

North America

This is a continent. It is big, but it is not the biggest continent. It is the third largest continent on Earth. It is north of the equator. It has seven biomes.

North America

North America Biome Cards Primary Guide to Presentation

2020 edition

North America Biome Cards - Primary

(suitable for children 3 to 9 years of age)

Contents of North America Biome Cards - Primary:

There are 115 three-part cards in the North America Biome Cards - Primary set. The three-part cards of the North America Biome Cards - Primary include a large picture card with label, a small picture card with a description on the back, and a label for each of the following:

- the continent
- 6 biomes (grassland, desert, wetland, tropical forest, temperate forest, and polar)
- 15 animals from each biome (including at least one example of an invertebrate, an amphibian, a reptile, a fish, a bird, and a mammal for each biome except for the polar biome - there is no reptile for the polar biome)
- 6 people cards from the desert, tropical forest, and polar biomes (one card each for the people, food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and culture)

The blackline masters for North America Biome Cards - Primary can be downloaded from the North America Materials section of the A - Z PDF library on our website (wasecabiomes.org).

Additional Related Products:

- *Biomes of the World Mat*
- *North America Biome Puzzle*
- *North America Biome Readers*
- *Introduction to the Biomes with Curriculum - Primary*
- *North America Biome Cards - Elementary*
- *North America Biome Mat*
- *North America Stencil*
- *North America Portfolio*
- *Biome Stamps*
- *Three-Part Card Tray Cabinet - Primary*
- *Cabinet of the Continents*

Guide to Presentation

Table of Contents:

Introduction	1
Introducing North America's Biomes	2
Animal Cards: Level One Activities	2
Animal Cards: Level Two Activities	3
Animal Cards: Level Three Activities	3
Animal Cards: Level Four Activities	4
People Cards	5
Assembling a Field Notes or People of the World booklet	6

Introduction

These cards are designed to help introduce children to the biomes of a continent and the animals and people that live there. These materials will help them learn to differentiate animals and become familiar with the adaptations that help them thrive in their home biome. They will also be introduced to groups of people that live in biomes of the continent and learn about how they meet their needs.

Three-part cards, in general, are very versatile and you will find some ideas on the following pages for different age levels and abilities. The children will learn the names of the animals and this can be very empowering. However, rote learning is not the purpose of these activities. Remember to keep it fun and light. To engage readers and non-readers alike, the activities included here are grouped into learning levels One, Two, Three, and Four.

The icons on the back of each of the cards serve as a control of error and help keep the materials organized. For example, the following set of icons would be found on the back of a card for an invertebrate that lives in a desert of North America.



These are all of the icons that can be found in Continent Biome Cards - Primary:

continents	biomes	animals	people
 Africa	 desert	 amphibian	 people
 Antarctica	 grassland	 bird	 food
 Asia	 mountain	 fish	 clothing
 Europe	 polar	 invertebrate	 shelter
 North America	 temperate forest	 mammal	 transportation
 Oceania	 tropical forest	 reptile	 culture
 South America	 wetland		

Introducing North America's Biomes

(Please note that these lessons are flexible and you should feel free to use these cards in any ways that are best for your classroom. For the lower levels, where continents or the concept of biomes may not have been introduced yet, you may use the animal cards for the leveled activities outlined below to engage the children without focusing on geography or the concept of biomes.)

You will need: either a North America Puzzle Map or a Biomes of the World Mat, North America Biome Cards - Primary cards (continent card and grassland, desert, wetland, tropical forest, temperate forest, or polar card depending on the biome being introduced), North America blackline map (page 1 from the blackline masters), colored pencils

Purpose: To become familiar with the biomes of North America.

1. Lay out the puzzle or mat. Note the compass rose for orientation and go over the legend with the children. Identify the different biomes and where they are located on the puzzle or mat.
2. Read the description from the continent card. Ask the children if they know of any animals that live on that continent.
3. Introduce a biome. Point out each region on the puzzle or mat where that biome can be found. Read the description on the back of the biome card. Ask the children if they can think of any animals that might live in that biome on that continent.
4. At this point, the children can color in the blackline master map using the puzzle, mat, or continent card as a control.

Animal Cards: Level One Activities

Level One emphasizes visual discrimination, visual memory, and auditory recognition.

You will need: a set from the North America Biome Cards - Primary animal cards (these sets can be broken out from the larger group at your discretion by biome, animal type etc. - a set may have as few as four cards to begin)

Purpose: To learn to identify and differentiate animals.

- Have the child match the large picture cards to the small picture cards of the set.
- Place the small picture cards at some distance. Show the child the large picture card and ask the child to go and get the matching small card.
- Lay the large picture cards out. Read, or have an older child read, the names of the animals. Then, ask the child to point to an animal: "Show me the scorpion."

Animal Cards: Level Two Activities

Level Two emphasizes visual discrimination, visual memory, auditory recognition, auditory memory, comprehension of facts, and comparison.

You will need: a set from the North America Biome Cards - Primary animal cards (these sets can be broken out from the larger group at your discretion by biome, animal type etc. - a set may have as few as four cards to begin)

Purpose: To learn to identify and differentiate animals. To become familiar with the animals of a biome and learn about their characteristics and adaptations to their biome.

- Have the child match labels to the large picture cards that have labels on them. (It is not necessary to read to do this.)
- Place the small picture cards at some distance. Whisper the name of an animal to the child and ask them to bring its picture back to you.
- Place the large picture cards at some distance. Give the child a label. Have the child take the label to the large picture cards, match it to the corresponding large picture card, and bring them both back to you.
- Lay out the large picture cards. Point to an animal and have the child name it.
- Place the large picture cards face down on a table or mat. Have the child knock on the back of a card and say, "knock knock, who's there?" Then, have the child turn the card over and name the animal.
- Distribute the large picture cards among the children. One by one, read the descriptions on the back of the corresponding small picture cards and have the children guess which animal it is.

Animal Cards: Level Three Activities

Level Three emphasizes visual discrimination, visual memory, auditory recognition, auditory memory, comprehension of facts, comparison, and reading words.

You will need: a set from the North America Biome Cards - Primary animal cards (these sets can be broken out from the larger group at your discretion by biome, animal type etc. - a set may have as few as four cards to begin), Field Notes booklets from blackline masters, colored pencils

Purpose: To learn to identify and differentiate animals. To become familiar with the animals of a biome and learn about their characteristics and adaptations to their biome. To build reading skills.

- Have the child lay out the small picture cards and match the labels by reading the name of the animal and placing it under the appropriate small picture card. (The icons on the back of the cards or the large picture cards can be used as a control of error.)
- Pick some large picture cards from a set and discuss them with the children as you lay them on the mat. Then, lay out the small picture cards with the descriptions face up. You, or an older child, read the description on the back of a small picture card and ask

the children to guess the name of the animal. Turn over the small picture card once they have named the animal they think it is. Does it match the large picture card with the label?

- Distribute large picture cards among younger children. As an older child reads a label, the other children find the large picture card of the animal that has just been named.
- Children can use the large picture cards to “color like scientists” in their Field Notes booklets by paying attention to the colorings and markings illustrated on the cards. There is a line for them to practice their writing by labeling the animal they just colored.

Animal Cards: Level Four Activities

Level Four emphasizes visual discrimination, visual memory, auditory recognition, auditory memory, comprehension of facts, comparison, reading words, and reading sentences.

You will need: a set from the North America Biome Cards - Primary animal cards (these sets can be broken out from the larger group at your discretion by biome, animal type etc.), Field Notes booklets from blackline masters, colored pencils

Purpose: To learn to identify and differentiate animals. To become familiar with the animals of a biome and learn about their characteristics and adaptations to their biome. To build reading skills. To choose animals to research and write about.

- Have the child lay out the large picture cards. Stack the corresponding small picture cards with the definition side up. From that stack, the child chooses a card, reads the definition, and matches it to the corresponding animal. The definition card can be turned over for self-check.
- Place the large picture cards at some distance. Give the child a definition card to read and put down. Ask the child to go get the large picture card of the animal they just read about.
- Gather a group of children and a set of cards. Distribute a card to each child so that no one sees what the cards are. Have the children try to guess each other’s cards by asking yes or no questions: Is it a reptile? Does it have fur? Can it fly? Is it blue?
- The child can choose an animal to read about to learn more and write a “research.”*
- Copies of the blackline pages from the Field Notes booklets may be placed out for children to trace and color to keep with their research. These pages may be used to make nomenclature cards for the parts of the animals, pointing out their different parts and how they are adapted to their biome.

** A note on a “research:” All of the lessons of language come into play with a “research.” In the beginning, this should be done with the moveable alphabet until such a time that the child no longer has to sound out each word. This will take a good bit of your attention, but most children will become steadily more independent and will become prolific writers if helped with the initial difficulties. You may have to hold their sentence for them and help them sound out each part of each word. Invented phonetic spelling is fine at this stage.*

First “researches” may only be a sentence or two. With these first attempts, have them cross the room and give the sentence to another adult to read. Many children will be amazed that they can communicate this way. As the child is introduced to new phonetic elements, you can expect to see it in their writing. If they continue to use an invented

spelling, you may prompt them with questions like, “How do we make an -ing sound?” If you are using the Waseca Reading Program, you may send them to a particular drawer, like Green 3, to find the answer. In some cases, you might ask them if there is a different way to make that same sound and suggest that they try that. You should also expect to see more adjectives when you introduce that part of speech. It makes for colorful and fun sentences.

Help the children identify what a sentence needs to be a sentence including the capital letter it starts with and the period (or other punctuation) that it ends with. They may write these “researches” on the back of the Field Notes page for that animal, but it is always good to give the child the opportunity to draw an illustration of their own to accompany their research. If a child is reluctant to draw, there are some very helpful techniques you might try in Mona Brooks’ book, *Drawing With Children*. If you have the Biome Stamps, you can also have the child stamp their research with the continent where the animal lives, the biome it lives in, and the kind of animal that it is. The Biome Stamps also include masters to make their own cards from their research. Lastly, it’s important that they practice reading what they wrote, so give them a chance to share it at circle.

People Cards

You will need: a set from the North America Biome Cards - Primary people cards, People of the World booklets from blackline masters, colored pencils

Purpose: To explore different indigenous cultures in North America. To learn about how people’s common needs are met in different ways and how this is affected by their biome.

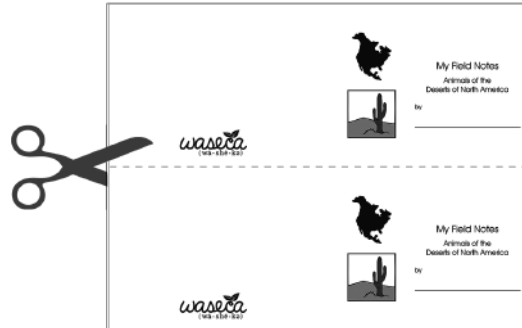
The North America Biome Cards - Primary people cards explore indigenous people from the desert, tropical forest, and polar regions of North America. The cards introduce the people and their food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and culture with an emphasis on adaptation and sustainability. We did not include defense to avoid discussions of wars past and present. We feel that traditional history, and even cultural geography, places an emphasis on conflict. We would like to emphasize a more peaceful perspective. This is not to deny the existence of war, but to reserve it for the 9 to 12 classroom. Spiritual needs may be included in the cultural expression cards (it is difficult to pick a single thing to highlight and fully represent the richness of a culture’s customs, arts, and religions in such a small space). The people cards are meant to be a brief introduction to support further research.

- You can feel free to use any of the leveled activities outlined for the Animal Cards to work with these cards. The text on the back of the small picture cards can be used to extend the work and to provide some information for the guide. Whenever possible, bring in actual objects from that culture for the children to see and touch.
- Build models of the different shelters with the children.
- Cook food from the culture.
- Sing songs and perform dances of the culture.
- Play games that children of that culture play.
- Have the children color and label the People of the World booklet.
- The child can choose a people to read about to learn more and write a “research.” They may use the back page of their People of the World booklet to write their research.

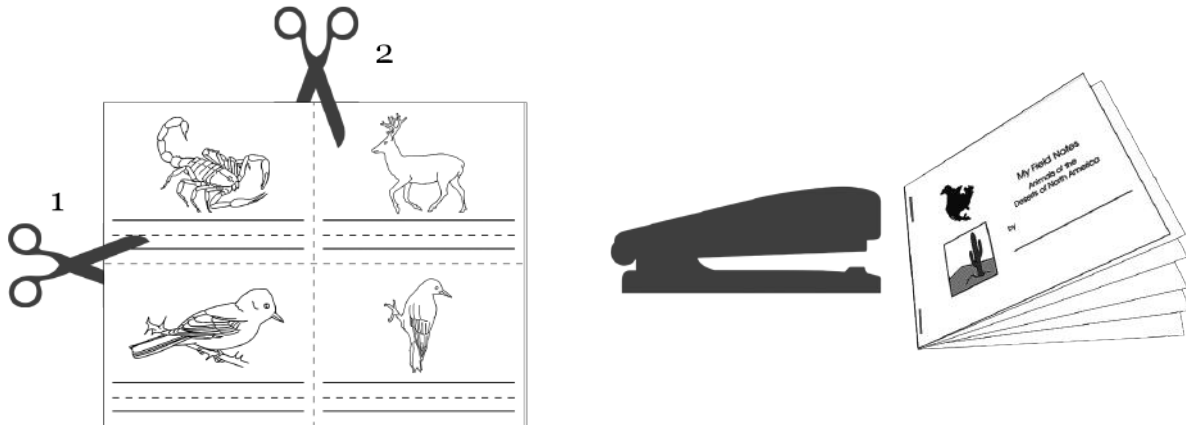
Assembling a Field Notes or People of the World booklet

The blackline masters for North America Biome Cards - Primary can be downloaded from the North America Materials section of the A - Z PDF library on our website (wasecabiomes.org). The first page is the biome map of the continent. The pages that follow are the Field Notes and People of the World booklets.

There are two covers for booklets on each cover page. Cut along the dotted line to separate the two.



The pages that follow each cover are a single set of the blacklines for the illustrations from that biome. These are the interior pages for a single booklet. Cut the pages along the dotted lines. Then, wrap a cover around the set and staple along the edge. Print another set of those pages to make a second booklet.



There may be interior pages with label lines but no illustration. These can be used as a page for a child to draw their own illustration of an animal or do further research to find another animal from that biome to draw, label, and write about.