Science Study Guide

**Vocabulary:**

*Competition:* when two or more species in an ecosystem must use the same

limited resources

*Parasite:* an organism that lives on or in another organism, helping itself but hurting the other organism

*Host:*  an organism that is harmed by a parasite

*Succession:* gradual change from one community of organisms to another

*Extinct:* no longer living, as an entire species, or no longer active, as a volcano

*Endangered:* a species whose population has been reduced to such small numbers that it is in danger of becoming extinct

*Hazardous Waste:* substances that are very harmful to humans and other organisms

**Key Points:**

* Balanced ecosystems are always changing. Organisms are born. They live, die, and then decompose. Change helps keep ecosystems in balance.
* An ecosystem is healthy when the resources in the environment are enough to meet the needs of the populations in that ecosystem.
* When an animal competes successfully, the animal will survive and reproduce.
* When animals are in a group, the animals are able to compete successfully for food.Living in groups can make it easier to obtain food or stay protected. Deer protect themselves from wolves by traveling in groups. With many deer bunched together, it is hard for a pack of wolves to attack any individual deer.
* Fossils tell that life on Earth has not always been the way it is now. Over long periods of time, changes in the environment have caused species to change.
* The average temperature and winds over a long time are examples of climate.
* The national park system was established to preserve nature’s beauty, historic sights, and unique habitats.
* Humans change parts of the environment to meet their needs. For example, people clear land to plant crops, build roads, and build buildings.
* Water becomes polluted when wastes and chemicals get into rivers, lakes, and oceans. The Clean Water Act made it illegal to put pollutants into water.
* Strip mining is a way to get coal from the land.