

Day 2 – Climate & Plants

- Read **pages 12–13**.
- Review the vocabulary words **affect** and **vegetation**.
- Discuss the four types of vegetation: **forests, grasslands, tundra, and deserts**.
- Complete **Reading Check #1 on page 13**: Write two details about each type of vegetation in the correct box.
- Choose one type of vegetation, **draw a picture**, and write a **complete sentence** describing it.

Academic Vocabulary

affect • v., to have an influence on

Climate and Plants

The climate of a place **affects** the plants that grow there. Both the temperature and the amount of rainfall determine the types of **vegetation**, or kinds of plant life, that grow. In the United States, there are four main types of vegetation: forests, grasslands, tundra, and deserts. Different animals depend on the vegetation that grows in an area.

In climate regions that have plenty of rainfall, large forests are found. Forests grow in many parts of the United States. In fact, not long ago, forests covered most of North America! Many forests today are found in parts of the West region, near the Great Lakes, and in the eastern United States. Animals such as bears, deer, and raccoons live in forests.

Grasslands cover much of the plains in the United States. Some parts of the Great Plains get enough rain for tall grasses, berry bushes, and even small trees to grow. However, in the western Great Plains, there is less rain. Short grasses are found here. The prairie dogs that live in this region dig underground and eat the grasses.

Caribou in Alaska search for food in the tundra.



Both tundra and desert vegetation are found in places that have dry climates. In Alaska's arctic climate, the land is called tundra. The ground is frozen nearly all year long. It is too cold for trees to grow. However, moss, lichens, and some shrubs grow. Deer called caribou use their hooves to scrape away snow and eat the moss and lichens off the frozen land.

In desert climates, the only plants that can survive are those that can live with little water. In some deserts, grasses and shrubs are found. In the deserts of the West region, there are large cactuses called saguaros [suh GWAR ohs]. Saguaros grow in Mexico, too. Saguaros have long roots that allow them to get water from a wide area. A saguaro can grow to be 50 feet high. That is nearly as tall as a five-story building!

Animals that live in deserts can survive the hot temperatures during the day. Some animals, such as desert tortoises, keep cool by spending much of their time underground. Other animals only come out at night when it is cooler.

1. **✓ Reading Check** **Main Idea and Details Identify** two details about each type of vegetation, then fill in each box.

Quest Connection

What kinds of plants and animals live in your national park? What does that tell you about its climate?



INTERACTIVITY

Talk with a partner about the different kinds of plant and animal life throughout the United States.

Forests

Grasslands

Tundra

Desert
