

**What is a Desert?**

Deserts are very dry areas. They have very little rainfall; usually less than 25cm a year. Many deserts are made up of sand and rock. Deserts are very hot during the day, but often very cold at night. It is often very windy in deserts. Sandstorms and dust storms are common due to the high winds. Deserts are home to a number of plants, animals and people.

**Desert Animals**

Because deserts are so dry, not many plants and animals can survive. The plants and animals that do live in deserts have special features to help them. Most desert animals get their water from their food. Other animals, like camels, store fat in their bodies. This provides them with energy during periods they cannot find food. Many desert animals are small because small animals don't need as much water as larger animals.

Some desert animals are nocturnal. This means that they are active during the night when it is much cooler. These animals escape the high daytime temperatures by sleeping in a spot of shade or in a burrow. This stops animals losing as much water as they would if they were active during the heat of the day.

**Desert Plants**

Several desert plants store water in their leaves, stems and roots. Other plants have very long roots which allows them to access water from underground. Many desert plants have prickly spines to prevent hungry and thirsty animals eating them!

**Cactus**

## Task A: Comprehension

1. How much rainfall do deserts usually receive?

---

2. Why is it difficult for plants and animals to live in the desert?

---

---

3. Why are many desert animals small?

---

---

4. Which word from the text means 'avoid'?

---

5. Why do some desert animals move around at night?

---

---

6. List 3 special features that help plants survive in deserts.

---

---

7. What questions might someone still have about deserts after reading this text?

---

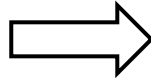
---

---

## Task B: Language and Grammar

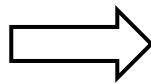
1. This text mentions a number of **cause and effect** relationships. Show 3 of them below.

Cause



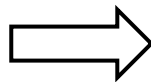
Effect

Cause



Effect

Cause



Effect

2. **Synonyms** are words that have a similar meaning. Eg. '**burrow**' and '**tunnel**'.

Search the text for **synonyms** of the following words:

a. exceptional- \_\_\_\_\_

b. usual- \_\_\_\_\_

c. stop- \_\_\_\_\_

d. spiky- \_\_\_\_\_

## Task C: Challenge

Draw a desert scene, adding all desert animals and plants you know.