

Biome	Tundra
Grassland	Forest
Desert	Savanna

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IR-28: Biomes Text Pattern Vocabulary

Predict the meaning of each word by matching the vocabulary words with the definitions.

	Large ecosystems characterized by distinctive types of plants and animals, which are maintained under climatic conditions
	Area with cold, desertlike conditions with a short growing season; contains small shrubs; brutally cold winters; short, mild summers
	Area that supports the growth of various plants but few tall trees; contains areas with various types of soil; temperate
	Found in warm to hot climates with varying rainfall amounts; tends to have porous soil that does not hold large amounts of water
	Covers about one-third of Earth's land area and contains about 70% of the carbon present in living things
	Covers about 20% of Earth's surface; little shelter from extreme elements

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IR-29: Biomes Content Frame

Main Ideas	Details
Biome	
Tundra	
Grassland	
Forest	
Desert	

Biomes

Biomes are large ecosystems characterized by distinctive types of plants and animals, which are maintained under climatic conditions. Both plants and animals depend on the soil and climate of the biome to produce nutrients necessary for survival. Accordingly, there are different biomes across the world. The most widely recognized biomes are tundra, grassland, forest, and desert regions.

The tundra is found in the northern hemisphere. It is characterized by cold, desertlike conditions, with a very short growing season (less than 5 months). There are small shrubs, and both plants and animals have adapted to brutally cold winters and short, mild summers.

Grassland spans most continents and supports different plants. As its name implies, there are many grasses and grains that can be grown in this biome, although there are few tall trees. The savanna grassland is always found in warm to hot climates, and rainfall varies. The soil in the savanna tends to be porous and does not hold large amounts of water for long periods of time. Temperate grassland receives less rain than savanna, and the temperature range is more extreme from summer to winter. However, temperate grassland has much richer soil and is generally more productive than savanna grassland.

The forest biome covers about one-third of Earth's land area and contains about 70% of the carbon present in living things. However, in both the tropical rainforest and the temperate forest, civilization is encroaching on this biome. Change is rapid and dangerous, and the survival of the trees is questionable. Tropical rainforests have the greatest biodiversity of any biome in the world. They can be found near the equator in South America, Africa, and Asia. The only season found in this biome is summer, with one period being wet and the other dry. There is little variation in the average temperature, the length of the days, or the distribution of precipitation. The soil tends to be deficient of many necessary nutrients and is very acidic. The temperate forest is located further north and stretches throughout eastern North America, western and central Europe, and northeastern Asia. The growing season is almost two-thirds of the year, and the soil tends to be very rich and fertile, although most of the original temperate forests in the world have been a casualty of economic development and have all but disappeared.

The desert biome accounts for about 20% of Earth's surface. Because of the differences between hot and cold deserts, soils and plant life vary. Plants are specialized based on climatic conditions. There is little shelter from the elements of a desert, and few large animals have been able to adapt to the extreme conditions.