

# **adaptation:**

Any trait that helps a plant or animal survive.

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# **atmosphere:**

The air around Earth.

# **atom:**

Smallest unit of an element that has all the properties of that element.

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# **axis:**

A line – that you cannot see – from the top of the Earth through the center of the Earth to the bottom.

# **carnivore:**

An animal that eats other animals.

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# **change of state:**

A physical change that occurs when matter changes from one state to another, such as from a liquid to a gas.

# **chemical change:**

A reaction or change in a substance, produced by chemical means, that results in a different substance.

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# **community:**

All the populations of organisms that live in an ecosystem at the same time.

# **compound:**

A substance made of two or more different elements.

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# **condensation:**

The process of a gas changing into a liquid.

# **conservation:**

The practice of saving resources.

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# **constellation:**

A pattern of stars, named after a mythological or religious figure, an object, or an animal.

## **consumer:**

An animal that eats plants, other animals, or both.

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## **decomposer:**

A consumer that obtains food energy by breaking down the remains of dead plants and animals.

# **density:**

The measure of how closely packed matter is in an object.

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# **deposition:**

The process in which sediment settles out of water or is dropped by wind.

# **earthquake:**

A movement of the ground, caused by a sudden release of energy in Earth's crust.

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# **ecosystem:**

Community of organisms and the environment in which they live.

# **element:**

A substance made up of only one kind of atom.

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# **energy:**

The ability to cause changes in matter.

# **energy pyramid:**

Diagram that shows how much food energy is passed from each level in a food chain to the next.

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# **energy transfer:**

Movement of energy from one place or object to another.

# **environment:**

All the living and nonliving things that surround and affect an organism.

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# **equator:**

An imaginary line around Earth equally distant from the North and South Poles.

# **erosion:**

Process of wearing away and moving sediment by wind, moving water, or ice.

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# **evaporation:**

The process of a liquid changing into a gas.

# **experiment:**

A procedure carried out under controlled conditions to test a hypothesis.

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# **food chain:**

Transfer of food energy between organisms in an ecosystem.

# **food web:**

Diagram that shows the relationships between different food chains in an ecosystem.

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# **force:**

A push or pull that causes an object to move, stop, or change direction.

# **fossil:**

The remains or traces of past life, found in sedimentary rock.

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# **friction:**

A force that opposes motion.

# **fulcrum:**

The balance point on a lever that supports the arm but does not move.

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# **galaxy:**

Grouping of gas, dust, and many stars, plus any objects that orbit those stars.

## **gas:**

The state of matter that does not have a definite shape or volume.

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## **gravitation:**

A force that acts between any two objects and pulls them together.

# **gravity:**

The force of attraction between Earth and other objects, an expression of gravitation.

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# **habitat:**

An environment that meets the needs of an organism.

# **heat:**

The flow of thermal energy from a warmer object to a cooler object.

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# **herbivore:**

An animal that eats only plants, or producers.

# **igneous rock:**

A type of rock that forms from melted rock that cools and hardens.

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# **inclined plane:**

A simple machine that is a slanted surface.

# **inertia:**

The property of matter that keeps it at rest or moving in a straight line.

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# **investigation:**

A procedure carried out to gather data about an object or event.

# **kinetic energy:**

The energy of motion.

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# **lever:**

A bar that makes it easier to move things.

# **life cycle:**

The stages that a living thing passes through as it grows and changes.

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# **light:**

Radiation that we can see.

# **liquid:**

The state of matter that has a definite volume but no definite shape.

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# **magnetic:**

Having the property of attracting iron objects.

# **mass:**

The amount of matter in an object.

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# **matter:**

Anything that has mass and takes up space.

# **metamorphic rock:**

Rock formed when high heat and great pressure change existing rock into a new form.

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# **microscopic:**

Too small to be seen without using a microscope.

# **mixture:**

A blending of two types of matter that are not chemically combined.

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# **moon:**

Any natural body that revolves around a planet.

## **moon phase:**

One of the shapes the moon seems to have as it orbits Earth.

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## **nonrenewable resource:**

A resource that, once used, cannot be replaced in a reasonable amount of time.

## **organ:**

A group of tissues that work together to perform a certain function.

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## **organism:**

Any living thing that maintains vital life processes.

# **photosynthesis:**

Process in which plants make food by using water from the soil, carbon dioxide from the air, and energy from sunlight.

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# **physical change:**

A change in matter from one form to another that doesn't result in a different substance.

# **planet:**

A body that revolves around a star.

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# **pollution:**

Waste products that damage an ecosystem.

# **population:**

A group of organisms of one kind that live in one location.

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# **potential energy:**

The energy an object has because of its condition or position.

# **predator:**

An animal that kills and eats other animals.

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# **prey:**

An animal that is eaten by a predator.

# **producer:**

A living thing, such as a plant, that makes its own food.

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# **protist:**

A single-celled organism with a nucleus and organelles.

# **pulley:**

A wheel with a rope that lets you change the direction in which you move an object.

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# **reflection:**

The bouncing of heat or light off an object.

# **refraction:**

The bending of light as it moves from one material to another.

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# **renewable resource:**

A resource that can be replaced within a reasonable amount of time.

## **resource:**

Any material or energy that people use to satisfy a need.

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## **scientific method:**

A series of steps that scientists use when performing an experiment.

# **sedimentary rock:**

Rocks formed when sediments are cemented together.

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# **solar system:**

A star and all the planets and other objects that revolve around it.

# **solid:**

The state of matter that has a definite shape and a definite volume.

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# **solution:**

A mixture in which all the parts are mixed evenly.

# **star:**

A huge ball of very hot gases  
in space.

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# **sun:**

The star at the center of our  
solar system.

# **system:**

Group of separate elements that work together to accomplish something.

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# **tissue:**

Group of cells that work together to perform a certain function.

# **topography:**

All the kinds of landforms in a certain place.

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# **universe:**

Everything that exists, including such things as stars, planets, gas, dust, and energy.

# **volcano:**

A mountain made of lava, ash, or other materials from eruptions that occur at an opening in Earth's crust.

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# **volume:**

The loudness of a sound.

# **water cycle:**

The process in which water continuously moves from Earth's surface into the atmosphere and back again.

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# **weathering:**

The process of wearing away rocks by natural processes.

# **wheel-and-axle:**

A wheel with a rod, or axle, in the center.