

# Biomes and Ecosystems

By Trista L. Pollard

<sup>1</sup> Did you know that there are communities right in your backyard? Do you know that some communities don't have houses, but trees, plants, and shrubs? Well, these communities are part of **ecosystems** . They are also part of **biomes** .

<sup>2</sup> Biomes are large areas that have similar plants, animals, and other **organisms** . Organisms are living things that can work independently. Some of these organisms we cannot see with our eyes. However, they are there. Ecosystems are smaller than biomes. They are a community of plants and animals that live in an environment.



<sup>3</sup> There are many biomes on Earth. However, we will only talk about four. They are **forests**, **grasslands**, **deserts**, and **tundras**. The animals and plants in these biomes need to adapt to the environment. Each biome has different types of water, soil, and climate.

<sup>4</sup> Forests are trees and other plants that cover a large area. These trees and plants grow in groups that are very dense. Depending on the climate, different types of trees and plants grow in the forest. There are **tropical rainforests**, **tropical dry forests**, **cold climate forests**, and **temperate forests**. Temperate forests are found in the eastern United States. These forests have cold winters and warm summers. You can tell you are in a temperate forest if the leaves change colors in the fall. Cold climate forests have trees that have cones. You would find pine, fir, and spruce trees in these areas. These forests are found in the mountains.

<sup>5</sup> Tropical forests are found in different areas of the world. Tropical dry forests are found in parts of Australia and Central America. They have high temperatures. They also have very little rainfall. Tropical rainforests are the opposite. They have a lot of rain. Some of these forests are found in Africa, South America, and Asia.

<sup>6</sup> Grasslands are areas that are covered with grass and very few trees. You know them as prairies in the United States. There are very hot summers and very cold winters in grassland areas. Grasslands have some rain. However, the rain is not enough for trees to grow there.

<sup>7</sup> Deserts are the driest places on Earth. They have very little rain during the year. The plants that are in the desert have to survive the low amount of rain. You may see cacti in deserts. The U.S. has a desert in California. It is called the Mojave Desert (Mo-ha-vee). The Sahara Desert in Africa is the largest desert on Earth.

<sup>8</sup> The last biome is tundra. A tundra is a frozen prairie. If you were to visit Antarctica or Alaska, you would be visiting a tundra. Tundras have summers that are not very hot. The winters are extremely cold. There are plants that grow in the tundra. However, there are not any trees.

<sup>9</sup> Animals that live in these different biomes need to adapt to the climate. Their feeding habits may depend on the climate. They may have layers of fur that help to keep them warm. They may also have very thin fur or covering for hot weather.

<sup>10</sup> Ecosystems can be very small or very large. They can be as large as the Amazon Rainforest. They can also be the small log in your backyard. The ants in your backyard are part of an ecosystem. They depend on the water from the rain. They use the soil to make their homes. If we drop food in the backyard, it becomes their food. They live together with the other insects and animals.

<sup>11</sup> So take a trip into your backyard or to the park in your neighborhood. There is an ecosystem waiting for you to explore.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Science Pd \_\_\_\_\_

## Biomes and Ecosystems

<p>1. What are biomes?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>2. What are ecosystems?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>3. _____ have trees with cones.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Tropical rainforests</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Tropical dry forests</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Cold climate forests</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Temperate forests</p>	<p>4. Plants in deserts have to survive large amounts of rain each year.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>
<p>5. Complete the sentence: Grasslands are areas _____.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>6. Describe tundras.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>7. Where are some tropical rainforests found on Earth?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>8. What are grasslands called in the United States?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

