



## LIVING GREEN

# Mountains, Deserts, and Grasslands

While mountains, deserts, and grasslands are distinct and unique ecosystems, they are also closely connected. Explore how these vital ecosystems are being threatened by global warming, pollution, and habitat destruction caused by human activities.

### What did you learn?

#### QUESTIONS

1. A main factor that determines what kind of plants can grow there is ...
  - a. Distance to coasts
  - b. Precipitation
  - c. Traffic
  - d. Animal life
2. Cloud forests, though small and scattered around the tropics, are havens of ...
  - a. Biodifference
  - b. Biodiversity
  - c. Biology
  - d. Biospheres
3. One harmful nonnative species in Texas and Mexico is ...
  - a. Mossy grass
  - b. Blue grass
  - c. Buffelgrass
  - d. Buggelgrass
4. Green plants, such as grass, help to control global warming by absorbing ...
  - a. Carbon dioxide
  - b. Carbon monoxide
  - c. Hydrogen dioxide
  - d. Hydrogen peroxide
5. What is *global warming*?
6. What is the *greenhouse effect*?

#### TRUE OR FALSE?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| _____ 1. All mountains get warmer toward their peaks.   | _____ 4. Many desert animals, especially rodents, do not need to drink water.                                   |
| _____ 2. Clearcutting is a logging method that is often cited by environmentalists as extremely harmful to mountains. | _____ 5. Tallgrass prairie is the wettest kind of grassland and has rich, deep topsoil.                         |
| _____ 3. Death Valley is surrounded by forests.   | _____ 6. Bison, once ranging across North America's grasslands, were nearly hunted to extinction in the 1800's. |



## ANSWERS

- 1. b. Precipitation.** According to section "Introduction" on page 5, we know that "The amount of precipitation in an area is a main factor that determines what kind of plants can grow there." So, the correct answer is B.
- 2. b. Biodiversity.** According to section "Climate Change and Mountain Life" on page 22, we know that "Cloud forests, though small and scattered around the tropics, are havens of biodiversity." So, the correct answer is B.
- 3. c. Buffelgrass.** According to section "Threats to Desert Life" on page 39, we know that "Buffelgrass is a harmful nonnative species in Texas and Mexico." So, the correct answer is C.
- 4. a. Carbon dioxide.** According to section "Climate Change and Grasslands" on page 57, we know that "Green plants, such as grass, help to control global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere during photosynthesis—the process they use to convert sunlight into food." So, the correct answer is A.
- 5.** According to page 60, *global warming* is "the gradual warming of Earth's surface, believed to be caused by a build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere."
- 6.** According to page 60, the *greenhouse effect* is "the process by which certain gases cause the Earth's atmosphere to warm."

## TRUE OR FALSE? ANSWERS

- 1. False.** According to section "Mountain Climates" on page 10, we know that "All mountains get colder toward their peaks." So, the correct answer is False.
- 2. True.** According to section "Industrial Development" on page 17, we know that "Clearcutting is a logging method that is often cited by environmentalists as extremely harmful to mountains." So, the correct answer is True.
- 3. False.** According to section "Types of Deserts" on page 29, we know that "Death Valley is surrounded by mountains." So, the correct answer is False.
- 4. True.** According to section "Desert Animals" on page 32, we know that "Many desert animals, especially rodents, do not need to drink water." So, the correct answer is True.
- 5. True.** According to section "How Rainfall Shapes Grasslands" on page 45, we know that "Tallgrass prairie is the wettest kind of grassland and has rich, deep topsoil." So, the correct answer is True.
- 6. True.** According to section "Hunting and Warfare" on page 50, we know that "Bison, once ranging across North America's grasslands, were nearly hunted to extinction in the 1800's." So, the correct answer is True.