

Name _____

Exploring the Diverse World of Protists

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Protists contribute to nutrient cycling in ecosystems by decomposing organic matter, releasing nutrients back into the environment for other organisms to use.
2. Algae are considered primary producers because they perform photosynthesis, converting sunlight into energy and producing organic molecules that serve as food for other organisms.
3. One way slime molds differ from traditional fungi is that slime molds are composed of single-celled amoeboid organisms that can form multicellular structures, whereas fungi are multicellular organisms with distinct cell types.
4. Water molds can impact aquatic environments by decomposing organic matter, potentially causing diseases in plants and animals, and affecting nutrient cycling.

