Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Food Chains and Webs

Food chain: a model describing the order in which organisms depend on each other for food. Most food chains start with producers (plants).

Food web: a model that diagrams multiple food chains connected together, with arrows connecting multiple "paths" an organism's diet can follow.

For each animal in the 'Relationship Table' worksheet, create a food chain like the one below. Research missing links on Google.

1. _____(a)_____ → Gray Squirrel → _____(b)_____
   a. We know from our Relationship Table that Gray Squirrels are herbivores and are prey. This tells us that we need to have something for the squirrel to eat (a), and something to eat the squirrel (b).
   b. By searching 'Gray Squirrel Diet' on Google, you find that Gray Squirrels eat, among other things, acorns.
   c. By searching 'Who eats Gray Squirrels?' you find that Red-tailed Hawks are one predator that eats Gray Squirrels.
   d. Now you can complete your food chain
   e. _Acorns_ → Gray Squirrel → _Red-tailed Hawk_

While assembling your food chains, you might have noticed that animals do not usually eat only one thing. They can eat different kinds of plants or different kinds of prey. This is because nature does not function in a straight line. Instead, it functions as a web. A food web is a figure made of connected food chains. Connect as many of your food chains into a web as you can. Use the picture to the right as an example to help you.