

Lesson at a Glance

- **Grassland** is a region where grasses form the dominant type of plant life. Grasslands make up almost a quarter of the total land surface.
- The world's grasslands are divided into **two categories**: those that occur in the temperate region and those that occur in the tropical region.
- The **prairies** are the temperate grasslands in North America. They are bound by the Rocky Mountains in the west and the Great Lakes in the East.
- The prairies are located in the heart of the continent and therefore we find here the continental type of climate which is characterised by extreme temperatures.
- The **annual rainfall** is moderate and is ideal for the growth of grass. 'Chinook', a local wind, blow here.
- Trees are not there in the prairies. Only trees like willows, alders and poplars grow.
- **Crops** like maize, potatoes, soyabean, cotton and alfa-alfa are grown in the areas where rainfall is over 50 cm.
- In the areas with poor rainfall, grasses are short and sparse. In these areas **cattle-rearing** is done. Bison or the American buffalo is the most important animal of this region.
- The people of this region are hardworking. The USA and Canada are located in this region.
- The prairies are known as the 'Granaries of the world' because surplus wheat is produced here.
- **Dairy farming** is also a major industry.
- **Minerals** such as coal and iron are found in abundance. Roads, railways and canals—all are in good condition and play an important role in making this region the most industrialised one in the world.
- The **velds** are the temperate grasslands of South Africa. They are bound by the Drakensburg Mountains on the east. To its west lies the Kalahari desert. On the north-eastern part, high velds are located that attain a height of more than 1600 m in some places.
- The velds are characterised by mild climate. They receive rainfall mainly in the summer months from November to February.

- The velds do not have much vegetation. Grasses dominate the landscape. The popular varieties of grass are—red grass, acacia and maroola.
- The animals found in this region are—lions, leopards, cheetah and kudu.
- **Cattle rearing** and **mining** are two important activities in the velds. Soils are not very fertile.
- The main crops are maize, wheat, barley, oats and potato. Cash crops grown here are tobacco, sugarcane and cotton.
- The people of this region are mostly engaged in **sheep rearing**.
- Merino sheep is very popular because its wool is very warm.
- **Dairy farming** is also an important activity Dairy products like butter, cheese are produced for both domestic supply and also for export.
- The velds have rich reserve of minerals. Gold and diamond mining are major occupations of people of this region.
- Johannesburg is famous for gold. It is known as the gold capital in the world.
- Kimberley is famous for its diamond mines.

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

9. 1. Answer the following questions briefly.
- What are the Temperate Grasslands of North America called?
 - What are the cattle farms in the North American Grasslands known as?
 - Name the rivers that drain the Velds.
 - When is the rainy season in the Velds?
 - What is the major occupation of the people of the South African grasslands?
- Ans.
- The temperate Grasslands of North America are called Prairies.
 - The cattle farms in the North American Grasslands are called ranches.
 - The tributaries of rivers Orange and Limpopo.
 - The velds enjoy rainy season mainly in the summer months from November to February.
 - The major occupation of the people of the South African grasslands is sheep rearing.

Q. 2. Tick the correct answer:

- (a) River Mississippi drains
 (i) Canada (ii) Africa
 (iii) USA.
- (b) Drakensberg Mountains are to the west of
 (i) Prairies (ii) Velds
 (iii) Pampas.
- (c) Merino is a species of
 (i) Fish (ii) Elephant
 (iii) Sheep.
- (d) Kimberley is famous for
 (i) diamonds (ii) silver
 (iii) platinum.

Ans. (a) —(iii), (b) —(ii), (c) —(iii), (d) —(i).

Q. 3. Match the following:

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|--------------|--------------------|
| (i) Comboys | (a) Iron and Steel |
| (ii) Gold | (b) Prairies |
| (iii) Kudu | (c) Hot wind |
| (iv) Chinook | (d) Velds |
| (v) Coal | (e) Johannesburg |
| | (f) Animal |

Ans. (i) —(b), (ii) —(e), (iii) —(f), (iv) —(c), (v) —(a).

Q. 4. Give reasons:

- (i) The Prairies are known as the 'Granaries of the world'.
- (ii) Rise of wool industry in the Velds.

Ans. (i) The Prairies are known as the 'Granaries of the world' because of the huge surplus of wheat production.

- (ii) Sheep rearing is the most important occupation in the Velds. Merino sheep is a popular species and their wool is very warm. People of this region are mostly engaged in this activity. This has given rise to wool industry there.

Q. 5. Map skills:

On an outline map of North America, mark the Rocky mountains, the Great Lakes, River Mississippi, River Saskatchewan, the cities—Chicago and Winnipeg.

Ans.

