

Animations Disclaimer

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful.

PowerPoint

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This resource has been designed with animations to make it as fun and engaging as possible. To view the content in the correct formatting, please view the PowerPoint in “slide show mode.” This takes you from desktop to presentation mode. If you view the slides out of “slide show mode,” you may find that some of the text and images overlap each other and/or are difficult to read.

To enter slide show mode, go to the **slide show menu tab** and select either **from beginning** or **from current slide**.

Slides

This resource has been designed with animations to make it fun and engaging for children. To ensure the content has the correct formatting, please view the presentation in “present mode.” This takes you from edit mode to presentation mode. If you view the slides out of “present mode,” you may find that some of the text and images overlap each other and/or are difficult to read.

To enter present mode, go to the “**Present**” tab and select “**Present from beginning**” or simply click “**Present**” to play from the current slide.

Desert Biome:

The Chihuahuan Desert



Where Is the Chihuahuan Desert?

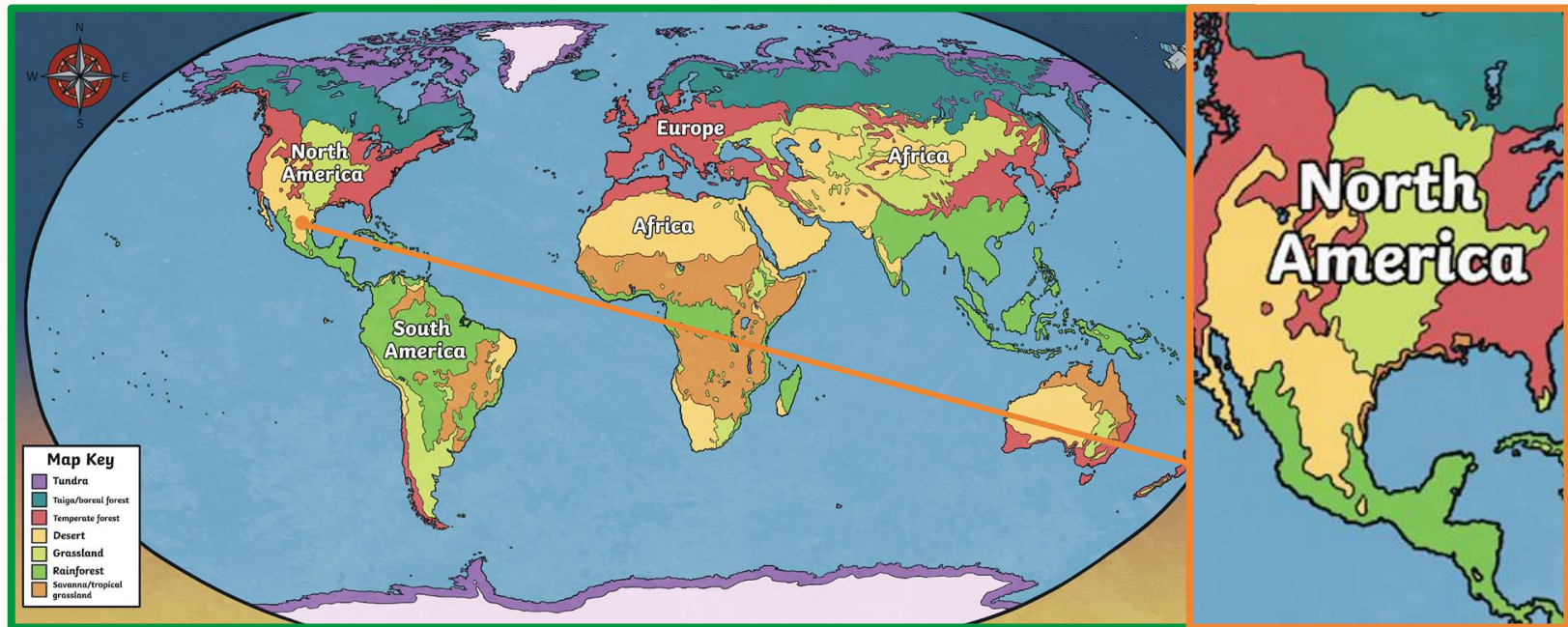


The Chihuahuan Desert is the largest desert in North America, covering over 200,000 square miles. It is mainly in Mexico but also covers parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas.



The Chihuahuan Desert Biome

A biome is a large community of plants and wildlife that have adapted to live in a specific climate.



A **desert** is a dry arid area with minimal yearly rainfall. A desert typically receives less than 20 inches of rain each year. Anything that lives there adapts to living in these dry conditions. Deserts are also sparse, with not much vegetation.

Chihuahuan Desert

The Chihuahuan Desert covers a large area from Mexico into the United States. As the temperature, soil, altitude, and rainfall change, so does the environment.

You will notice from the biome map that there are multiple biome types due to the climate and elevation.

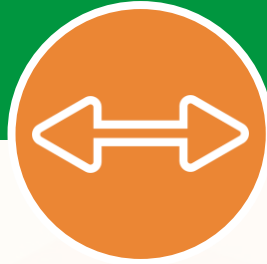


The land is much higher and cooler in the central area than in the lower parts, affecting the climate. More plants can grow with more rain and cooler temperatures.

Think



Pair



Share



What do you find most interesting about the Chihuahuan Desert biome? Why?

Rio Grande/Rio Bravo

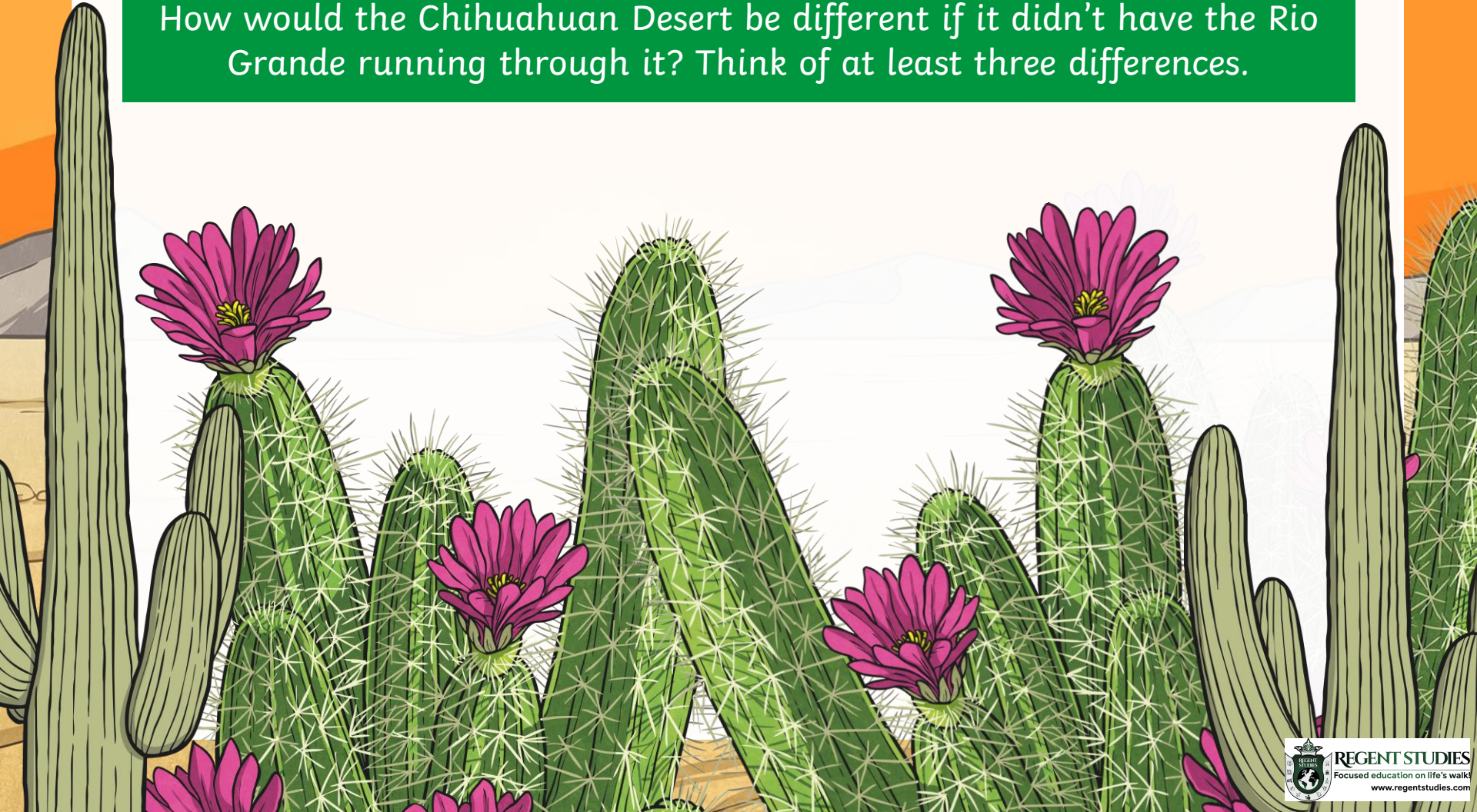
The Rio Grande River is the largest river system in the Chihuahuan Desert. On the U.S. side of the desert, it is called the Rio Grande. On the Mexican side, it is known as the Rio Bravo.

The river provides a vital lifeline for plants and animals.



Think About It

How would the Chihuahuan Desert be different if it didn't have the Rio Grande running through it? Think of at least three differences.



What Is the Climate Like?

The climate in the Chihuahuan Desert is dry. It only has two seasons, summer and winter.

Summer is the rainy season, with smaller amounts of rainfall occurring in the winter.



The average temperature is 75°F, but this changes with altitude.

The hottest temperatures are found in the lower areas and valleys.

What Animals Live There?

Over 130 species of animals live in the Chihuahuan Desert, all of which can live in its dry conditions. Here are a few of those species. Click the photographs to find out more.



pronghorn

The pronghorn has a deer-like body. It is about 3 1/2 feet tall. It is the fastest animal in the Western Hemisphere.

kit fox

This nocturnal animal is the smallest member of the fox family. They are primarily carnivores, eating rodents and rabbits.



What Animals Live There?



black-tailed jackrabbit

This "rabbit" is actually a hare. They have black-tipped ears and long front and rear legs. They can run up to 30 miles per hour!



prairie dog

This herbivorous rodent lives in extensive underground burrows in large family groups. Their calls sound like a dog's bark.

What Animals Live There?



mule deer

Mule deer have large ears that are constantly moving independently of each other. Its gray-buff color is an adaptation that helps it camouflage into the environment from predators like cougar and coyote.

Do People Live There?

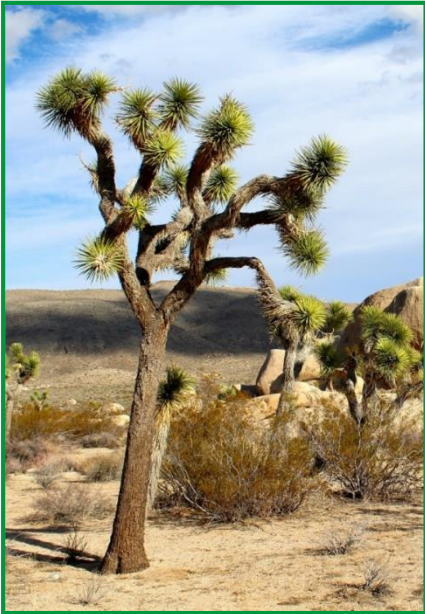
Yes! The desert is home to five million people! There are inhabited towns and cities in the area, such as Chihuahua (say: “chi-wa-wa”), Ciudad Juárez, and Torreón in Mexico. Also, U.S. cities like Albuquerque, Roswell, and Las Cruces in New Mexico.



Albuquerque



What Grows There?



Joshua tree

Its real name is *Yucca brevifolia*. It was given this name by Mormon settlers, thinking it looked like hands reaching to the sky.



Saguaro cactus

Native to dry areas, this tall cactus can grow up to 30 feet. The tallest ever recorded was over 75 feet high!



Ocotillo

This grows to 30 feet but is not a cactus. It sometimes has red flowers, and its canes can be used for walking sticks.

What Grows There?



prickly pear

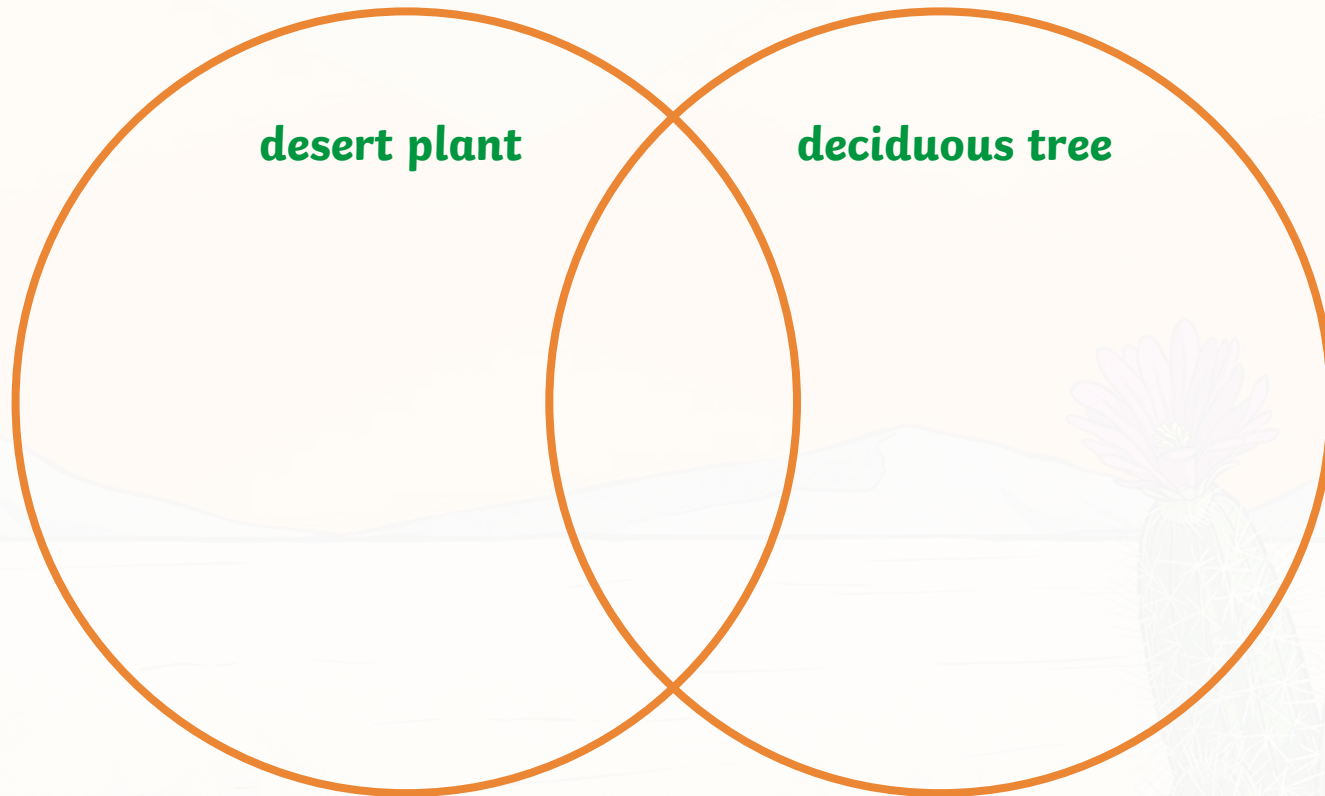
A type of cactus whose official name is *Opuntia*, the prickly pear is found only in the Americas and can grow 15 - 20 feet tall.



yucca

It has long, sword-shaped leaves and is native to dry areas. Yucca moths pollinate it!

Compare and Contrast



Copy this Venn diagram into a notebook. Compare and contrast a desert plant with a deciduous tree. How are they alike and different?

