

Desert Life: Science : Year 3/4

	Learning Objective	Overview	Assessment Questions	Resources
Lesson 1	To know what a desert habitat is like	In this first lesson, children will recap on what a habitat is, and discuss a variety of different habitats. They will then focus on the desert habitat in particular, finding out about its features and its ability to support life. Children will then record what they have learnt about this habitat, and draw their own sketch of a desert based on this. Alternatively, children will research different types of desert habitats around the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do children know what a habitat is? Can children describe the main features of a desert habitat? Can children compare and contrast the desert habitat to a different habitat? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slides Desert Fact Cards Worksheet 1A/1B/1C Deserts of the World Sheet (FSD? activity only)
Lesson 2	To know that desert animals can be grouped in a variety of different ways	Children will develop their knowledge of desert animals in this lesson, and learn different ways in which to group them, including into vertebrates and invertebrates, as well as breaking this down further into mammals, birds, reptiles, arachnids and insects. In their independent activities, children will use or write definitions of these groups to sort picture cards of desert animals. Alternatively, they will explore and sort animals into nocturnal and diurnal groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can children sort desert animals in different ways, and explain their reasoning? Can children sort desert animals according to whether they are mammals, birds, reptiles, arachnids or insects? Do children understand the terms 'diurnal' and 'nocturnal'? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slides Desert Animals Picture Cards What am I? Worksheet 2A/2B/2C Night Time or Day Time? Sheet (FSD? activity only)
Lesson 3	To explore and use classification keys	Children will use and expand on their knowledge of grouping animals by using classification keys. As a class, they will identify individual desert animals using a key. They will also briefly discuss how a key works/is made. Children will use a different key to identify desert animals in their independent work, or in the Fancy Something Different? activity, children create their own key for a chosen group of animals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do children know what a classification key is? Can children use a classification key to identify specific animals? Can children create their own classification key to help identify specific animals? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slides Worksheet 3A/3B/3C Desert Animals Classification Key A/B Desert Animal Picture Cards (FSD? activity only)
Lesson 4	To know how animals are adapted to survive in the desert	In this lesson, children will first recap on what all animals need in order to survive. They will learn that many animals have had to adapt to their environment in order to give them the best chance of survival. Children will then look at and discuss a range of different adaptations of specific desert animals. In their independent work, they will explain how specific adaptations help different animals. Alternatively, they can create their own creature with adaptations that would help it to survive in the desert.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do children know what all animals need in order to survive? Do children understand the term 'adaptation'? Can children describe a feature of a specific animal that has helped it to survive in the desert habitat? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slides Worksheet 4A/4B/4C Information Sheet Create a Creature! Sheet (FSD? activity only)
Lesson 5	To know how plants are adapted to survive in the desert	Children will first compare and contrast a selection of plants from both a woodland and a desert habitat. They will discuss what a plant needs in order to survive, and how a desert environment can impact on these needs. Children will focus on a particular plant, the saguaro cactus, and explore how it has successfully adapted to life in the desert. In their independent activities, children will use this information to explain how the cacti survive in the harsh environment. In the Fancy Something Different? option, children conduct a simple experiment to test the usefulness of the saguaro cacti's waxy coating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do children understand what plants need in order to grow? Can children correctly label and explain what the different parts of a plant are for? Can children explain how a desert plant, the saguaro cactus, survives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slides Worksheet 5A/5B/5C Saguaro Sponge Experiment Sheet (FSD? activity only) Thin sponges, wax paper, water, digital weighing scales (FSD? activity only)
Lesson 6	To know how to make and interpret desert food chains	In this final lesson, children will learn how plants and animals in the desert are linked by what they eat. They will learn what a herbivore, carnivore and omnivore are. Children will look at different desert food chains, and identify the producer and consumers in each one, as well as the predators and prey. In their independent activities, children will sort sets of animals into food chains. Alternatively, they will create their own food chains based on information cards about desert plants and animals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can children explain what a food chain is? Do children understand the terms producer, consumer, predator, prey, herbivore, carnivore and omnivore? Can children label and organise animals and plants into food chains? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slides Picture Cards A/B Worksheet 6A/6B/6C Food Web Cards Who Eats Who? Information Cards (FSD? activity only) Who Eats Who? Food Chains Sheet (FSD? activity only)