READING MATERIAL

# Read About Biodiversity

## BIODIVERSITY DEFINITION

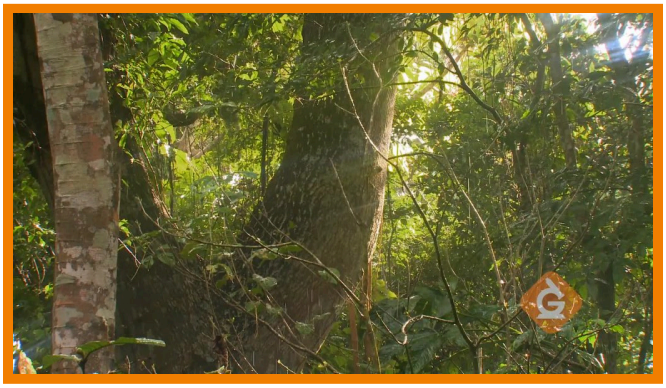
Biodiversity is the measurement of the number of different kinds of plants and animals that live in an area. Different areas on Earth have different plants and animals.

***To better understand diversity of life on Earth...***

## *LET'S BREAK IT DOWN!*

### The rainforest is a very diverse environment.

More than 40% of the animals and plants on Earth live in the rainforest. The rainforest gets lots of rain, which helps plants grow. Many animals eat these plants.



### Many plants and animals live in the desert.

Deserts are homes to foxes, snakes, birds and lizards. Plants like a cactus can grow in the desert too. Many animals are hard to see there because they hide underground.

## A pond is home to many different plants and animals.

Fish, birds, frogs and bugs are just a few of the different kinds of plants and animals found near a pond. Many of these animals need to be in water to live, like a frog or a fish.

## Even your backyard is a diverse environment.

At night, many animals move around our neighborhoods. Some are scavengers, who look for food anywhere they can find it. These animals include raccoons, skunks and mice.

## Scientists study the biodiversity of life in certain areas.

Scientists count the number of plants and animals in an area to see if that environment is healthy. If the number of living things goes down, scientists can investigate to find out why.

***BIODIVERSITY VOCABULARY***

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|---|---|
| **Biodiversity** | The measurement of the number of different kinds of plants and animals that live in an area. |
| **Canopy** | The tops of the trees in the rainforest. |
| **Rainforest** | A warm and wet habitat that is green with lots of trees and gets lots of rain. |
| **Habitat** | The place a plant or animal naturally lives and grows. |
| **Environment** | All of the living and non-living things in an area. |
| **Subterranean** | Underground. |

## *BIODIVERSITY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS*

### Why do desert animals build homes underground?

Desert animals build subterranean homes to stay cool in the heat. Underground is also a good place to hide from predators.

### Why is a rainforest so much more diverse than the Arctic?

The Arctic is very cold, which makes it tough to survive there. A rainforest gets lots of rain, which causes lots of plants to grow. Plants are homes and food for many different animals. It is also warm in the rainforest.

### What kinds of things do raccoons eat?

Raccoons are scavengers, so they eat whatever they can find. Sometimes they dig around in garbage cans for food.

### Why does a skunk have very few predators?

Skunks spray stinky liquid that keeps predators away. Any animal that tries to eat a skunk could get sprayed. An owl might try to eat a skunk by attacking it from the sky.

### Why do scientists survey areas of land?

Scientists survey areas of land to learn about the types of animals and plants living there. This survey can tell them how diverse an area is.

**What could you say about an area with high biodiversity?**

It would have a lot of different kinds of plants and animals living there.