

The Missing Link

Natasha Paris

Have you ever heard of a **food chain**? Well, if you have not, a food chain shows what each living thing eats and how energy is passed from organism to organism. An **organism** is any living plant, animal, fungus, or bacteria. A food chain always starts with the sun. For example, the sun gives its energy to a rosebush, and then a rodent eats the rosebush, then a snake eats the rodent, the fox eats the snake, and finally when the fox dies insects and fungus eat him. During all this eating, energy is being passed on to each organism, so instead of humans asking where the best food is in town, some organisms are asking where the most energy is in town.

Humans have a huge impact (effect) on food chains and most of their impact has to do with changing an organism's **habitat** (home where they get everything they need to survive – food, water, shelter, space). These changes can be harvesting too many organisms from their habitat, polluting their habitat, destroying (harming) their habitat, and introducing new organisms into their habitat.

Pollution is a major cause in the destruction of habitat. Pollution can make the organisms in that area sick and unhealthy which means the other organisms that eat them will also get sick. Water, air, soil, plants, and animals can all be affected by pollution.

Many times humans destroy habitats by clearing land to develop it. This clearing takes the entire habitat away from the organisms that live there and they can die if there is nowhere else for them to go. Can you imagine a tree getting up and moving itself to a new place to live?

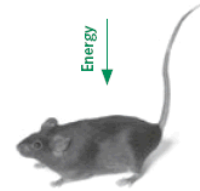
Habitats of organisms are changing everyday because of human actions such as killing animals, cutting down trees, polluting, and introducing new species. Just beware of your actions because you can be destroying an organism's home or harm its food supply. That could alter the food chain, of which you are a part of.



Energy ↓



Energy ↓



Energy ↓



Energy ↓



Energy ↓



A FOOD CHAIN