**Vocabulary:** **Prairie Ecosystem**

dictionary2

**Vocabulary**

* Carnivore – an organism that eats only animals.
  + Examples of carnivores in North America are wolves, coyotes, mountain lions, hawks, eagles, and snakes.
* Consumer – a creature that feeds on organic matter because it cannot produce it.
  + All animals, all fungi, and even a few plants are consumers.
  + A cow chewing grass, a person eating steak, and an earthworm digesting manure all represent consumers in action because in each case the animal is eating organic matter.
* Ecosystem – a community of living things along with their natural environment.
* Equilibrium – a state of balance and stability.
* Extinct – no longer in existence. (An organism is extinct if it has died out.)
* Food chain – a sequence of organisms in which each organism feeds on the one below.
  + Example: Grass 🡪 Cricket 🡪 Frog 🡪 Snake 🡪 Hawk.

In this food chain, crickets eat grass, frogs eat crickets, snakes eat frogs, and hawks eat snakes.

* Herbivore – an animal that eats plants.
  + Examples of herbivores in North America are deer, elk, bison, beavers, and crickets.
* Organism – a living thing.
* Population – all the organisms of a certain kind in a particular place.
* Prairie – a region of flat or gently hilly land that is dominated by grasses and has few or no trees.
  + The word “prairie” generally refers to an area of North America east of the Rocky Mountains.
* Producer – an organism that can convert simple inorganic matter (such as water and carbon dioxide) into organic matter (like sugar and protein).
  + Plants are producers because they use the energy of the Sun to create organic materials from carbon dioxide and water.