

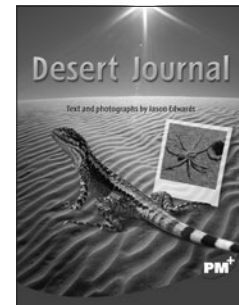
# Desert Journal

PM Level 28

Ruby

**Text Type** Recount / Information Report / Description

**Running Words** 2120



## Preparing for Guided Reading

### Orientation to the Text

- This book is written as a journal, as the author sets out to find out all about deserts: where they are, the various types, and how people, animals and plants survive in them.

### Prior Knowledge

- Ask students to write their own definitions of a desert.
- Using a world globe or a map (political rather than topographical), ask students to identify areas where they believe deserts would be found.

## Building the Balanced Reader

### Grammatical Conventions

- Draw students' attention to aspects of the text that are written in the first person. Have them suggest how these sections would be rephrased in the third person.
- Examine the way the author uses language to develop visual imagery, e.g. *In sub-tropical deserts the hot air rests over the scorched earth like a blanket* (precise use of adjectives and interesting similes); *Mirages dance along the horizon* (personification).

### Vocabulary

#### Key Vocabulary

*adaptations, Antarctica, anti-freeze, Arctic, arid, camouflage, carnivorous, continent, equator, exothermic, exposure, fragments, harsh, hibernation, inhabited, intense, mirages, nutritious, permanently, pollination, researchers, resourceful, semi arid, tubers, vary*

### Spelling

- Identify words with unusual letter patterns, e.g. *camouflage, researchers, nutritious*.
- Locate words in the text that end with *-ent*, e.g. *continent, permanent*. Distinguish between *ent* and *ant* endings.

### Visual Literacy

- Study the map on p. 6 and encourage students to explain the use of colour for the key.
- Focus on the colours used in presenting the information. Why have these been chosen? How can students use this information in the presentation of their own research material?

## Focusing on the Story – Guided Reading

- Read pp. 4–5 to students and have them revisit their definitions. Identify aspects that match the definition that the author provided.
- Ask students to read to the end of p. 14 after setting the focus questions:  
*Where are deserts located?*  
*Are all deserts hot and dusty?*  
*What is unique about the Antarctica desert?*
- Ask students to read to the end of p. 23 after setting the focus questions: *How do animals in the desert conserve their energy? How are plants able to survive desert conditions?*
- Share students' responses to the focus questions, then discuss the following:  
*How do people survive in arid environments?*  
*Where is most of the world's fresh water located? Is it accessible?*  
*How have polar bears adapted to their desert environment?*  
*Which is the world's harshest desert? Why?*
- Ask the students to examine how many number facts have been included in the text. Have them offer comparisons where possible to help understand these facts.
- Share students' responses to the focus questions, then discuss the following:  
*Which features do the four desert types have in common? How do they differ?*  
*How does an exothermic animal survive in the desert?*  
*Which desert animal did you find the most fascinating? Why?*  
*Which groups of people are best informed about how to survive in deserts?*
- Ask students to identify the words that are very precise, e.g. *hot* vs *scorched*.

## Comprehension

- What is an adaptation? (*Literal*)
- How has modern technology allowed people to live in desert conditions? (*Inferential*)
- Which exploration tip of Jason's would be the most valuable? Why? (*Applied Knowledge*)

## Follow-up Activities

- Ask students to select one of the animals or plants mentioned in the text and prepare an explanation on how it survives in the desert.

## Learning Intentions

- We are learning to understand that factual texts rely on a range of methods to present information.
- We are learning to model our writing on existing factual texts and our knowledge of the text structure and language features of the text type.

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## Success Criteria

- I can interpret information that has been presented in a variety of visual forms in a factual text.
- I can model my own writing on a given text and my knowledge of text structure and language features.

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## Guided Reading Notes

Student's name	Reading focus	Observations/notes	For follow-up