

Name _____



Support Searchers

Directions: Read the passage carefully. After reading, review the claims listed below the passage. For each claim, **highlight or underline** the sentence(s) in the text that provide clear evidence for it. Write a short explanation in your own words about how the evidence supports the claim.

“The Hidden Helpers of the Forest”

Deep in every forest, there’s a silent network working beneath the surface. Fungal threads called *mycorrhizae* connect tree roots, allowing them to share water and nutrients. When one tree gets too little sunlight, another may send it extra carbon through this underground web. Scientists have even found that older trees often support younger ones, ensuring the forest stays balanced.

Some people think competition rules the natural world, but forests tell a different story. The cooperation between species helps them all survive harsh seasons and fires. Without these hidden connections, many trees would struggle to grow tall or stay healthy. The forest’s success depends not on rivalry, but on shared strength and communication.

CLAIMS	TEXT EVIDENCE	EXPLANATION
1. Trees in a forest help each other rather than just compete.		
2. Older trees play a key role in maintaining forest balance.		
3. The underground fungal network is essential to a forest’s health.		