

MEAT AND VEGETABLES

KEY IDEAS

- Herbivores are plant-eating animals
- Carnivores are meat-eating animals
- Omnivores are animals that eat both plants and animals
- Some animals hunt other animals for food

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

- What different foods do animals in the wild eat?
- What animals do you know that eat only meat?
- What animals eat only plants? Do you know any animals that eat both meat and plants?
- How do meat-eaters get their food?

ANIMALS OBTAIN THEIR FOOD THROUGH EATING

- Many animals eat plants for food and energy.
- Plant eating animals are called herbivores.
- Meat-eating animals are called carnivores.
- They eat other animals.
- The energy originally made by, and stored in, the plants is transferred to the primary consumer (the animal that first eats the plant) and is then transferred to the animal that eats the primary consumer and in turn, onto any other animal that eats them.
- In this sense, plants are at the beginning of all animal food chains.
- Animals which eat both plants and meat are called omnivores.
- Most humans eat both plants and meat and are called omnivores.
- Most humans are omnivores, though some choose to be herbivores (vegetarians).

FOOD CHAINS BEGIN WITH PLANTS

- Green plants are the only living things that are able to turn non-living substances (minerals, water and carbon-dioxide) into food and energy.
- Animals are dependant upon green plants for their food supplies.
- Humans, and some other animals, eat green plants (cabbage, lettuce for example).
- We also eat things like potatoes, rice and apples which are food and energy stores built up by green plants.
- When we eat the meat of a plant-eating animal, or herbivore, such as cow, sheep or rabbit, we are eating the flesh of an animal that has been created from the stored energy in the plants that it has eaten.
- Each change, or transfer of energy via food, is a link in a chain of energy-transfer events, called a food chain.

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