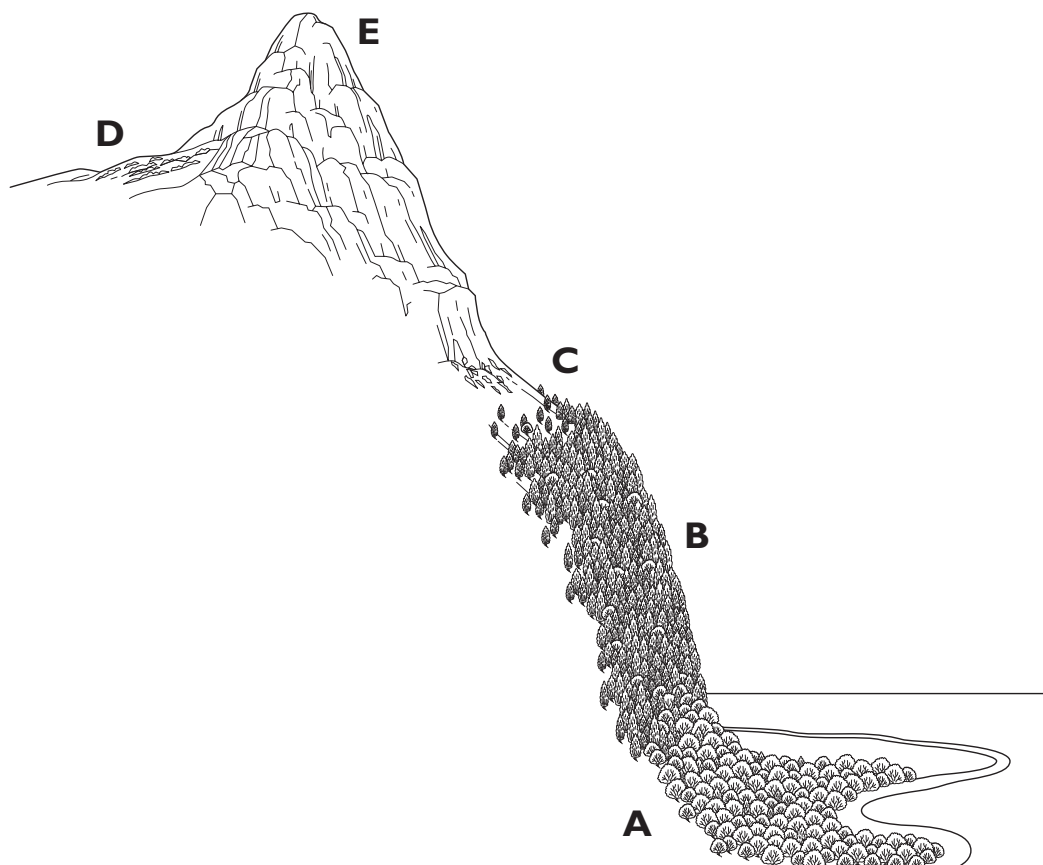


Mountain plants

Because the weather is always colder and harsher on mountains than in valleys, mountain plants are found in bands, or zones, that change with height.

Q1. Write on the diagram below the kind of plants you would expect to find at A, B, C, D and E.



Q2. If you were to dig down into the soil below the coniferous forest, would you expect it to be thick or thin?

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Q3. What happens to the size of trees near the highest level that they will grow?

.....

Q4. Why wouldn't plants grow at heights where snow lasts all year?

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Answers

1. **A = Broadleaved forest such as oak.**
B = Coniferous forest such as spruce and pine.
C = Alpine meadows with plants such as lupins.
D = Alpine plants such as edelweiss and heathers.
E = None, because it is a permanent snowfield.

2. **It would be thin.**

All soils on steep slopes are thin because they are constantly moving down the slopes. Also, cold conditions mean that weathering is quite slow, giving time for transport to remove most of the weathered material.

3. **They become small and stunted and grow very slowly.**

Here we are discussing species at the edges of their range.

4. **There is never an opportunity for plants to warm up to a temperature at which they can grow.**

In general, most plants need to have some part of the year when the temperature is above 6°C. Growth will usually occur only above this temperature. In cases where there is snow about, but there are snow-free patches, then plants may use the warmer microclimate close to rocks to get a temperature high enough for growth.