**How do you describe an ecosystem?**

**Inquiry MiniLab 20 minutes**

**An ecosystem can be a small area or a very large environment. What makes up the ecosystem around your school yard?**

1. What are the safety concerns associated with this lab/activity (as explained by your teacher)? Refer to page xxxiv of the testbook.

2. Walk around the outside of the school. Note the general appearance of the ecosystem. Record your observations.

3. In your Science Journal, list the abiotic factors you find around your ecosystem. Describe as many of the abiotic factors, in as much detail, as you can.

4. List and describe the biotic factors in your ecosystem. Examine the soil and the ground area closely for smaller organisms.

5. In your Science Journal, illustrate your ecosystem.

**Analyze and Conclude**

1. Summarize the interactions that occur between biotic and abiotic factors within the school’s ecosystem.

2. Define the populations within your ecosystem.

3. Describe the community that inhabits your ecosystem.

4. **Key Concept** - Diagram your ecosystem in terms of populations, community, and abiotic factors.