

Skills Worksheet

Active Reading**Section: Shaping Communities**

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions that follow.

A key investigation carried out in the early 1990s by David Tilman of the University of Minnesota illustrates the relationship between biodiversity, which is the variety of living organisms present in a community, and productivity. Tilman, along with co-workers and students, tended 147 experimental plots in a Minnesota prairie. Each plot contained a mix of up to 24 native prairie plant species. The biologist monitored the plots, measuring how much growth was occurring. Tilman found that the more species a plot had, the greater the amount of plant material produced in that plot. Tilman's experiments clearly demonstrated that increased biodiversity leads to greater productivity. Tilman also found that the plots with greater numbers of species recovered more fully from a major drought. Thus, the biologically diverse plots were also more stable than the plots with fewer species.

SKILL: READING EFFECTIVELY

Read each question, and write your answer in the space provided.

1. Which sentence expresses the main idea of the passage? What is the main idea?

2. What was the location and focus of Tilman's investigation?

In the space provided, write the letter of the phrase that best completes the statement.

- _____ 3. According to the passage, the greater the variety of living organisms present in a community, the greater the
- a. size of the community.
 - b. stability of the community.
 - c. amount of plant material used by the community.
 - d. Both (b) and (c)