

Name _____

Fun with Fungi: Exploring the Unique Characteristics of Fungi

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. One example of a symbiotic relationship involving fungi is mycorrhizae, where fungi form mutualistic relationships with plant roots, exchanging nutrients with their host plants.
2. Fungi obtain nutrients by digesting their food externally and then absorbing the nutrients, unlike plants that produce their own food through photosynthesis and animals that ingest food and digest it internally.
3. Understanding the unique characteristics of fungi is important in ecology because fungi play essential roles in nutrient cycling, decomposition, and symbiotic relationships in ecosystems.
4. Fungi contribute to the decomposition of organic matter in ecosystems by secreting enzymes that break down complex molecules into simpler ones, which can then be absorbed by fungi and other organisms.

