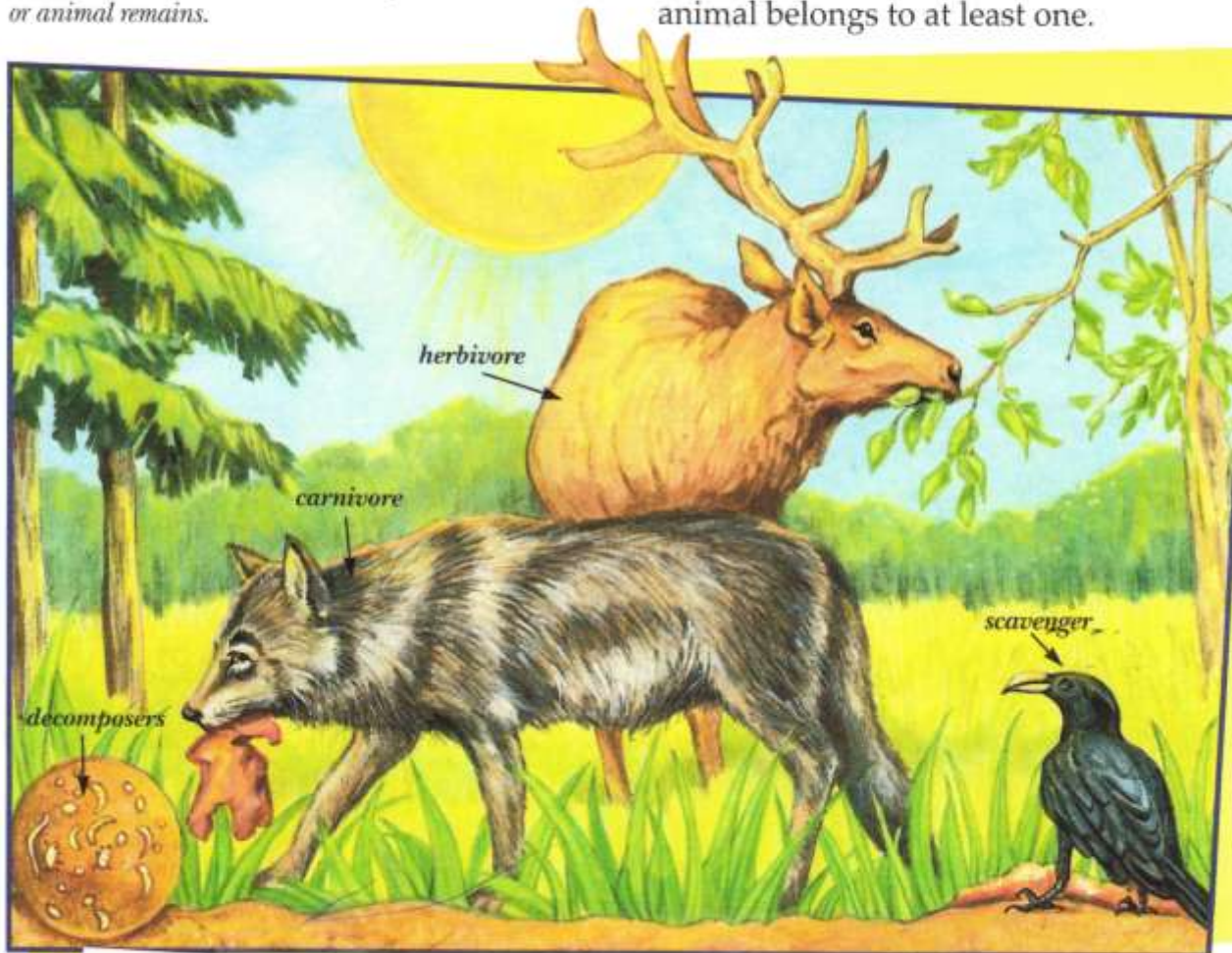


What is a food chain?

A food chain includes plants, a plant-eating animal called a **herbivore**, a meat-eating animal called a **carnivore**, an animal that eats dead animal bodies called a **scavenger**, and tiny creatures, or **decomposers**, that break down dead plant or animal remains.

All animals eat other living things. Some animals eat plants. Others feed on the plant-eaters. For example, lettuce is eaten by a rabbit, which is eaten by a wolf. This pattern of eating and being eaten is called a **food chain**. There are countless food chains, and every plant and animal belongs to at least one.



- Plants are **producers**. They make their own food through the process of photosynthesis, by using energy from the sun.
- Anything that eats a plant or eats another animal is a consumer. **Consumers** get their energy from eating plants and animals.
- **Decomposers** cannot make their own food and they do not eat food. Instead they get their energy by breaking down and absorbing dead organic matter.