

The Great Plains

The Great Plains is a huge, mostly treeless area of prairie and grasslands in the middle of the United States. It includes parts of New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Texas, Oklahoma, and all of Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. Its industries include farming, ranching and manufacturing. Huge rivers such as the Missouri, Arkansas, and Platte, flow through the heart of the Great Plains. These rivers and their wetlands are important habitats for many kinds of migrating birds such as ducks, geese, cranes, and gulls.

The Great Plains area is the native home of the American bison. Millions once roamed the plains before they were settled in the 1800s. The number of bison, however, fell drastically by 1900 until there were only a few hundred left. Prairie dogs, badgers, coyotes, and burrowing owls are among the wildlife that live in the Great Plains. The area is sometimes called "Tornado Alley" because most of the nation's tornadoes occur here.

1. What would I NOT expect to see much of in the Great Plains?

- A. Grasslands
- B. Forests
- C. Farms
- D. Wildlife

2. What is NOT true about the American bison?

- A. They roamed Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas before the Great Plains were settled
- B. There were more bison before settlement of the Great Plains than in 1900
- C. Prairie dogs and coyotes could be found in the same places as bison
- D. By 1900, the number of bison went up

3. What does “drastically” mean as used below?

The number of bison, however, fell drastically by 1900 until there were only a few hundred left.

- A. The number of bison fell a lot
- B. The number of bison fell a little bit
- C. The number of bison stayed about the same
- D. The number of bison fell to none

4. The Great Plains...

- A. has small rivers.
- B. includes parts of Kansas and Nebraska.
- C. includes all of Wyoming and Colorado.
- D. often gets tornadoes.