

Resources for Learning About Grasslands

In 2017, the Area Studies Centers at the University of Kansas hosted a workshop on grasslands for K-12 educators. Workshop participants learned about grasslands around the world, adding an international dimension to a subject many are teaching here in the Midwest, home to our own native grasslands. These are a few resources about grasslands worldwide for those who want to explore these connections at home or in classrooms. The resources below range from basic to more advanced material, and focus primarily on grasslands in the United States and East Asia, so you can explore connections between these similar ecosystems in different areas of the world.

Grasslands of the World

Basics: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/habitats/grasslands/>

Online map: <http://kids.britannica.com/students/assembly/view/166438>

More advanced material about the ecology of grasslands, including specific grasslands around the world: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/biomes/temperate-grasslands-savannas-and-shrublands>

Grasslands in the United States

The U.S. has many places designated as National Grasslands. Find them here:

<https://www.fs.fed.us/grasslands/>

PBS has free online resources on grasslands, including video. Go to <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/> and search “grasslands.” (Note that you may be redirected to a website tied to your local station.)

Grassland Issues in the News

Issues with grasslands around the world often come up in the news, here are just a few examples. The first two articles below are about grasslands in the United States. The next two address current issues with grasslands in East Asia.

“North America’s grasslands are slowly disappearing — and no one’s paying attention,” *The Washington Post*, 11/29/2016: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/11/29/north-americas-grasslands-are-slowly-disappearing-and-no-ones-paying-attention/?utm_term=.eca2f153f1d6

“Umatilla County ranchers rethink livestock grazing,” *Union-Bulletin*, 7/24/2017: http://www.union-bulletin.com/local/umatilla-county-ranchers-rethink-livestock-grazing/article_da9e1828-7097-11e7-b6d0-6769831b9ff7.html

“Drought in Northern China Is Worst on Record, Officials Say,” *New York Times*, 6/29/17

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/29/world/asia/china-drought.html>

“Mongolians best friends: Saving herder dogs on the steppes,” *Today*, 7/8/2017

<http://www.todayonline.com/world/asia/mongolians-best-friends-saving-herder-dogs-steppes>

Grasslands in Online Journals

You can also find material about grasslands in academic journals. See below for articles about North American grasslands, as well as grasslands in China and Mongolia. These articles are available in free online journals, and might lend themselves to a high school science classroom.

Reading, Richard P.; Bedunah, Don; and Amgalanbaatar, Sukh, (2010) "Conserving Mongolia's Grasslands, with Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons for North America's Great Plains" (2010). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsresearch/1080>

Leisher C, Hess S, Boucher TM, van Beukering P, Sanjayan M (2012) "Measuring the Impacts of Community-based Grasslands Management in Mongolia's Gobi." *PLoS ONE* 7(2): e30991.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0030991>

Citation: Zhang L, Guo D, Niu S, Wang C, Shao C, Li L (2012) "Effects of Mowing on Methane Uptake in a Semiarid Grassland in Northern China." *PLoS ONE* 7(4): e35952.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0035952>