Activities

The Magic School Bus Gets Eaten

Grades: 3–5

Overview
This installment in the Magic School Bus series is about food chains. Kids play different roles in a "popcorn food chain" and learn how energy is circulated and consumed in an ecosystem.

Field Trip Notes
Arnold and Keesha forget their homework - to bring in two beach things that go together -- so they improvise. He has a shoe filled with pond scum he stepped in on the way to school. She has a tuna sandwich for her lunch. Ms. Frizzle thinks it's a brilliant combination. On the class field trip to the ocean, Arnold and Keesha search for the connection between scum and tuna. The bus and class shrink, travel through the food chain - and get eaten by a tuna fish! From inside the
tuna's stomach, Keesha makes the connection. Scum is a kind of algae and algae and tuna are part of the same food chain. Now, if they can just get out of that fish!

**Popcorn Chain**
The Magic School Bus kids really get into the food chain: They're swallowed by a tuna fish. With this activity, your kids get to eat while they act as links in the food chain. The popcorn bags stand for food energy that is passed along the links in a food chain from the sun, to plants, to plant-eaters, to meateaters.

**What You Need**
- Copies of POPCORN CHAIN page
- Scissors
- Markers
- Yarn
- Tape
- 12 baggies of popcorn

**Talk About It**
Ask children: What is a food chain? What are some examples of plants and animals that are links in a food chain? What might happen in a food chain if one link is harmed by pollution?

**What To Do**
2. Kids color and cut out their symbols and tape them to yarn to make necklaces.
3. Have children spread out around the room, or go outside if possible.
4. The sun holds all 12 bags of popcorn. She gives one bag to each plant.
5. The plants eat half of the popcorn to have energy for growing and living.
6. Each plant-eater takes a bag from two plants and eats half of the remaining popcorn.
7. Each meat-eater takes a bag from two plant-eaters and eats the rest of the popcorn.

Next Stop
Kids can trace a food chain from a favorite food. They might try pizza, a jelly bean, or tuna fish.

Subjects:
- Food Chain
- Fish and Marine Life
- Science
- Oceans
- Lakes
- Rivers
- Plants
- Observation
- Energy
- Ecosystems and Habitats
Popcorn Chain

Draw a picture of a food chain.
Show where the food energy comes from. Show what eats what.

GET READY FOR THE POPCORN CHAIN
Color and cut out the symbol that matches your role in the food chain.
Tape it to a piece of yarn and wear it around your neck.

It's your job as scientists to look for connections!