

Deserts

PM Levels 22/23

Gold

Text Type Information Report / Explanation / Recount

Running Words 721



Preparing for Guided Reading

Orientation to the text

- Read the title. Study the cover and title page photographs. Initiate an informative discussion that encourages students to share their existing knowledge about desert environments. Write some of the students' ideas on a chart and add to this chart after the text has been read.

Prior knowledge

- Most deserts are very dry places, with very hot weather during the day. However, at night deserts can be freezing cold. People, plants and animals have learned how to survive in these extreme environments.

Building the Balanced Reader

Vocabulary

Key vocabulary

almost, also, different, famous

Content Words

amount, bare, cactus, dew, kangaroos, needles, nomads, oases, oasis, sprout, stems, survive

Decoding

- Attempt to decode unfamiliar words by utilising knowledge of text types, language features and vocabulary related to the theme of the text. Provide support and encouragement when necessary.

Focusing on the story – guided reading

- Read the contents page. Notice the sub-headings under *People in the desert*. Ask, *What do these subheadings tell the reader?*
- Encourage students to think critically about the harsh conditions and what people and animals do in order to survive.
- Study the photographs on pp. 6–7. Recall the features of an explanation. Identify key phrases, e.g. *no rain, too much wind*, etc. Ensure that students understand that some deserts are formed through natural phenomena, while others may occur through people's careless and thoughtless disregard for the environment. Introduce the concept of erosion.

- Compare the physical features of desert environments. Mark the position of the Sahara Desert on a world map.
- Read the meanings of *dew* and *well* from the glossary on p. 24. Talk about animals licking the dew that falls on leaves during the very cold nights that occur in the desert. Ensure that students understand what a 'well' is – this may require a diagram. Read and discuss the *Did you know?* statement.
- Discuss reasons why desert people move on. Read the meaning of *nomad* from the glossary on p. 24. Read and discuss the *Did you know?* statement.
- Recall the reasons for staying near food and water (an oasis), and building houses there. Discuss the portability of moving your tent home when natural food and water runs out.
- Talk about why nomadic people take their food sources with them. Show students how the word *desert* can be put ahead of a noun, e.g. desert plants, desert animals. Read and discuss the *Did you know?* statement.
- Discuss how difficult it is for all living things to cope where there are extreme weather and physical conditions. Read and discuss the *Did you know?* statement.
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using animals for transport compared to machines or vehicles. Remind students that animals can also be company for people living in lonely places like deserts. Read the letter. Identify information about camels contained in the letter. Read and discuss the *Did you know?* statement.
- Respond to the questions. Ask students to select key words from the index or glossary, and use the page references to find them in the text.

Comprehension

- Where does a cactus plant store water? (*Literal*)
- Why is it hard for people to live in the desert? (*Inferential*)
- Why are desert homes with thick walls warm at night? (*Applied Knowledge*)

Follow-up activities

- Provide an opportunity for students to research and report back to the class on how some animals and plants have adapted to survive severe environments.

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Learning Intentions

- We are learning to apply a complex range of skills to decode unfamiliar words in the text.
- We are using our knowledge of text types, language structures and vocabulary to gain a deeper understanding of the text.

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Success Criteria

- I can use a wide range of skills to assist me in reading unfamiliar words in the text.
- I can use my knowledge of text types, language structures and vocabulary to gain a better understanding of the text.

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Guided Reading Notes

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