

Chapter 3: The Desert

Comprehension Check

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Question 1:

From the first paragraph

- (i) pick out two phrases which describe the desert as most people believe it is;
- (ii) pick out two phrases which describe the desert as specialists see it. Which do you think is an apt description, and why?

Answer:

(i) The two such phrases are :

- (a) “an endless stretch of land where no rain falls”, and
- (b) “no vegetation grows”

(ii) (a) “a beautiful place”.

(b) “home of variety of people, animals and plants that have learnt to live under very hot and dry conditions”. I think the description of the specialists is more apt because a desert is not always dry, hot and sandy. It can also be covered with hills.

Question 2:

The phrases on the left in the following box occur in the text. Match each of them with a phrase on the right.

- (i) an endless stretch of land – fertile place with water and plants in a desert.
- (ii) waterless and without shelter. – not visible because the grass is thick.
- (iii) an oasis – nothing but sand as far as one can see.
- (iv) hidden by a cover of grass. – no water and no shade.

Answer:

- (i) an endless stretch of land – nothing but sand as far as one can see.
- (ii) waterless and without shelter – no water and no shade.
- (iii) an oasis – fertile place with water and plants in a desert.
- (iv) hidden by a cover of grass – not visible because the grass is thick.

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Question 1:

A camel can do without water for days together. What is the reason given in the text?

Answer:

The camel can drink a lot of water at a time. So, a camel can do without water for days together. Camel can stand a high body temperature. He does not need to sweat. That is why the camel can retain water for a longer time.

Question 2:

How do the smaller desert animals fulfil their need for water?

Answer:

The smaller desert animals burrow underground during the hot day and come out at night. They get moisture from the meat they eat. Smaller animals can also get plant juices from the plants and seeds they eat.

Question 3:

In a desert the temperature rises during the day and falls rapidly at night. Why?

Answer:

In the desert there is no blanket of moisture in the air. So, the sand in the desert heats up a lot during the day. As the surface of sand also cools up quickly at night, so desert remains very cold at night.

Exercises

Do the following activities in groups.

Question 1:

Describe a desert in your own way. Write a paragraph and read it aloud to your classmates.

Answer:

It is a class-room activity. However, a brief answer is given below:

A Desert Most of us think that a desert area is a dull place where there is nothing except waste land. But it is not necessarily dry, hot and waterless and endless stretch of land. During rains its flowers can bloom and give a beautiful sight. Moreover we can also find mountains, hills and oasis in deserts.

A large part of Rajasthan consists of desert. But otherwise it is a beautiful place. Tourists from all over the world love to visit Rajasthan. Animals and plants found in desert have adapted themselves to the less water conditions. Camel can survive for many days without drinking water. In a desert days are very hot and usually the nights are very cold.

Question 2:

Go to the library and collect information about the lifestyle of people in desert areas their food, clothes, work, social customs, etc. Share this information with the group.

Answer:

For self-attempt and a class-room activity. You should visit your school library or a good library of your town. You will find a lot of books describing the lifestyle of the people of desert area. You will also find many books about their food, clothes, work, social customs, etc. Collect the relevant information and share it with your class or a small group of students.