

Succession

Real World Ecosystems
Learner Worksheet
Grade Level: 5-8



Name:

After reading the Succession Backgrounder, answer the following questions.

1. In what ways do you think primary succession would differ from secondary succession?

2. What do you think would happen to a pond ecosystem if all the decomposers died?

3. Why do you think earthworms and insects become more common as succession nears the climax stage?

4. How are lichens able to grow on bare rock?

5. How is emergent different from submergent vegetation?

6. An aquatic community may gradually be changed, through succession, to a ...

7. In the north, the large trees in such conditions are likely to be of what type?

8. Why is the island of Surtsey an especially good example of a place where primary succession occurs?

9. Why is it that some plants always arrive later on in the process of succession? Hint: What conditions do they prefer?

10. Why is it likely that no herbivores will be found in an area immediately after a fire?

11. Name a species of plant that is actually assisted by fire. Explain.

Read the paragraph on grasslands, below, then answer the questions that follow.

Grassland:



In southern Manitoba, an area of 4 hectare was first cleared of trees and planted for grain crops in 1910. Around the edges of that field in 1910 was the forest: a few poplar, jack pine, birch, and, oldest of all, white spruce. The farmer grew hay for his horses in that field for thirty years, until 1940. Each fall, he had to plow the borders of his field to destroy the seedling trees which had taken root. The farmer retired in 1942, so he and his wife left the place and moved into town. The field was left unattended.

It is now 2021, 79 years later. Answer the following three questions based on the above scenario. One cannot know for certain what the answers would be to the questions, but your answers should be based upon your knowledge of what is most likely.

1. Do you think there would be any open land left in the field? Explain.

2. In what part of the field do you think the trees would be tallest?

3. After so much time, what kind of trees do you think most would be?

4. In what part of the field would there be the greatest variety of species? Explain.
