

Grade 7 Science

Unit 2: Ecosystems

Have you ever been camping, or hiked through the woods? Think about the forest, was it always there?

Think about the ice age. What would that forest have looked like? Would it have the same organisms?



Did you know the deserts of Egypt used to be dense forests? What happened to them? Could they ever come back?

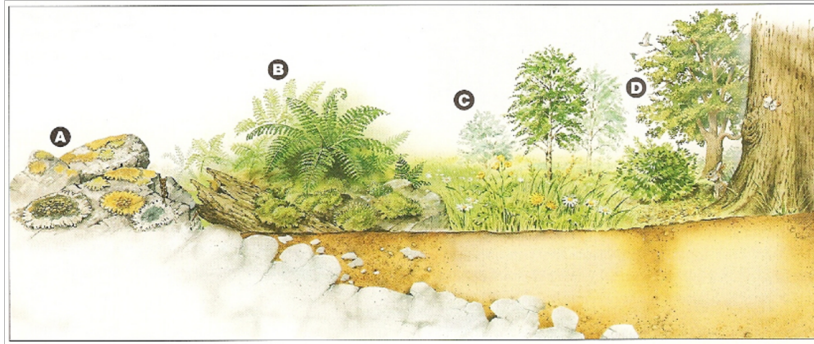
Today we will look at the process by which these changes happen.

*Copy this note, gluing in diagram.

Succession

The gradual process by which certain species replace other species in an ecosystem.

Primary Succession



- A. Lichens produce acids that help to break down the rock. The broken-down rock and the decomposing bodies of dead lichens contribute to soil formation.
- B. The resulting soil is poor and thin. However, mosses and ferns grow and slowly replace the lichens.

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- C. The soil layer thickens, which means it can hold more water. Plants that need more soil and moisture, such as grasses and flowering weeds, take root and grow. They attract insects, such as bees and butterflies.
- D. Since the soil is now thicker and richer, bushes and trees take root. They provide shelter and food for birds, mammals, and other organisms, which now start moving in.

Secondary Succession

Occurs when there is a major event that reduces an already established ecosystem, thus starting a new succession with the pre-existing soil.

These are some things that may cause secondary succession:

- Forest Fire
- Hurricane
- Tsunami
- Humans - Logging, Harvesting, etc