

APES Unit 2 Study Guide
The Living World: Ecosystems Teacher's KEY

The first unit of AP Environmental Science will introduce and/or reacquaint you with the ecology of the Earth. We will cover ecosystems, biomes, the biogeochemical cycles, food chains, and food webs.

Unit 1. Short Answer Questions

1.0	Describe abiotic & biotic factors in ecosystems, and give examples of energy converting from one form to another. 1. State the First Law of Thermodynamics. Energy is neither created nor destroyed, but transferred. 2. What is the main difference between kinetic and potential energy? Potential energy is stored, kinetic energy is in motion. 3. What is the difference between a community and an ecosystem? A community consists of all the populations of living things in an area. An ecosystem includes the community and the abiotic factors. 4. Give [egg] examples of biotic factors and [egg] examples of abiotic factors in a pond ecosystem. Biotic = bacteria, algae Abiotic = Dissolved oxygen levels, water temperature 5. Why is the Gray Wolf in Yellowstone considered a keystone species? Gray wolves are top predators. Their presence influences the health of the ecosystem as they prevent grazing animals from becoming overpopulated, and alter their behavior.
1.1	Explain how the availability of resources influences species interactions. 6. Define resource partitioning and give an example. Resource partitioning mitigates competition. It involves using a resource in different ways, at different times, or different parts. For example, many species of warbler can occupy the same tree since they use different parts of the resource. 7. Give an example of a mutualistic interspecific interaction. Mutualism = both species benefit. For example, coral reefs and zooxanthellae algae in their tissues. 8. Give an example of commensalism. One benefits and the other is not affected. For example, Cactus wren nesting on a cactus. 9. Give an example of a parasitic symbiotic relationship. The parasite benefits while the host is harmed (usually weakened). For example, dogfish shark and tapeworm.
1.2	Describe the global distribution and principal environmental aspects of terrestrial biomes. 10. How are terrestrial biomes characterized? Climate (long term patterns of temperature and precipitation) and dominant vegetation 11. Describe the taiga biome and the community found there. Taiga is a cold, northern coniferous forest. There are well-defined seasons in this sub-arctic biome. Animals living there have adapted to the cold, snowy winters. Lichens, mosses, and mushrooms are found on the forest floor. A permafrost layer is found in the soil. 12. How do desert plants and animals survive? Adaptations to survive a lack of water. 13. Why does a thick layer of decaying leaf litter typically cover the floors of temperate deciduous forests? In deciduous forests, trees lose their leaves seasonally.

Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers

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Table of Contents Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers

1. Understanding the eBook Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers User Reviews and Ratings

- Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers Free and Paid eBooks
 - Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers Public Domain eBooks
 - Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers eBook Subscription Services
 - Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers Compatibility with Devices
 - Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Interactive Elements Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
- 8. Staying Engaged with Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Setting Reading Goals Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Environmental Science Unit 1 Study Guide Answers
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources

13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements
 - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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