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RENNEL BURGOS 07/19/2016

Ecological Pyramids

How does energy flow through an ecosystem?

Why?

Every organism in an ecosystem is either eating or being eaten. When cows eat grass, they obtain some of the energy that the grass transferred from the sunlight it absorbed. If cows could carry out photosynthesis, would they have access to more energy than they get as herbivores? Which organisms in an ecosystem require the most energy to sustain life?

Model 1 - Pyramid of Energy

Values in the pyramid are per square meter per year.

The diagram is a pyramid with four levels. From bottom to top: 1. Oak tree leaves (producer) / PRIMARY PRODUCERS: 25,500 kcal. 2. Grasshopper (herbivore) / PRIMARY CONSUMERS: 4,000 kcal. 3. Snake (carnivore) / SECONDARY CONSUMERS: 470 kcal. 4. Hawk (carnivore) / TERTIARY CONSUMERS: 24 kcal. Below the pyramid, it says 'Sunlight hitting Earth's surface = 3,150,000 kcal'. Arrows point from the bottom level to the next level up.

1. A unit used to measure energy is the kcal.
2. What is the source of all energy in the pyramid in Model 1?
The SUNLIGHT hitting the earth's surface.
3. How much energy does this source provide to a square meter of the Earth per year? (Be sure your answer includes units.)
3,150,000 kcal per square meter per year.
4. Label the pyramid levels in Model 1 with the following: primary producers, primary consumers, secondary consumers, and tertiary consumers.
5. The arrows in Model 1 represent the energy available to the next level of the pyramid.
6. What percentage of the source energy from Question 1a is absorbed by the oak leaves in Model 1?

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