

# STUDY QUESTIONS

## TO “FOUR DIFFERENT MINNESOTAS”

Study and learn facts and ideas based on this Young Naturalists nonfiction story in *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, Sept-Oct 2025, [www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine).

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*Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* magazine is your guide to wild things. Every other month, six times a year, the magazine arrives in your school library. Each one has a story for Young Naturalists like you. **Are you curious about wild things?** Young Naturalists tells true stories that can answer all kinds of questions such as these—

**Have you ever heard of a purple wartyback?** How about a pink heelsplitter, pimple-back, or monkeyface? All are Minnesota freshwater mussels. Read Young Naturalists stories to learn which species (kinds) of critters live in Minnesota—frogs, salamanders, snakes, wild cats, wild dogs, weasels, mice, and rabbits.

Want to **peek inside the den of a red fox** and see how the kits grow up? Are you a rock hound searching for agates? Have you ever wondered what’s alive under snow? How animals see? Why is a bluebird blue? How birds fly?

Would you like to hear the true story of **giants of the ice age**? Young Naturalists also tells you about the underground universe. You can read the story of a tiny owl that went to a hospital with an injured wing. Find out about a boy who worked in a logging camp. Read the story of Ojibwe children today hunting and gathering like their ancestors did.

Learn how to get started **camping, snowshoeing, ice fishing, or canoeing**.

**Find these stories and more online** at [www.mndnr.gov/young\\_naturalists](http://www.mndnr.gov/young_naturalists).

*Your knowledge of wild things helps you explore and enjoy the outdoors. Have fun!*

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**1. THE CHANGES IN THE LANDSCAPE AND THE ANIMALS, TREES AND PLANTS THAT YOU NOTICE WHILE YOU DRIVE ACROSS MINNESOTA ARE BECAUSE YOU ARE TRAVELING THROUGH DIFFERENT?**

- a. biomes
- b. geographic borders
- c. time zones
- d. scenery.

**2. MINNESOTA IS HOME TO HOW MANY BIOMES?**

- a. two
- b. many
- c. four
- d. none of the above

**3. TRUE OR FALSE: MINNESOTA'S BIOMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED BY PEOPLE.**

**4. WHICH BIOME HAS BEEN MOST DRAMATICALLY CHANGED BY EUROPEAN SETTLERS, SO MUCH SO THAT LESS THAN 1% OF WHAT IT ORIGINALLY WAS REMAINS?**

- a. tallgrass aspen parkland
- b. prairie grassland
- c. coniferous forest
- d. deciduous forest

**TRUE OR FALSE: TO EXPERIENCE A BIOME FIRST-HAND, PEOPLE MUST VISIT PLACES LIKE ZOOS AND MUSEUMS, WHERE SCIENTISTS HAVE RE-CREATED DISPLAYS OF BIOMES?**

**6. HOW HAVE PEOPLE CHANGED MINNESOTA'S DECIDUOUS FOREST BIOME?**

**7. IF YOU VISITED LAKE MARIA STATE PARK, WHICH BIOME WOULD YOU EXPERIENCE?**

- a. coniferous forest
- b. deciduous forest
- c. prairie grassland
- d. tallgrass aspen parkland

**8. IN WHICH BIOME ARE DROUGHTS MORE COMMON?**

- a. coniferous forest
- b. deciduous forest
- c. prairie grassland
- d. tallgrass aspen parkland

**9. WHAT SCULPTED THE LANDSCAPE OF THE CONIFEROUS FOREST BIOME OF NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA?**

- a. glaciers
- b. Lake Superior
- c. foresters and biologists
- d. wildfires

**10. CHALLENGE QUESTION: GO BACK THROUGH THE STORY TO FIND AND LIST EXAMPLES OF THE MANY WAYS IN WHICH HUMANS HAVE SHAPED AND CONTINUE TO SHAPE MINNESOTA'S BIOMES.**

### **MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS PRACTICE ITEMS**

**1. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD BE CONSIDERED A MAIN IDEA FROM THE STORY?**

- a. Biomes are larger than habitats.
- b. It is important that each of us do our part to help conserve Minnesota's biomes so the wildlife doesn't become extinct.
- c. Humans have influenced and continue to influence Minnesota's biomes.
- d. Some areas of Minnesota have prairie grassland instead of trees.

**2. USING STORY DETAILS, WHICH TWO BIOMES HAVE BEEN MOST AFFECTED BY BEING CLEARED FOR FARMLAND?**

- a. deciduous forest and prairie grassland
- b. tallgrass aspen parkland and coniferous forest
- c. deciduous forest and coniferous forest
- d. prairie grassland and tallgrass aspen parkland

**3. IN WHICH BIOME DO YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO SEE BISON (BUFFALO)?**

- a. prairie grassland
- b. coniferous forest
- c. deciduous forest
- d. none; Minnesota does not have bison.

**VOCABULARY**

Biome – a large area with a specific climate and unique plants and animals

Climate – the average weather in a region over a period of years

Humid – when the air has a lot of water vapor in it

Deciduous – a tree or shrub that loses its leaves each year

Conifers – trees with needles instead of leaves

Prairie – a grass-covered plain with few or no trees

Drought – a period of drier than normal conditions

Dormant – to shut down or slow down for a period of time

Prescribed Fire – a carefully planned and controlled fire conducted to manage natural areas

Inhabited – to live in or occupy an area

Receded – to move back or diminish

Grazing – livestock, such as cattle, eating grass or other plants