



# ENGLISH

## CHAPTER 9: DESERT ANIMALS



# DESERT ANIMALS

## ~Summary~

**-by David West**

**Deserts** are where no one can find water, and they are known to be one of the **driest places** on Earth. The animals present in the desert can not survive **without water**, so they seek a different living place for every **climatic change**. The desert is at **high temperatures**, and they have the worst conditions where the animals can't survive.

**Gerbils** occupy places underground to feel less heat. Some insects like **Darkling Beetles** catch the drops of moisture on their legs and suck them through the air.

During the **spring season**, the weather usually turns warmer, and trees begin to grow their leaves, and plants start to flower. Deserts are generally rocky and dotted with bushes. The **rattle** of **rattlesnakes** could be heard thirty meters away, and they can strike at the speed of lightning.

**Mongoose**s, being mammals, prefer to hunt in groups. And they always check or **predator's** movement. **Mongoose**s travel in a group in search of food. If a mongoose cannot see other members of its group, it communicates by making bird-like calls which tells the others where they are, thereby being in contact even when unseen.

**Camels**, which were once considered wild animals, were tamed by our ancestors a long time ago. Usually, camels live within small groups, and each group can count up to thirty camels. While their coats grow long and shaggy to trap heat during cold season, the coat becomes short and cleaner during warmer climes. There are two types of camels, namely, the **Dromedary** (single hump) and the **Bactrian Camel** (double hump).

The purpose of the hump is to store fat, and it acts as a **storage container**. If the camel doesn't have anything to eat for several days, the hump will become smaller as it uses up the stored fat. All these features help camels adapt to desert life.

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~Conclusion~

This chapter concludes that every desert animal has developed certain mechanisms to deal with extreme weather conditions. Their survival mechanisms also help them to stay protected from other animals.

## NCERT SOLUTIONS

### Questions (Page No. 117) (Working with the Text)

Question 1.

- i. Talk to your partner and say whether the following statements are true or false.
  - a. No animal can survive without water.
  - b. Deserts are endless sand dunes.
  - c. Most snakes are harmless.
  - d. Snakes cannot hear, but they can feel vibrations through the ground.
  - e. Camels store water in their humps.
- ii. Answer the following questions.
  - a. How do desert animals survive without water? (1)
  - b. How do mongooses kill snakes? (6)
  - c. How does the hump of the camels help them to survive when there is no water? (9)

Answer:

- i.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  - c. True
  - d. True
  - e. False
- ii.
  - a. Desert animals make it possible to survive without water for days. For instance, Gerbils stay under holes to keep themselves cool. Beetles keep drops of water/moisture on their legs and then lift those drops into the air till the drops trickle down into their mouths.
  - b. Mongooses kill snakes with their quick reactions through which they dodge the snake each time the snake strikes. They keep dodging the snake until it gets completely tired and then they dive in to kill the snake.



- c. The humps of the camels are full of fat. This fat nourishes the camels when food is less.

Question 2. Read the words/phrases in the box. With your partner find their meaning in the dictionary.

harsh conditions, harmless, survive, intruder, threatened, predators, prey, continually

Fill in the blanks in the following passage with the above words/ phrases.

All animals in forests and deserts struggle to \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, Though most of the animals are \_\_\_\_\_, some are dangerous when \_\_\_\_\_. If an \_\_\_\_\_ is noticed, they attack or bite to save themselves. They struggle \_\_\_\_\_ for food and water. Some animals are called \_\_\_\_\_ because they \_\_\_\_\_ on other animals.

Answer: All animals in forests and deserts struggle to **survive** in **harsh conditions**. Though most of the animals are **harmless**, some are dangerous when **threatened**. If an **intruder** is noticed, they attack or bite to save themselves. They struggle **continually** for food and water. Some animals are called **predators** because they **prey** on other animals.

## Questions (Page No. 118) (Speaking)

Question 1. Look at these sentences.

- Deserts are the driest places on earth.
- Gerbils spend the hottest part of the day in cool underground burrows.

Now form pairs. Ask questions using a suitable form of the word in brackets. Try to answer the questions too.

Do you know

- a. Which animal is the \_\_\_\_\_ (tall)?
- b. Which animal runs the \_\_\_\_\_ (fast)?
- c. Which place on earth is the \_\_\_\_\_ (hot) or the \_\_\_\_\_ (cold)?
- d. Which animal is the \_\_\_\_\_ (large)?
- e. Which is the \_\_\_\_\_ (tall) mountain in the world?
- f. Which is the \_\_\_\_\_ (rainy) place on earth?
- g. Which is the \_\_\_\_\_ (old) living animal?

Can you add some questions of your own?

Answer:

a. Which animal is the **tallest** (tall)?

Answer: Giraffe is the tallest animal.

b. Which animal runs the **fastest** (fast)?

Answer: Leopard runs the fastest.

c. Which place on earth is the **hottest** (hot) or the **coldest** (cold)?

Answer: Aziza Libya is the hottest and Verkhoyansk is the coldest place on earth.

d. Which animal is the **largest** (large)?

Answer: Blue Whale is the largest animal.

e. Which is the **tallest** (tall) mountain in the world?

Answer: Mount Everest is the tallest mountain in the world.

f. Which is the **rainiest** (rainy) place on earth?

Answer: Mawsynram in Meghalaya is the rainiest place on earth.

g. Which is the **oldest** (old) living animal?

Answer: The giant tortoise is the oldest living animal.

## Questions (Page No. 118-120) (Thinking about the language)

Question 1. Look at these sentences.

- Most snakes are quite harmless, but a few are poisonous.
- Most snakes lay eggs, but the rattlesnake gives birth to its young.

Now write five sentences like these using 'most' and the clues below.

a. (90% of) people are honest (10%) are dishonest.

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b. (Lots of) fruit have plenty of sugar, (some) citrus fruit are low in sugar.

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c. (Every soft drink except this one) has lots of 'empty calories'.

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d. (The majority of) films are romances, (a few) are on other topics.

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e. (A majority of) people agree that he is a good leader, (just a few) disagree.

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Answer:

- Most of the people are honest but a few are dishonest.
- Most of the fruits have plenty of sugar but a few citrus fruits are low in sugar.
- Most of the soft drinks except this one has lots of empty calories.
- Most of the films are romances but a few are on other topics.
- (A majority of) people agree that he is a good leader, (just a few) disagree.

Most of the people agree that he is a good leader but a few disagree.

Question 2. Look at these sentences.

- Animals cannot survive for long without water.
- So desert animals have to find different ways of coping.

The first sentence says what cannot happen or be done; the second tells us what must, therefore, be done, what it is necessary to do.

Complete these sentences using cannot and have to/has to.

- You ----- reach the island by land or air; you ----- go by boat.
- We ----- see bacteria with our eyes; we ----- look at them through a microscope.
- He ----- have a new bicycle now; he ----- wait till next year.
- Old people often ----- hear very well; they ----- use a hearing aid.
- Road users ----- do what they wish; they ----- follow the traffic rules.
- She ----- accept this decision; she ----- question it.
- You ----- believe everything you hear; you ----- use your own judgement.

Answer:

- a. You cannot reach the island by land or air; you have to go by boat.
- b. We cannot see bacteria with our eyes; we have to look at them through a microscope.
- c. He cannot have a new bicycle now; he has to wait till next year.
- d. Old people often cannot hear very well; they have to use a hearing aid.
- e. Road users cannot do what they wish; they have to follow the traffic rules.
- f. She cannot accept this decision; she has to question it.
- g. You cannot believe everything you hear; you have to use your own judgement.

**Questions (Page No. 120)**  
**(Writing)**

Question 1. Imagine you are journeying through a desert. Write a couple of paragraphs describing what you see and hear.

Answer: Do it yourself.

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