

## STEM Month in Grade 6

In Mrs. Karen Cristian's Science classes, students are learning about Ecology as they study food chains, food webs, and energy pyramids. Students are working in groups to prepare diagrams of food chains, food webs, and energy pyramids of organisms found here in Douglas. Energy pyramids are diagrams that show how energy flows through the different organisms in an ecosystem, illustrating the producers, primary consumers, secondary consumers, and tertiary consumers found in our Douglas environment. Students are also learning the energy roles of the different organisms found in various environments. For example, organisms that eat plants are herbivores; organisms that eat meat are carnivores; and organisms that eat both plants and animals are omnivores. We also cannot forget the scavengers (organisms that eat dead creatures) and the decomposers (mushrooms and fungi) that recycle the nutrients needed by the plants.

Here are some recent pictures from Mrs. Karen Cristian's Science class:



(Left) Samuel Masoud and Hans Alanes-Alvarez look and think about the results of their filtration system. Earlier this month, the sixth graders used their engineering skills to create water filters out of fine sand, small gravel, coffee filters, cotton balls, and nylon netting to remove particles and color from a mixture of potting soil, cooking oil, and tea during their unit on water filtration.

(Below Right) As part of the Ecology unit, students use the Internet to practice identifying consumers, producers, and decomposers. They are also using educational games and websites to learn more about food chains and food webs. (Below Left) Caitlyn Taft tests her homemade water filter.

