



Desert Habitat

5TH GRADE • 6TH GRADE

SUMMER LESSONS



Extended Learning Partnership

Deserts: What is a Habitat?

Today you learned about the desert ecosystem and some of the amazing animals that call it home. If you were traveling to a desert you need to bring many things in order for you to survive. You would need water, food, and shelter. You would probably also need a hat or umbrella, sunscreen and a fan. These are items you can bring if you go to a desert, but animals need to already have these items to help them survive in this harsh climate. For these animals to be able to survive in the desert they must have adaptations. Adaptations are characteristics that help a living thing survive in their environment. Adaptations can be physical characteristics including: claws, teeth, fur, color etc. They can also be behavioral characteristics including: migration, herding, hibernation etc.

Let's take a look at our fennec fox from the video. The first thing you might notice are those big ears. How would those big ears help the fox in the desert? Not only do these large ears offer great hearing for prey but they also help release heat. Their ears provide a large surface area where the blood vessels can cool the blood and return it to their body. Another adaptation the fennec fox has is the sandy-yellow colored fur that acts as great camouflage in the desert. All animals have multiple adaptations that help them survive in their habitat.

Activity:

- Watch the video again and choose another animal that lives in the desert. Write down at least three physical and three behavioral adaptations that animals possess in order to survive in the desert.
- Go outside in your ecosystem and try to find an animal. Maybe dig in the dirt for some small critters or look up in the sky. What adaptations do these animals have for surviving in our ecosystem?

Writing prompt:

- In your opinion, what would be the top three adaptations to have? Think of these questions as you write.
 - What ecosystem would your adaptations be best to survive in?
 - How would these adaptations help you eat and find shelter?
 - With your awesome adaptations would you have any predators? If so, what animal?

Math:

- In the morning our tortoise ate $\frac{3}{5}$ of his salad. He then ate $\frac{5}{8}$ of his salad for dinner. How much salad did the tortoise eat in 1 day?
- If the tortoise moves at 55 feet per hour, how long will it take him to move 330 feet?

Check for Understanding:

- Give three reasons why a polar bear cannot survive in the desert.

