Main Script

**Scene One: Max Axiom gets out of the ocean and heads to a school . . .**

Max: Every ecosystem has many food chains. Often, they overlap and connect into a system called a web. And no one knows food webs better than my old science teacher, Mrs. Breem.

**Scene Two: Max back at his old school . . .**

Max: Hey, Mrs. B! How’s the world of science?

Mrs. Breem: Maxwell! My, you’ve grown. You must have learned to eat your vegetables.

Max: Actually, that’s kind of the reason I’m here. I heard your class was studying food webs.

Mrs. Breem: Yes, this is Maria. She’s studying the food web of the park.

Maria: Hello, Mr. Axiom! As you can see, most animals in the park eat more than one type of food. They belong to multiple food chains.

Max: In this food web both hawks and snakes eat mice. The snakes also eat frogs, which connects them to another food chain. Everything is connected! And everything eventually returns to the soil.

Maria: In my research, I noticed that each chain has only four or five links. Why don’t some food chains have lots of links?

Max: To answer that question, we’ll need a pyramid. An energy pyramid! Energy pyramids are another way of showing how food chains work. Each level is a link in the chain.

Maria: Whoa!

Max: Producers make up the bottom level. It’s the largest part because that’s where most of the sun’s energy is stored.

Maria: And grasshoppers are the second level because they eat plants for energy, right?

Max: Yes! But only some of the energy is transferred. The plants used up energy simply by living and growing.

Maria: So, that’s why it’s smaller. Each level has less energy than the level below it.

Max: With less energy, each level can also support fewer animals. By the fourth or fifth level, little energy remains and—

Maria: The food chain ends.

Max: You got it! Remember, each level is as important as the next. Even predators, which look scary, are necessary for a healthy ecosystem. Without them, the food chain is knocked off balance. Some levels become overpopulated while others struggle to survive. Eventually, the entire system could be lost.

Well, I’ve still got a lot of ground to cover. Thanks for letting me check out your research!

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