

**READ THE PASSAGE**

Pay attention to the details of what happens in a pond and the order in which things happen.

### The World in a Pond

An ecosystem is a community of living and nonliving things that work together. Organisms, light, heat, soil, water, and the atmosphere are all parts of an ecosystem. Any alteration to an ecosystem—such as changes in temperature, the kinds of animals living there, or pollution—can affect all parts of it. This can be especially obvious in the small, enclosed ecosystem of a pond.

In a pond, sunlight helps tiny plants called algae grow. Algae release oxygen, which fish need in order to breathe. Algae are also food for other tiny organisms. Fish eat the organisms and give off carbon dioxide, which plants use to grow.

Imagine what would happen, however, if something changed in the pond. For example, if sunlight didn't reach the pond because of thick pollution, or if the temperature of the water grew colder or warmer, the algae wouldn't grow. Without algae, there would first be less oxygen. Tiny organisms would starve. Fish would then die from the lack of oxygen. Plants would die without the carbon dioxide that fish give off. Then larger animals that eat the plants and smaller animals would not get enough food. Even humans, who eat the plants, fish, and larger animals, would feel the impact. The whole ecosystem would suffer.

**SKILL PRACTICE**

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Which of these would happen first if algae stopped growing in a pond?
  - Fish would die.
  - There would be less carbon dioxide.
  - There would be less oxygen.
  - Plants would die.
- After the tiny organisms that eat algae died, the next thing to happen would be that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - the fish would die
  - plants would lack carbon dioxide
  - humans would go hungry
  - larger animals would have less food
- Plants would die in a pond after \_\_\_\_\_.
  - the amount of oxygen decreased
  - humans were affected
  - larger animals went hungry
  - the amount of carbon dioxide decreased
- Which of these would be the last to feel the effects of a lack of algae?
  - fish
  - plants
  - humans
  - tiny organisms

**STRATEGY PRACTICE**

Make a numbered list telling the sequence of events that occur after algae disappears from a pond.

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