

DESERT GRASSLAND

Tell the children: *As you walk into this area, pretend that you have left the mountains and you are climbing down toward the desert. You are in a desert grassland!*

Give the students time to look at the habitats in the Desert Grassland.

Ask: *Are there any trees here?*

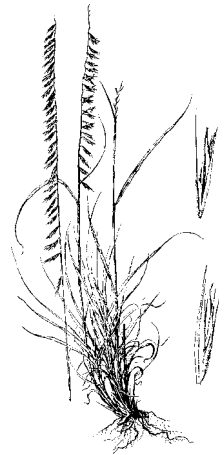
Possible answers:

- no
- a few
- they are small

Ask: *What is the grass like here in the desert grassland?*

Possible answers:

- brown
- tall
- bunchy
- dry (note: except for rainy months, the grass will look dry)



MIXED GRASSLAND ANIMAL EXHIBITS

Encourage the children to look at the burrowing owl and its eggs.

Ask: *Where do burrowing owls build their nests and lay their eggs?*

Possible answers:

- in the ground
- in burrows of other animals (they do not dig their own burrows)

Touch the model of a rattlesnake's rattles.

Ask: *What is a rattlesnake's rattle for?*

Possible answers:

- to scare away predators
- to let other animals know the snake is there
- it is a warning

PRAIRIE DOGS

Stop and watch the prairie dogs for a few minutes.

Ask: *What are the prairie dogs doing?*

Possible answers:

- barking
- watching
- eating
- grooming
- kissing



Ask: *Why do you think prairie dogs live together in "towns?"*

Possible answers:

- Living together is a defense against predators. Some keep watch for hawks in the sky, while others look for coyotes on the ground. If a prairie dog sees a predator, it gives an alarm bark, and everyone runs underground.

MAMMOTH KILL SITE

The Mammoth Kill Site is a replica of a site found in Southern Arizona where ancient people butchered a woolly mammoth ten thousand years ago. Have the children look for bones, a tusk, teeth, and stone tools.