own food, so they need to consume (eat) plants and/or animals.

There are 3 groups of consumers:

Animals that eat only plants – these are known as **herbivores**. Examples are: bees, sheep, rabbits.

Animals that eat only animals – these are known as **carnivores**. Examples are spiders, frogs, sharks, birds of prey.

Animals that eat both plants and animals – these are known as **omnivores**. Examples are: humans, apes, monkeys, most bears.

### 3. Decomposers

Bacteria and fungi are **decomposers**.

They eat decaying matter - dead plants and animals and in the process, they break them down to decompose them. When that happens, they release nutrients and mineral salts back into the soil - which then will be used by plants.

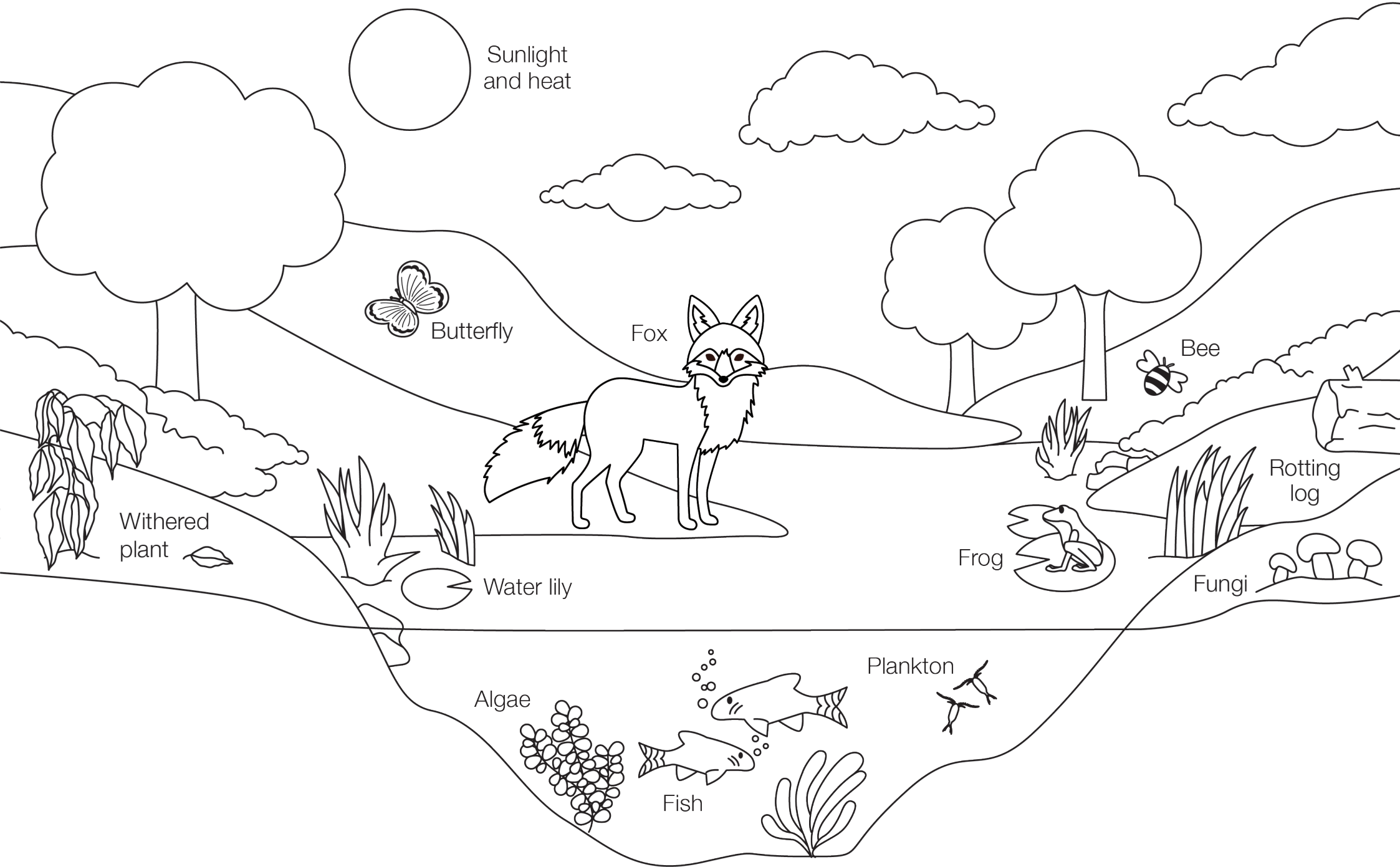


**Abiotic Factors** are non-living elements of an eco-system.

This includes water and soil chemistry as well as nutrient cycles, temperature, terrain and the amount of sunlight.



Colour in this picture and using the key facts, label what you think are Producers, Consumers and Decomposers.



Sunlight and heat

Butterfly

Fox

Bee

Withered plant

Water lily

Frog

Rotting log

Fungi

Algae

Fish

Plankton