

## Saint John's Outdoor University Class Overview

### Minnesota Biomes

**Objective:** Students will analyze and explore the historical and current natural landscape of Minnesota, including the prairie/grassland, coniferous forest, and deciduous forest biomes. Students will compare and contrast the abiotic factors influencing the biotic factors in each biome, along with historical use and human impact. Students will discuss and explore the ways of life of the native people and early settlers of central Minnesota.

#### **Field Activities:**

**Changes in Environments-Biome Analysis:** Students will examine representations of the three biomes found historically in Minnesota: prairie, coniferous forest, and deciduous forest. Students will investigate how the abiotic factors (sunlight, soil moisture, temperature, and wind) and biotic factors (plant and animals) affect each other.

**Prairie Life:** This activity will allow students to discuss and experience what life was like on the prairie for Native Americans and early European settlers. Students will attempt to solve daily dilemmas people experienced living on the prairie.

**Minnesota Symbols Quiz:** This activity will allow students to use their knowledge of the important state symbols to participate in a quiz game. Students will discuss the incredible resources MN has and how they are important to humans and the natural world.

#### **Key points and themes covered in each class:**

- Examples of abiotic factors (sun, soil, wind, temperature) that influence biotic factors (plant and animal life)
- The three biomes found in Minnesota (prairie/grassland, deciduous forest, coniferous forest) and where they were historically found, and currently found
- Components found in each of the biomes
- Culture and way of life of Native Americans and early European settlers who lived in central Minnesota
- Human uses of the biomes and how our actions affect the biomes
- THEME: MN Biomes were located in their historic locations because of the abiotic factors found there, which then influence which biotic factors can be present

#### **Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards addressed during activities:**

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>		
3. Geography	6.3.1.1.1	Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in MN; incorporate the "TODALSS" map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information.
	6.3.3.6.1	Locate, identify and describe major physical features in MN; explain how physical features and the location of resources affect settlement patterns and the growth of cities in different parts of MN.
	6.3.4.10.1	Describe how land was used during different time periods in MN history; explain how and why land use has changed over time.