

Name _____

Unraveling the Mystery of Heterotrophs: Nature's Consumers

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Decomposers, such as fungi and bacteria, break down dead organic matter. Detritivores, like earthworms and some insects, consume decaying organic matter.
2. Heterotrophs obtain their energy and nutrients by consuming other organisms.
3. Heterotrophs play a crucial role in nutrient recycling within ecosystems by breaking down organic matter and releasing nutrients back into the soil.
4. Biodiversity is important for ecosystems because it promotes resilience and stability. Heterotrophs contribute to biodiversity by regulating populations and preventing any one species from dominating an ecosystem.

