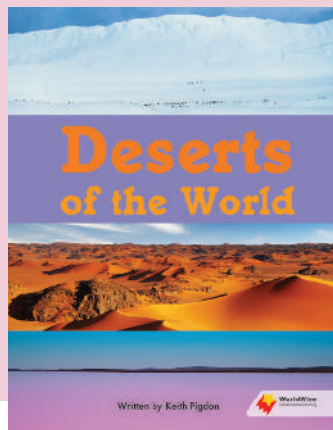


Lesson Plan

**Fluent
reading stage
Levels 21–22**



Deserts of the World explores different types of deserts by describing a hot desert (the Sahara), a cold desert (the Gobi) and a polar desert (Antarctica). It discusses what each desert is like, and the plants and animals that are able to survive in these extreme environments.

Informative text types:
Report

Science Curriculum links

Australia

- **ESS (ACSSUO32)** Earth's resources are used in a variety of ways
- **BS (ACSSUO30)** Living things grow, change and have offspring similar to themselves

New Zealand

- **PEB:** Water, air, rocks and soil, and land forms make up our planet and these are Earth's resources
- **LW:** There are life processes common to all living things and these occur in different ways

Key concepts

- Some deserts are very hot and some are very cold, but all deserts are dry with very little rainfall.
- Plants and animals that live in deserts have special features that allow them to survive.

Content vocabulary

Antarctica, deserts, dry, endangered, extinct, glaciers, Gobi Desert, icebergs, mountain ranges, polar desert, Sahara Desert, sand dunes, sandy, snow, temperatures, valleys

Text features

- Chapters with headings and sub-headings
- Maps, photographs with captions, photographic tables, text boxes
- Glossary and index

Reading strategy

- Visualising

First reading session

Getting started

Introducing the book

Activate students' prior knowledge. Ask: *What do you like about deserts?* Invite students to talk with a partner. Have students share their ideas and list these on a chart.

Ask: *Can it snow in deserts? Are there mountains in deserts? Can grass grow in deserts?* Have students turn and talk about this with a partner. Discuss and say: *The answer to all these questions is yes!*

Provide each student with a copy of *Deserts of the World*. Say: *This book is about three different types of deserts: a hot desert, a cold desert and a desert that is both hot and cold.* Have students browse through the book.

Exploring vocabulary

Ask: *What words or phrases might be in this book?* Have students work with a partner, then share with the group. List each word on a chart and invite students to make suggestions about what the word means. Where appropriate, have the students add a drawing (for example, a picture or a symbol) to the words on the chart to make the meaning clear. Discuss each word as you list them on the chart. If necessary, introduce the content vocabulary and add these words to the list.

Introducing the reading strategy

Say: *When we read the words and view the pictures in the book, it can help us to create images in our mind. This is called visualising.* Have students take turns telling their partner what they “see in their mind” when they think of the word *desert*.

Reading the text

Have students turn to pages 4 and 5 and read the introduction independently. Ask: *Are you surprised about this information? Why?*

Have students read chapter 1 independently. Say: *As you read, remember to use the words and pictures to create images in your mind.* This can help you to understand the text better.

Second reading session

Building understanding

Ask: *What surprised you about the Sahara Desert? What do you still wonder about it?* Discuss as a whole group.

Have students read chapter 2 independently.

Ask: *How is the Gobi Desert similar to the Sahara? In what ways is it different? What most interested you about the Gobi Desert?*

Have students turn and talk to a partner about their ideas.

Final reading session

Have students read chapter 3 and the conclusion independently. Say: *As you read, use the words and pictures to create images of Antarctica in your mind. This will help you to understand what it might be like there.*

Bringing it all together

Ask: *What have you learnt about deserts?* Have students turn and talk with a partner. Invite students to share their knowledge. Add their responses to the group chart started prior to reading the book.

Ask: *What new understandings do you now have about deserts?* Discuss as a whole group.

Students could complete the Blackline Master about using the senses to create images about deserts.

Reflecting on the reading strategy

With a partner, have students think about different images they see in their mind when they hear the word *desert*. Ask: *Do you visualise more than one image of what a desert is? How has what you visualise about deserts changed? Why is that the case?* Invite pairs to share their ideas.

Ask: *How does being able to visualise help you to understand and remember new information?* Discuss as a whole group.

Going beyond the book

Speaking and listening

Pairs of students could play a game of “Ten Questions”. One student chooses an animal or plant mentioned in the book, and writes it down without their partner seeing.

The other student asks questions about the mystery plant or animal and receives a “yes” or “no” response. For example, they might ask: *Does it live in the Sahara Desert? Is it an animal? Is it a mammal?* Encourage the students to use *Deserts of the World* as a reference when asking questions.

The student keeps asking questions until they guess the plant or animal. The aim is to guess correctly in ten or fewer guesses. Pairs can then swap roles.

Vocabulary

Students could play “Fast Five”. Choose a desert from the book (the Sahara, the Gobi, or Antarctica) and have the students list five words in a given category such as:

- Five words to describe it (adjectives)
- Five living things you would find there (nouns)
- Five things you would see there (nouns)
- Five words to describe the weather there (adjectives)
- Five feelings you might experience there (abstract nouns)

Students can share their lists in small groups.

Visual literacy

Have students “put themselves in the picture” by drawing themselves visiting one of the deserts in the book (the Sahara, the Gobi, or Antarctica). Encourage them to think about what they would wear and what they would need to bring with them to survive, and include this in their pictures.

Writing

Have students write a recount about an imaginary day in either a hot desert, a desert that is hot in summer and cold in winter, or a cold desert. Provide the students with a template detailing the structure and elements of a recount.

Planning to write a recount
Name: _____

Getting started
What is my recount about? _____
Who am I writing for? _____

Planning my recount
1. Setting: orientation
Who? _____

What? _____

Where? _____

When? _____

2. Significant things that happened (in order)
First (event 1) _____

Then (event 2) _____

Finally (event 3) _____

3. Conclusion: Comment
Can I summarise what I have written? _____

 **Hint:** What voice will I use?
first person *I, we, my, or third*
person *he, she, they*?

Additional features I could use
☐ Extra facts ☐ Emails ☐ Time lines
☐ Quotes ☐ Photographs ☐ Diaries

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Download the template at

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Say: *Reread information in the book about the type of desert you are going to write about.* Students can also use research skills to find out extra information.

Encourage students to share their ideas with a partner.

Say: *Talk about the type of desert you are writing about and what information you will include.*

Use the template to remind the students about the structure of a recount. Say: *Follow the template when you write. Begin by writing about where the recount is set. Then write about the things you saw, heard and felt on your imaginary day there, in the order that they happened.*

Blackline Master: Senses in the desert

Name/s: _____

Use words and/or pictures to fill in the table.

	Senses <i>What do you see, hear and feel as you think about each place?</i>
Sahara Desert	
Gobi Desert	
Antarctica	

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Developed by
Eleanor Curtain Publishing
Text: Kerrie Shanahan, Jenny Feely
Consultants: Linda Hoyt, Lyn Reggett
Designed by Derek Schneider
Printed in China through
Colorcraft Ltd, Hong Kong

Distribution details:
www.ecpublishing.com.au/contact-us

More information:
www.WorldWiseReading.com.au
www.ecpublishing.com.au

ISBN: 978-1-76086-885-7

