

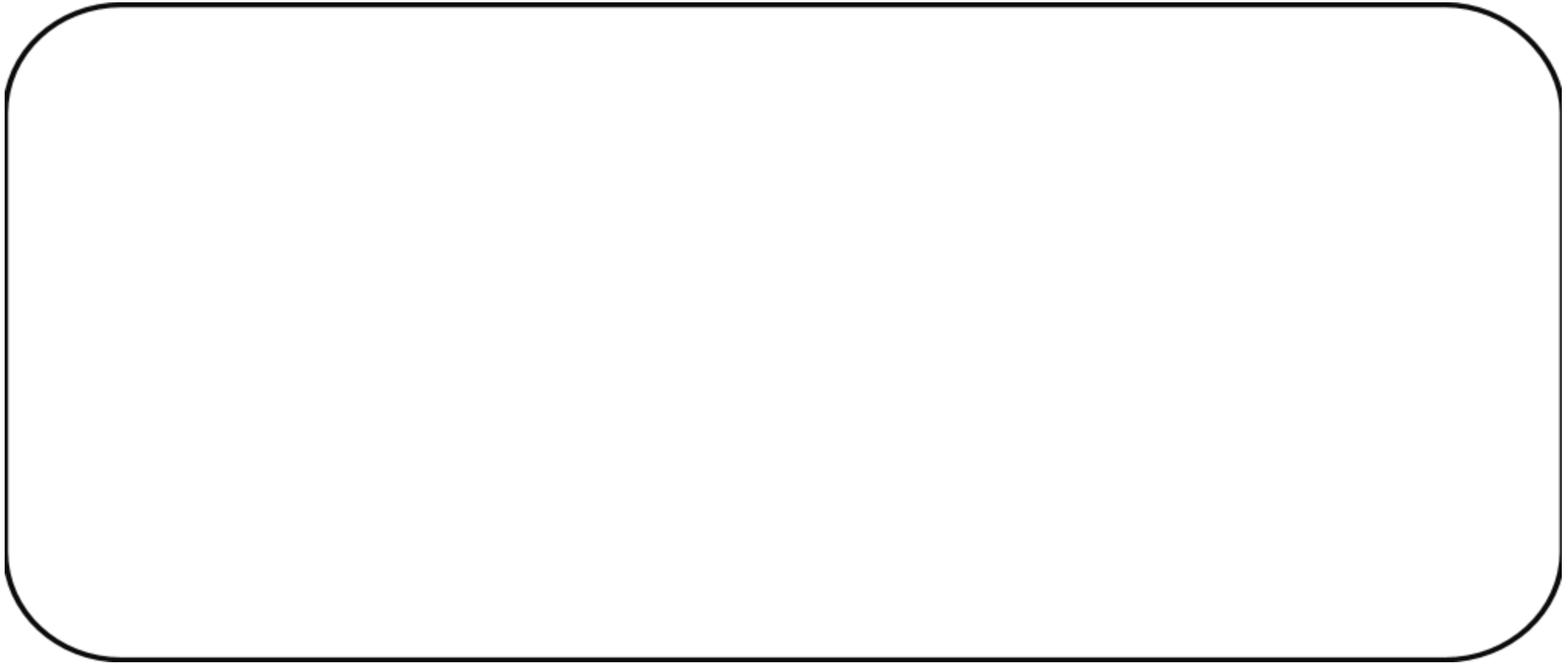
Sonoran Desert Habitat

Ecosystems include both **biotic** and **abiotic** components.

Biotic components of an ecosystem are the living organisms that inhabit it. Some are called **producers** and make their own food with inorganic molecules and energy from the sun or chemical reactions (an example would be photosynthesis). Other organisms are **consumers**, which eat other organisms to acquire energy and nutrients.

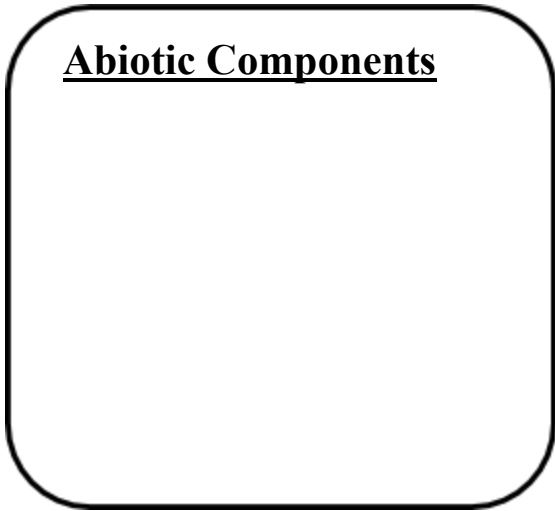
Abiotic components of an ecosystem are those that are non-living. Examples of some abiotic components are temperature, moisture, and soil.

Below, sketch what you see in the Sonoran Desert Habitat. Be sure to include the biotic and abiotic components that you see (include those that are pictured on the mural too!).

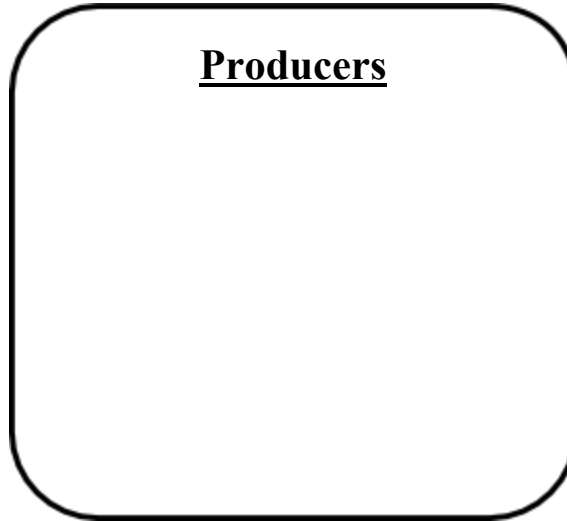
A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a black border, intended for a student to draw a sketch of the Sonoran Desert Habitat. The box is currently blank.

List the following:

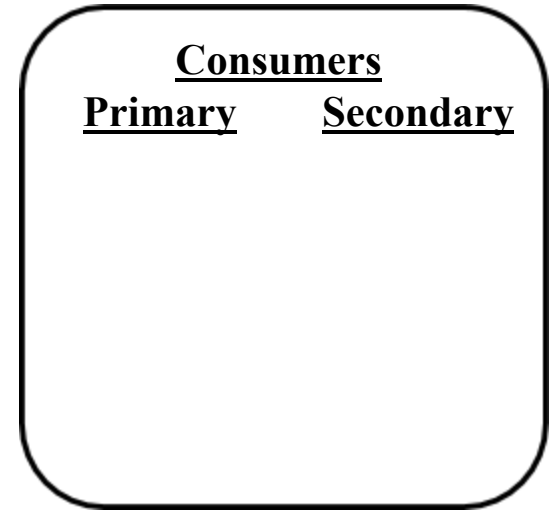
Abiotic Components



Producers



Consumers
Primary **Secondary**



Draw arrows on your sketch showing the flow of energy in this ecosystem.

Choose one of the arrows that you drew. Can you pose a question about the relationship between these two components of the ecosystem?

For example, How will _____ affect _____ ?

Sonoran Desert Habitat

Beaded Lizard



- Beaded lizards live in semi-arid rocky regions of Mexico, along the Pacific Coast, and Guatemala.
- Their scales are bead-like and have bone-like plates called **osteoderms**, which act as an armored shield.
- They eat slow-moving animals such as nestling ground squirrels, kangaroo rats, cactus mice, and other young rodents; eggs and chicks of doves, quails, and other ground-nesting birds.
- Listed as Vulnerable by IUCN due to habitat loss and collection for the pet trade.

Colorado River Toad



- These toads live in desert and semi-arid areas. They are semi-aquatic and live near bodies of water such as streams.
- River toads can grow to 7.5 inches and are the largest native toad in the United States. They have smooth, leathery skin which is olive green or mottled brown in color.
- They are **carnivorous**, eating invertebrates, lizards, mice, and smaller toads.
- Listed as least concern by IUCN.

Camble's Quail



- Gambel's Quails live in the Southwestern US and into Mexico, in warm deserts near brushy & thorny vegetation.
- They have a chunky, round body with a **plume** on their heads.
- These birds eat mostly seeds and leaves, with fruits and berries from cacti at certain times of the year. They will occasionally eat insects, especially when young. They are preyed upon by large predators including snakes, raptors, foxes, bobcats, and coyote.
- Listed as least concern by IUCN, however habitat degradation from urbanization and cattle grazing are possible threats.

Roadrunner



- Roadrunners live in Southwestern US into southern Mexico, in arid deserts.
- They are dark brown streaked with white, with a crest of black feathers and bright yellow eyes.
- Roadrunners are **omnivorous**, eating invertebrates, lizards, snakes, and mice, as well as prickly pear cactus. They rely on their speed to avoid predation by hawks, skunks, coyotes, and raccoons.
- Listed as Least Concern by IUCN.

Nine Banded Armadillo



- Nine-Banded Armadillos live in warm, wet areas. They are found in Southeastern United States.
- They can grow to be 2.5 feet long and weigh 12 pounds. Despite their name, they can have 7-10 bands.
- They eat mostly insects and other invertebrates, but will also eat small animals, eggs, and plants.
- Listed as Least Concern by IUCN.