

Name _____

Protists: Nature's Unique Builders

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Protists contribute to ecosystem stability by serving as primary producers in various ecosystems, contributing to the food web and providing energy for other organisms.
2. Protists are considered builders of ecosystems because of their roles as primary producers and their ability to shape ecosystem dynamics through photosynthesis and other ecological interactions.
3. An example of a protist exhibiting autotrophic capabilities is the diatom, which can photosynthesize using chloroplasts.
4. The diverse reproductive strategies of protists allow them to adapt to different environmental conditions and ensure their survival in various habitats. Asexual reproduction allows for rapid population growth, while sexual reproduction increases genetic diversity, enhancing their ability to withstand environmental changes.

