

Name _____ Hour _____



Busy Biomes MN Conservation Volunteer 1996 by Janice Welsh

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/young_naturalists/biome/index.html

What kind of place is Minnesota? It does not have mountains. It is not a desert. It is not near the ocean. Minnesota is a land of lakes (more than 12,000), rivers (more than 90,000 miles), prairies, and forests. More than 5 million people and 2,000 species of plants and animals live here. Minnesota has three biomes: coniferous forest, deciduous forest and prairie. A biome is an area with certain types of plants and animals.

Prairie

This biome covers most of southern and western Minnesota. The climate is drier and warmer here than in other parts of the state. Cheyenne, Assiniboine and Dakota Indians roamed the prairie before European settlers arrived. Herds of big animals ate the grasses, and the Indians hunted them for food and hides. When the European settlers moved in during the 1800's they plowed the prairie to plant corn, wheat, and other crops. Today, soybeans and beets are other important crops.

Deciduous Forest

North and east of the prairie, the climate is colder and wetter. This biome has more lakes and trees. Maple, oak, basswood, and other broadleaf trees grow here. These trees are often called hardwoods. Ojibwe Indians still gather wild rice and fish in lakes and streams here. Some tap maple trees for sap to make maple sugar and syrup. When European settlers arrived, they cut the woods for timber and firewood. They started farms. But farms in this biome were not as large or plentiful as farms on the prairie.

Coniferous Forest

Northern Minnesota has the state's coldest climate. Pines, spruces, firs, and other coniferous trees grow here. This biome is also called the pinewoods or north woods. In the far north, near Canada, you can canoe on hundreds of rocky lakes in forests almost as wild as they were when the Dakota, Cree, and Ojibwe Indians lived here. Loggers cut the big pine trees from many places. Farmers planted crops but soon discovered that summer was too short to grow much corn or wheat.

As you find your answers underline or circle them in the passage above.

1. What two landforms is Minnesota famous for? _____
2. What is a biome? _____
3. How many biomes does Minnesota have? _____
4. What did the European settlers use the prairie for? _____
5. What did the European settlers use the deciduous forest biome for? _____
6. What did the European settlers use the coniferous forest biome for? _____
7. Why was the coniferous forest biome not good to grow crops in? _____
8. What is this passage mostly about? _____