# Vocabulary

mystery science

## Lesson: Why do you have to clean a fish tank but not a pond?

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|---|---|
| **algae** | organisms that live in water and that produce their own food, like plants do |
| **atmosphere** | the gases that surround a planet |
| **bacteria** | an organism that is usually a decomposer; some cause illness |
| **carbon cycle** | the process of carbon moving back and forth between non-living and living parts of the environment, like carbon dioxide in the air moving into plants |
| **carbon dioxide** | a type of gas that plants sometimes take in and that animals release when they breathe |
| **consumer** | a living thing that eats other living things |
| **cycle** | a set of events that repeats in the same order over and over |
| **decomposer** | a living thing that can break down dead plants, dead animals, or animal waste |
| **ecosystem** | all the living things that interact with each other and their environment in one place |
| **fungus (fungi)** | a living thing that is a decomposer, such as a mold or mushroom |
| **matter** | anything that takes up space and has weight; can be in different forms such as solid, liquid, or gas |
| **model** | a pretend version of something that scientists use when the real thing is too big, small, or complicated to work with |

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| **nutrient (micronutrient)** | a substance that living things need to grow and stay healthy |
| **organism** | any living thing |
| **oxygen** | a type of gas that plants release and animals breathe in |
| **phytoplankton** | tiny, floating living things in water that are smaller than algae and produce their own food, like plants do |
| **producer** | a living thing that makes its own food |
| **system** | a group of things that affect each other and function as a whole |