

ACTIVITY 6

FOLLOWING THE FOOD CHAIN

A food chain diagram shows how energy is transferred through an ecosystem from plant-eating animals to the predators that eat them. The animal at the top of the food chain is a predator that has no natural predators in its ecosystem, like the lions living in an African savanna. But when there is a problem anywhere in the food chain, even the animal at the top of the chain can be affected.

Complete this diagram of the food chain in an African savanna. Write the names of the animals listed below into their correct places on the food chain. Then research to learn about other animals that live in the savanna ecosystem and add their names to show where they belong in the food chain.



Lion







Hyena Zebra Impala

The apex consumer, the lion, eats primary and secondary consumers and has no predators.

The secondary consumer eats herbivores and other secondary consumers.

The primary consumer is an *herbivore*, an animal that eats only plants.



Grasslands

DISCUSSION NOTES:

Use your food chain diagram to discuss these topics in class. Use the space provided to take notes on your class discussion.

1. What could happen to the savanna food chain if human development of the land caused a decline in the population of plants? How might the animals in this ecosystem adapt?
2. What could happen to the food chain if farmers added cattle to the ecosystem? How might the other animals in the food chain adapt?
3. What could happen if hunters reduced the number of lions at the top of the food chain? How would the other animals in the food chain adapt?

