TODAY’S ASSIGNMENT

Can you figure out who would eat whom in the South Carolina Coastal salt marsh? Today you are going to explore a wide variety of species from coastal areas. It will be your job to figure out the food web in this ecosystem.

1. Read the descriptions of the salt marsh species; pay specific attention to the information about what each species eats and their predators.

2. Cut out the pictures of the organisms but DO NOT glue them onto your construction paper until the very end.

3. Using the descriptions of the species and your knowledge of food chains and put together a food chain using all the pictures.
   a. Use your book to look at examples of other food chains.
   b. Make sure you have arrows connecting all the animals. An arrow means “It is eat by.” Use pencil first to draw your connections
   c. After you double check with the teacher that your food chain is correct: glue the pictures into the food chain and use marker to draw over your arrows.

4. Answer the questions about your food chain (below)

Answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper:

1. What are the decomposers in your food chain?
   The bacteria are the decomposers in this food chain. They primarily feed on cordgrass in the saltmarsh but will also decompose all other organisms after they die.

2. What are the producers in your food chain?
   The diatoms and the cordgrass are the producers in this food web.

3. What are the consumers in your food chain?
   The mussels, snails (limpets), blue crabs, fiddler crabs, turtles, otters, and humans.

4. Name one predator in your food chain:
   Humans, blue crabs, turtles, and otters are all predators.
5. Name one prey in your food chain:

Fiddler crabs, mussels, snails, blue crabs, and turtles are all prey in this food web.

6. What are the herbivores in your food chain?

Snails, mussels, and fiddler crabs are basically herbivores, they do not feed on other animals.

7. What are the carnivores in your food chain?

Turtles, blue crabs, otters are all carnivores.

8. What are the omnivores in your food chain?

According to our web there are no strict omnivores, however, humans are omnivores.

9. If a virus killed large amounts of mussels what would happen to the food chain?

It would disrupt the food chain. All the animals that eat the mussels would have less food and would have to eat more of their other prey items, decreasing other animal populations.

10. a) Are you a producer, consumer, or a decomposer? How do you know?

I am a consumer because I do not produce my own food and depend on other organisms for my food.

b) Are you an herbivore, carnivore, or an omnivore? How do you know?

Students will either be omnivores or herbivores (if they are vegetarian).