

BALANCING YOUR ECOSYSTEM

Where does your house fit in its ecosystem?

An **ecosystem** is all of the living and nonliving things in a certain area, and how they affect each other. A forest is an ecosystem, but so is a field, or a swamp, or an ocean.

Any living thing within the ecosystem has a role to play. Those roles are...

Producer green plants are producers, who make their own food through a process called photosynthesis

Consumer animals, including us humans, are consumers! We eat and use the producers, as well as other consumers

Decomposer bacteria is one type of decomposer. They help to break down waste, returning nutrients to the soil, from which new producers grow

All of the non-living things (like rocks, minerals and your house) affect these three roles as well! When building your house, do you want it to help produce, consume, or decompose? For example you could build a big compost heap to help out the decomposers in your ecosystem, or grow lots of helpful plants to become new producers.

Eco-systems are all about balance - by building your house you are affecting that balance, so we have to try and make the house as helpful as possible!

KEEP THE BALANCE

Lets get practicing our balancing skills ahead of building our house!

How many different ways can you balance?

- Try the tree pose to become a producer. Stand on one leg and raise your arms to the sky. Soak up sunlight to help you grow and produce.
- Reach as far out in front of you as you can to become a consumer - keep your balance by sticking one leg out behind you!
- Can you do a handstand? If not, lower both hands flat to the ground, keeping one leg down while the other reaches upwards. Balance upside down to start burrowing into the earth like a decomposer.

Show us how good you are at balancing through our shared gallery!