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.