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Life in Temperate Regions



Key Aspects

- The Temperate Grasslands – Location, extent and names.
- Climate, vegetation and wildlife.
- People, occupation and economy.

Natural vegetation differs from one area to another. There are certain regions where climatic conditions support forest cover while there are other regions where moderate conditions prevail and are more suitable for grasslands. In this chapter, we shall focus on temperate grasslands.

Temperate grasslands extend in the mid-latitudes between 40° to 55° in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. The climate here is moderate and grass forms the dominant vegetation cover. The temperate grasslands are called **Prairies** in North America, **Pampas** in South America, **Steppes** in Eurasia, **Velds** in South Africa and **Downs** in Australia.

Key Question 1

By which name, the temperate grasslands is known in Eurasia?

In this lesson, we will study the prairies in North America and the Velds in South Africa in detail.

THE PRAIRIES

These are located in Canada and the USA, lying between the foothills of the **Rocky Mountains** in the west and the **Great Lakes** and **Appalachian Highlands** in the east. The region is generally flat with certain portions having undulating terrain, rising towards the west and south. In the USA, the area is drained by the rivers Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio and Dakota and in Canada it is drained by the river Saskatchewan and its tributaries.

Insight

The word 'Prairie' originated from a Latin word 'Prata' meaning meadows.

CLIMATE

The Prairies are located in the interior of the continent and therefore, experience extreme climate. The winters are extremely cold with temperature reaching upto -20°C and the summers are warm with temperature rising



WORLD: Prairies and Veld Temperate Grasslands

above 20°C. The difference between day and night temperatures is also very high. The region experiences moderate annual rainfall around 50 cm which occurs mainly in the spring and summer season. There is snowfall in the winter season. In the absence of any natural barrier, strong warm winds blow down the eastern slopes of Rocky mountains. These are called the 'Chinook' winds.



Prairies

NATURAL VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

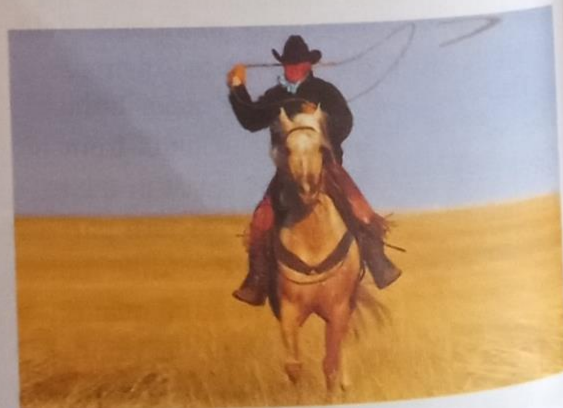
Being temperate grasslands, the vegetation here is restricted to grasses and scrubs. Trees such as willows, alders and poplar are found

near the river banks, shores of lakes or on mountain slopes.

The original grasslands have been converted into farmlands as the soil here is fertile and can support crops like wheat, maize, potatoes, soya-bean, cotton and alfa-alfa.

Where rainfall is low, short grasses

grow and such areas are suitable for cattle-rearing. Large cattle farms are called ranches. Ranches are large farms where cattle reared for milk and meat. These are managed like factories. Cowboys are the main workers here. Wildlife in the Prairies includes wolves, coyotes, jackals, Prairie dogs, antelopes, rabbits, rattlesnakes, etc. Bison or the American Buffalo was the most commonly found animal in this region. Today, it is one of the 'protected species' of animals due to large scale hunting for its fur coat and meat. Birds like owls, hawks and eagles are also found in the Prairies.



A Cowboy

Key Question 2

What reduced the American Bison to be listed as a protected species?

People

The Prairies are not only the most fertile farmlands in the world, but they also have large mineral deposits. The main occupation of the people is agriculture, dairy farming and mining.

The people of the Prairies are very hard working and practise 'commercial farming'. Commercial farming means where crops are grown for sale in the markets. USA and Canada are the two countries located in the Prairies. Scientific farming techniques like crop rotation, contour ploughing and strip farming are practiced here to promote high yield. The farms are large and most of the work is done by machines like combines, harvesters, etc. Combine harvesters are machines which reap the crop, thresh the grains and pack them in sacks. The Prairies are called 'the Granary of the World' because here huge quantities of wheat are produced mainly for export to European and Asian markets.

Let's Find OUT

What does the term 'protected species' mean? Find out names of certain animals in India which have been categorised as 'protected' animals.

Dairy farming is another major industry. The belt of dairy farming extends from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Coast in the east. Tall nutritious grasses of the eastern part are very suitable for dairy cattle. Milk, butter and cheese are produced in large quantities. Cattle rearing and agriculture have promoted setting up of food processing industries in this region.

Large mineral deposits of coal and iron ore and almost level land of the Prairies have helped in developing a good network of roads, railways and inland waterways. Most of the settlements are located along the railway lines. Chicago, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Kansas and Denver are important industrial centres in the USA while Edmonton, Regina, Calgary, Winnipeg and Saskatoon are important centres in Canadian Prairies. Winnipeg is called the 'Gateway to the Prairies'.

Let's Find OUT

Which place is known as the 'Gateway of India'?

THE VELDS

The temperate grasslands of South Africa are called the 'VELDS'. It is located in the eastern part of the plateau of South Africa; They lie between the 'Drakensberg Mountains' in south-east and 'Kalahari Desert' in the north-west. Velds are rolling plateaus with varying heights ranging from 600 m to 1100 m. The highest part is known as 'High Velds'. Its height ranges between 1200 m and 1800 m. The Middle Veld ranges between 150 m to 600 m in height. The region is drained by rivers Limpopo, Sabi, Orange and its tributaries.

Insight

'Velds' is a Dutch word which means 'fields'.

Let's Find OUT

By whom was the term 'Velds' used first?

Climate

The influence of the ocean is clearly felt in the climate here. As compared to the Prairies, the

Note:-Study above given material and solve question answer in cw copy with datewise. Answer these

Velds experience moderate climate. Winters are cold and dry while summers are short and warm. The climate gets cooler as the height increases. Rainfall is low and received mainly in summers. It decreases from east to west as the winds blow from the Indian Ocean and give more rain in the eastern region. The area often faces drought conditions.

Natural Vegetation and Wildlife

Velds are temperate grasslands, and grasses both tall and short, bushes and scattered trees form the vegetation cover of the area. Trees are restricted to the river banks and on higher slopes. Wildlife includes lions, leopards, cheetahs, giraffe, springbok, etc., but their numbers are dwindling because of reckless hunting and poaching. Several National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries have been set up in order to protect these animals and promote tourism.

People

The chief occupations are animal rearing and mining. Agriculture is not an important activity because of scanty rainfall and poor soil. However, wherever soil is fertile with rainfall sufficient, crops like maize, wheat, barley, oats and potatoes are grown. Certain cash crops like tobacco, sugar cane and cotton are also grown.

Animal rearing is an important occupation. While sheep are reared in the cooler and drier regions, cattle rearing is practiced in warmer and wetter areas in the eastern part. Sheep are reared for wool. Merino and Angora are two good breeds of sheep that yield high variety of wool. Dairy products like butter and cheese are produced for export. Meat and leather are also obtained from the cattle reared here.



A Gold mine in Johannesburg

Key Question 3

What are 'Angora' and 'Merino'?

The Veld has rich reserves of gold, uranium, diamond, coal and iron ore. While Johannesburg is famous as the gold capital of the world, Kimberley is famous for the diamond mines. Several mineral-based industries like iron and steel, metal products, machinery, railway equipment and diamond industries have come up in this region. Certain agro-based industries of the region are woollen textiles, food processing, dairy and leather products. The presence of industries has promoted excellent network of roads and railways. Major cities are also connected by airways.



Kimberley Diamond mine

questions (based on previous topic)

1. Name two Bhakti saints of Maharashtra.
2. Name the most famous work of Tulsidas.
3. Who were Alvars & Nayanars?
4. Who were Basavanna & Sufis?
5. What were the silsilah's?
6. Name the 10th Guru of Sikhs.
7. Write in brief about the teachings of Saint Kabir.
8. What do you mean by Kabir Panthis?
9. What were the main teaching of bhakti Saints?
10. Who was Guru Nanak? What did he preach?

Long Answer questions

1. How did Mirabai reject the social practices & traditions of her time?
2. Write down the features of Khanqahs.
3. Explain the significance of teaching of Guru Nanak.
4. What were the main features of Shankara's Advaita philosophy?