

Handout:

Commensalism

Definition: Commensalism, one organism benefits from a close relationship between two organisms, and the other organism is not harmed by the association.

Example: As a human being you have living on you millions of microscopic mites. Some live at the base of your eyebrow hairs, others on your eye itself. You can't see these without a microscope and everybody has them, no matter how many showers you take.

Directions: Come up with one example of commensalism in nature. Also use your imagination and create a commensal relationship between two imaginary organisms.

Mutualism

Definition: Mutualism is a close relationship between two different organisms from which both benefit.

Example: Our digestive tracks are home to millions of bacteria cells. These microorganisms live inside of us. They help us obtain the vitamins we need to survive. Without them we would be very sick.

Directions: Come up with one example of mutualism in nature. Also use your imagination and create a mutualistic relationship between two imaginary organisms.

Parasitism

Definition: Parasitism is a close relationship between two different organisms where one organism benefits and the other is harmed from the association.

Example: The tarantula hawk wasp is an example of parasitism. The wasp lays its eggs in the abdomen of the tarantula. The tarantula is eventually eaten by the growing wasp larvae.

Directions: Come up with one example of parasitism in nature. Also use your imagination and create a parasitic relationship between two imaginary organisms.

