Compost Food Web: Bold Print







Read the passage. Pay close attention to the words in bold print.

A **compost pile** is a pile of plant matter that used to be alive and growing. In the compost pile, dead plants and plant parts break down. This process is called **rot**, or **decay**. Another word for **rot** or **decay** is **decompose**.

Leaves, potato peels, apple cores, and grass clippings are examples of plant matter that decomposes in a compost pile. The rich soil that is left when the plant matter breaks down is called **humus**. Humus is black, fluffy soil full of **nutrients**, or food, that plants need to grow.

Living things called **decomposers** help break down, or decompose, the plant matter to produce humus. Many kinds of decomposers can break down compost.

Text structures and features help organize and present information.

Bold print is a text feature that helps you scan text to find important information quickly.

Earthworms eat compost. The compost moves through their bodies and comes out as waste. The worm waste is called **castings**. Castings help plants grow. Like earthworms, red worms and **nematodes** eat compost. Nematodes are tiny worms found in soil. The castings made by nematodes and red worms also help plants grow.

Other decomposers are snails, slugs, **bacteria**, and **fungi**. Bacteria are the smallest living organisms. Fungi are plants with no leaves, flowers, or green color. Bacteria and fungi break down the dead plants in the compost pile.

A compost pile is also a big **food web**, where everything is food for something else. **Springtails** are tiny gray insects with no wings. They jump around in compost piles, eating fungi. **Beetles** are insects with hard front wings. They eat springtails. Nothing in the food web gets wasted.

Use information from the passage to complete each sentence.







4 The smallest living organisms are called \blacksquare .

5 The word ■ means *to rot*.

Plants called ■ have no leaves or flowers, and they are not green.

7 Worm waste is called ■.

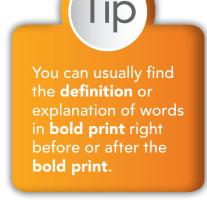
8 Jumping insects called ■ eat fungi.

Property Red worms and tiny ■ make castings, just like earthworms.

10 A ■ eats springtails.

Compost piles make rich, black soil called that is great for plants.

In a \blacksquare , everything is food for something else.





Α	В	С	D	E	F
beetle	castings	springtails	food web	humus	decompose
bacteria	nutrients	fungi	decomposers	worms	nematodes
G	Н	I	J	K	L

Objective: Use text structures (description) and features (bold print) to locate and comprehend information presented visually in informational text.



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