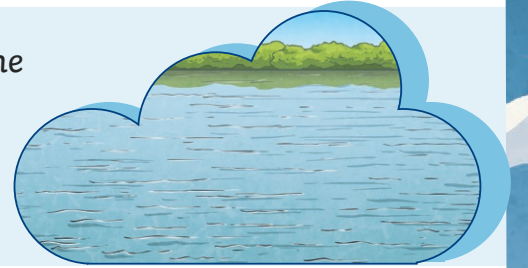


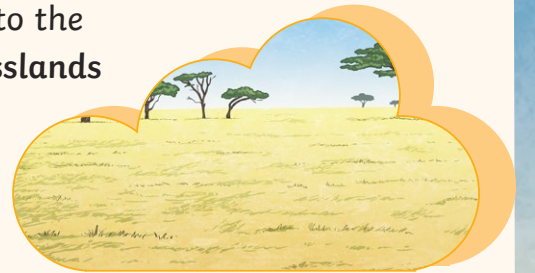
# What Is a Biome?

Biomes are regions of the world where the weather conditions and temperature are alike, and so the same kinds of animals and plants live and grow. There are five major types of biomes. These are aquatic, grassland, forest, desert and tundra.

**Aquatic** biomes include both freshwater and marine biomes. **Freshwater** biomes include ponds, rivers, and lakes. **Marine** biomes include the ocean, coral reefs and estuaries.



**Grasslands** are open regions mostly covered by grass and have a warm and dry climate. There are two different types of grasslands: Savannas and Temperate grasslands. **Savannas** are found closer to the equator with some scattered trees. **Temperate grasslands** are found further away from the equator. They do not have any trees or shrubs at all and receive less rainfall than savannas.



**Forests** are distinguished by their abundance of trees and are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals. There are three major forest biomes. **Tropical forests** are located closest to the equator and have a warm and humid climate. **Temperate forests** are found a little further away from the equator and experience all four seasons. **Boreal forests** are found furthest from the equator, with the coldest and driest climate of all of the forests.



**Deserts** are very dry regions, receiving less than 50cm of rainfall per year. They cover around 20% of Earth's surface and can be either very cold or very hot. The biodiversity of vegetation and wildlife that can be found living in deserts must have special adaptations for surviving in such a dry environment.



**Tundra** has the most inhospitable and extreme conditions of all the biomes, with average yearly temperatures ranging from -34 to 12 degrees Celsius. There are two different types of tundra. The **arctic tundra** is found to the north of boreal forests. The **alpine tundra** is located on mountains where the altitude is too high for any trees to survive.



# Questions

1. What are the five major types of biomes?

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2. Which statement is true?

- Savannas can be found closer to the equator with some scattered trees.
- Savannas can be found further away from the equator and do not have any trees or shrubs at all.

3. Why do you think forests are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals while some other biomes have very few animals?

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4. What does the word 'inhospitable' mean?

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5. Which biome would you most like to visit? Explain why.

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# Answers

1. What are the five major types of biomes?

**Aquatic, grassland, forest, desert and tundra.**

2. Which statement is true?

**Savannas can be found closer to the equator with some scattered trees.**

Savannas can be found further away from the equator and do not have any trees or shrubs at all.

3. Why do you think forests are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals while some other biomes have very few animals?

**Forests provide the most suitable habitat and living conditions for many different types of animals, while other biomes can be very harsh with their more extreme temperatures and climates.**

4. What does the word 'inhospitable' mean?

**A place or environment that is very harsh and difficult to live in.**

5. Which biome would you most like to visit? Explain why.

**Student's own response, answers will vary.**

# What Is a Biome?

A biome is a large area of the Earth populated by similar vegetation and wildlife that have adapted to accommodate a specific climate. Therefore, they are regions of the world where the weather conditions and temperature are alike, and so the same kinds of animals and plants live and grow. There are five major types of biomes. These are aquatic, grassland, forest, desert and tundra.

**Aquatic** biomes include both freshwater and marine biomes. **Freshwater** biomes include ponds, rivers, and lakes. **Marine** biomes include the ocean, coral reefs and estuaries. All together, these marine biomes cover close to three quarters of Earth's surface!



**Grasslands** are classified as open regions mostly covered by grass and have a warm and dry climate. There are two different types of grasslands: tropical grasslands or savannas, and temperate grasslands. **Savannas** are found closer to the equator and can have some scattered trees. **Temperate grasslands** are found further away from the equator. They do not have any trees or shrubs at all and receive less rainfall than savannas. Temperate grasslands can be further categorised into **prairies** and **steppes**. Prairies are recognised by their taller grasses, whereas steppes are identified by shorter grasses.



**Forests** are distinguished by their abundance of trees and can be found spread across about one third of Earth's surface. Forests are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals. The three major forest biomes are temperate forests, tropical forests and boreal forests, which can also be called the taiga. **Tropical forests** are located closest to the equator and have a warm, humid climate. **Temperate forests** are found a little further away from the equator and experience all four seasons. **Boreal forests**, found furthest from the equator, have the coldest and driest climate of all of the forests.

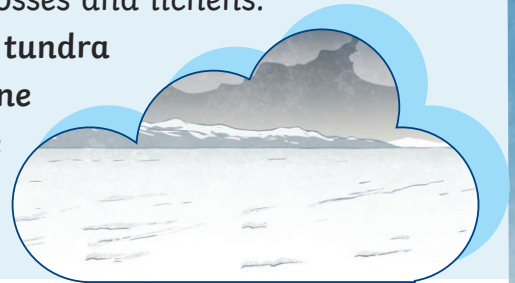




**Deserts** are very dry regions, receiving less than 50cm of rainfall per year. They cover around 20% of Earth's surface and can be either very cold or very hot. The biodiversity of vegetation and wildlife that can be found living in deserts must have special adaptations for surviving in such a dry environment.



**Tundra** has the most inhospitable and extreme conditions of all the biomes, with average yearly temperatures ranging from -34 to 12 degrees Celsius. Tundra has very little biodiversity and any vegetation that does grow is fairly small, including things such as shrubs, grasses, mosses and lichens. There are two different types of tundra. The **arctic tundra** is found to the north of boreal forests and the **alpine tundra** is located on mountains where the altitude is too high for any trees to survive.



# Questions

1. What are the five major types of biomes?

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2. How much of Earth's surface is covered by marine biomes?

- less than 25%
- 30% - 50%
- almost 75%

3. Which features differentiate savannas from temperate grasslands?

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4. Why do you think forests are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals while some other biomes have very few animals?

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5. What does the word 'inhospitable' mean?

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6. Which word from the text means 'a very large quantity of something'?  
(Hint: check the paragraph on forests)

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7. Which biome would you most like to visit? Explain why.

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# Answers

1. What are the five major types of biomes?

**Aquatic, grassland, forest, desert and tundra.**

2. How much of Earth's surface is covered by marine biomes?

- less than 25%
- 30% - 50%
- almost 75%**

3. Which features differentiate savannas from temperate grasslands?

**Savannas are found closer to the equator and can have some scattered trees, whereas temperate grasslands are further from the equator and will have no trees or shrubs at all.**

4. Why do you think forests are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals while some other biomes have very few animals?

**Forests provide the most suitable habitat and living conditions for many different types of animals, while other biomes can be very harsh with their more extreme temperatures and climates.**

5. What does the word 'inhospitable' mean?

**A place or environment that is very harsh and difficult to live in.**

6. Which word from the text means 'a very large quantity of something'?  
(Hint: check the paragraph on forests!)

**Abundance.**

7. Which biome would you most like to visit? Explain why.

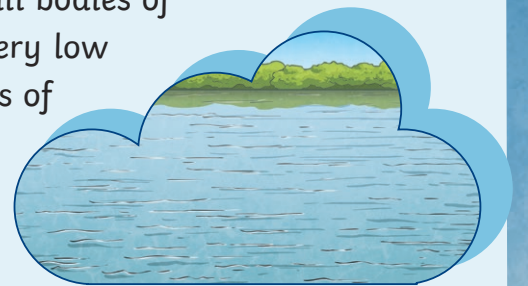
**Student's own response, answers will vary.**



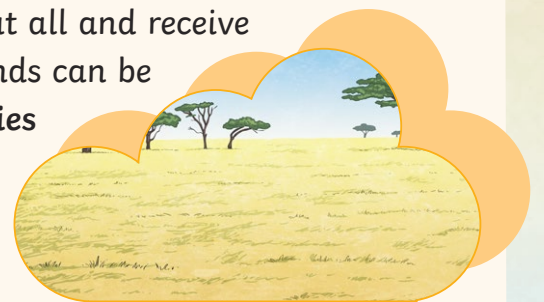
# What Is a Biome?

A biome is a large area of the Earth populated by similar vegetation and wildlife that have adapted to accommodate a specific climate. Therefore, they are regions of the world where the weather conditions and temperature are alike, and so the same kinds of animals and plants live and grow. There are five major types of biomes. These are aquatic, grassland, forest, desert and tundra.

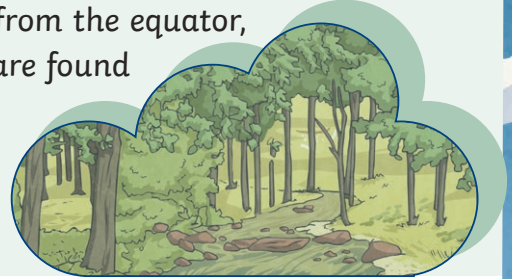
**Aquatic** biomes include both freshwater and marine biomes. **Freshwater** biomes include ponds, rivers and lakes. These are all bodies of water which are surrounded by land and have a very low concentration of salt. **Marine** biomes include bodies of water such as the ocean, coral reefs and estuaries. Collectively these cover close to three quarters of Earth's surface!



**Grasslands** are classified as open regions mostly covered by grass and have a warm and dry climate. There are two different types of grasslands: tropical grasslands or savannas, and temperate grasslands. **Savannas** are found closer to the equator and can have some scattered trees. These biomes cover almost half of the continent of Africa, as well as parts of Australia, India and South America. **Temperate grasslands** are found further away from the equator, in places such as South Africa, Hungary, Argentina, Uruguay, North America and Russia. They do not have any trees or shrubs at all and receive less rainfall than the savannas. Temperate grasslands can be further categorised into prairies and steppes. **Prairies** are recognised by their taller grasses, whereas **steppes** are identified by shorter grasses.



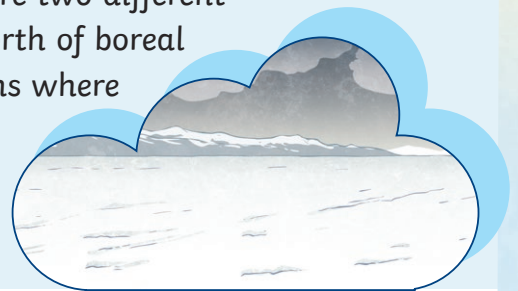
**Forests** are distinguished by their abundance of trees and can be found spread across about one third of Earth's surface. Forests are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals. The three major forest biomes are temperate forests, tropical forests and boreal forests, which can also be called the taiga. These can each be found at different latitudes or distances from the equator, and so they each have varying climate conditions. **Tropical forests** are located closest to the equator and have a warm, humid climate. **Temperate forests** are found at higher latitudes, placing them a little further away from the equator, and they experience all four seasons. **Boreal forests** are found at even higher latitudes, placing them furthest from the equator. These have the coldest, driest climate of all of the forests and experience lots of snow.



**Deserts** are very dry regions, receiving less than 50cm of rainfall per year. They cover around 20% of Earth's surface. Deserts can be either very cold or very hot, and because of these extreme weather conditions, there is generally less biodiversity found here compared to other biomes. The vegetation and wildlife that can be found living in deserts must have special adaptations for surviving in such a dry environment. Therefore, desert wildlife consists mostly of reptiles and small mammals best suited to the harsh and extreme conditions.



**Tundra** has the most inhospitable and extreme conditions of all the biomes, with average yearly temperatures ranging from -34 to 12 degrees Celsius. Tundra has very little biodiversity and any vegetation that does grow is fairly small, including things such as shrubs, grasses, mosses and lichens. Any other types of vegetation would struggle to grow here because of permafrost, which is a frozen layer just underneath the surface of the soil. There are two different types of tundra. The **arctic tundra** is found to the north of boreal forests and the **alpine tundra** is located on mountains where the altitude is too high for any trees to survive. Any wildlife living in the tundra must be well adapted to its extreme and harsh conditions in order to survive.



# Questions

1. What are the five major types of biomes?

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2. How much of Earth's surface is covered by marine biomes?

- less than 25%
- 30% - 50%
- almost 75%

3. Where are savannas usually found?

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4. How can you tell prairies and steppes apart?

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5. Why do you think forests are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals while some other biomes have very few animals?

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6. What does the word 'inhospitable' mean?

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7. Which word from the text means 'a variety of plant and animal life'?

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8. Which biome would you most like to visit? Explain why.

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# Answers

1. What are the five major types of biomes?

**Aquatic, grassland, forest, desert and tundra.**

2. How much of Earth's surface is covered by marine biomes?

- less than 25%
- 30% - 50%
- almost 75%**

3. Where are savannas usually found?

**Savannas are found closer to the equator in places such as Africa, Australia, India and South America.**

4. How can you tell prairies and steppes apart?

**Prairies are recognised by their taller grasses, whereas steppes are identified by shorter grasses.**

5. Why do you think forests are home to many different kinds of insects, birds and mammals while some other biomes have very few animals?

**Forests provide the most suitable habitat and living conditions for many different types of animals, while other biomes can be very harsh with their more extreme temperatures and climates.**

6. What does the word 'inhospitable' mean?

**A place or environment that is very harsh and difficult to live in.**

7. Which word from the text means 'a variety of plant and animal life'?

**Biodiversity.**

8. Which biome would you most like to visit? Explain why.

**Student's own response, answers will vary.**