

Nature's Helpers

Think about a forest. What do you see? Do you see green plants and tall trees? Do you see birds and deer? Maybe you see both plants and animals. It's hard for one group to live without the other. That is because plants and animals depend on each other to survive.

How Plants Help Animals

Plants do many things to help animals—that includes people—live. Plants make good homes for animals. For example, many squirrels and birds use trees to make their homes. Some kinds of ants make their homes in trees too. People use the wood from trees to make their homes.

Plants provide food for animals. Some animals, like beavers and termites, eat trees. Other animals, like deer and giraffes, eat tree leaves. Some insects lay their eggs on plants. That way when their babies are born, they have food right there to eat! Rabbits like to eat the vegetables grown on plants. Grizzly bears have been known to eat berries. People eat fruits and vegetables from plants too. These are just a few ways plants provide food to animals.

How else do plants help animals? Plants give off the oxygen animals breathe in. Some kinds of plants can be made into medicine. Plant fibers can be used to make clothing.

How Animals Help Plants

While plants do many things for animals, animals do their part for plants too. One of the most important things animals do is spread plant seeds. Some animals, like squirrels, bury seeds to eat later. They might forget about the seeds, and the seeds grow into plants. Other animals eat seeds or fruits that have seeds. They pass the seeds in their waste. Then new plants grow. Some animals, like insects and birds, spread pollen instead. This also helps plants grow.

Animals help plants in other ways. One way is when animals breathe. When an animal breathes out, it lets out carbon dioxide. This is what plants breathe in! Another way animals help happens after they die. As they decay, nutrients are added to soil. Plants use these nutrients to be healthy.

As you can see, plants need animals and animals need plants.

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Use the passage on the other page to help answer each question or complete each sentence.

Circle the best answer.

1. What is the reading mostly about?
 - A. animals in a forest
 - B. how plants and animals help each other
2. True or false? Plants give animals food.
 - A. true
 - B. false
3. Plants give off _____ that animals take in.
 - A. carbon dioxide
 - B. oxygen
4. One of the most important things animals do for plants is _____.
 - A. spread seeds
 - B. make medicine
5. True or false? Some animals help animals by burying seeds.
 - A. true
 - B. false
6. When animals die and decay, plants use the _____ that are added to the soil.
 - A. carbon dioxide
 - B. nutrients
7. Based on what you read, what does *survive* mean?
 - A. to stay alive
 - B. to breathe
8. Which text features was used in this reading?
 - A. subtitles
 - B. caption

Write and Explain:

Does the title do a good job telling what the reading is about? Why or why not?

“Nature’s Helpers” Answer Key

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. B | 5. A |
| 2. A | 6. B |
| 3. B | 7. A |
| 4. A | 8. A |

Write and Explain: Answers will vary.