

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 16 Word Count: 897

Book Summary

Desert People is an informational text about various peoples who live in deserts. It focuses mostly on the Tohono O'odham (a Native American tribe) and the Bedouins but also briefly mentions other cultures. *Desert People* tells about many aspects of desert life, from diet and shelter to daily routines, traditions, and customs. Photographs, tables, and a map support the text.

Book and lesson also available at Levels T and W.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Summarize

Objectives

- Summarize to understand nonfiction text
- Identify details to compare and contrast desert people
- Identify vowel digraph *ai*
- Understand and use prepositions in sentences
- Read and understand number words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Desert People* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- [Compare and contrast, prepositions, number words worksheets](#)
- [Discussion cards](#)



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](#).

- Content words:

Story critical: **adapt** (v.), **Atacama Desert** (n.), **Bushmen** (n.), **dung** (n.), **nomads** (n.), **oases** (n.)

Enrichment: *Australian Aborigines* (n.),

Before Reading

Build Background

- Draw a web on the board with the word *desert* in the center circle. Have students tell what they know about deserts. Attach smaller circles that contain the information they share.
- Explain that the hot deserts of the world are home to many different peoples. Ask students whether they would like to live in a desert and to explain their reasoning.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what kind of book it is and what it might be about.
- Ask students if they think this book is fiction or nonfiction and to explain their reasoning.
- Show students the title page. Talk about the information on the page (title of book, author's name).
- Ask students to turn to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Summarize**

- Explain to students that one way to understand what they are reading is to stop now and then during reading to summarize in their mind what they are reading about in the book.
- Model how to summarize.
Think-aloud: As I read this book, I am going to stop every now and then to remind myself what I have read so far about desert people. This helps me remember what I'm reading and makes me think about new information. When I finish reading the book, I should be able to tell, in my own words, some of the information I have read about desert people.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Compare and contrast**

- Explain that one way an author helps readers understand information in a book is to tell how topics in the book are alike and different.
- Have students look at the photographs on pages 3 and 9. Model how to compare and contrast using photographs.
Think-aloud: These photos show two different types of desert land. They are alike in some ways and different in some ways. One way they are alike is that they both are sandy. One way they are different is that the desert land on page 9 has cacti, while the desert land on page 3 does not.
- Model how to compare and contrast information using a Venn diagram. Draw a Venn diagram on the board. Label the left circle *Page 3* and the right circle *Page 9*. Explain that information relating to the desert land on page 3 is written in the left side of the left circle (no cacti). Information that relates to the desert land on page 9 is written in the right side of the right circle (cacti). Explain that in the middle where both circles overlap, information is written about what the desert lands on pages 3 and 9 have in common (sandy).
- Have students identify other similarities and differences between the desert lands on pages 3 and 9. Record these on the Venn diagram.

Introduce the Vocabulary


- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out a word. They can look for base words within words, prefixes, and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. For example, point out a word in bold, such as the word *adapt* on page 5. Model how students can use context clues to figure out the meaning of the word. Read the last paragraph aloud. Ask students what words provide clues as to the meaning of the word *adapt* in this text (*found ways; live successfully*). Have students follow along as you read the sentence to confirm the meaning of the word. Then have students check the glossary to confirm the word's meaning.
- Remind students to check whether a word makes sense by rereading the sentence in which it occurs.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to learn about deserts and the people who live there. Remind them to stop after reading new information to review, in their own words, what they have learned.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Give students their book and have them put a finger on the bottom of page 6. Tell them to read to the end of this page. Have students reread the pages if they finish before everyone else.
 - **Model summarizing.**
Think-aloud: As I read, I paused to summarize in my mind what I learned about in each section. For example, when I read the section titled "What Is a Desert?" I underlined the words, phrases, and sentences I thought were most important. (Add any information that was not generated by students to the web on the board. Review the web and point out which details are most important, crossing out the less-important details as you go.) After sorting through the information and deciding what is important and what isn't, I put the information in my own words to create a summary. (There are many types of deserts. Deserts receive less than 10 inches of rain a year. Some deserts get very cold, but most deserts are hot.) As I continue reading the book, I'll summarize what I've read to help me remember new information.
 - **Check for understanding:** Have students put a finger on the bottom of page 9. Tell them to read to the end of this page. Invite them to share the important information about the Sonoran Desert (page 7). Ask students to write a brief summary of the section on a separate piece of paper. Have them share what they wrote.
 - Using the chart on page 6, have students work with a partner to compare and contrast the Sonoran Desert and the Atacama Desert and write the information on a Venn diagram on a separate piece of paper. Discuss their responses aloud as you create a Venn diagram on the board.
 - Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about the details in the book so they can summarize the information after they read.
-  Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Ask students to explain how the strategy of summarizing helped them understand the book.
- **Think-aloud:** I know that summarizing keeps me actively involved in what I'm reading and helps me understand and remember what I've read. I know that I will remember more about different kinds of deserts and the people who live there, because I summarized the information in my own words as I read the book.
- **Independent practice:** Have students write a summary of pages 12 through 16 (*The Bedouin*) on a separate sheet of paper. If time allows, invite students to read their completed summaries aloud.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review with students the similarities and differences between the Sonoran Desert and the Atacama Desert. Add any new information to the Venn diagram on the board. Review how the information is organized in the Venn diagram.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

Desert People

- **Check for understanding:** Have students provide examples of how the Australian Aborigines and the Atacama Indians are alike and different. Record this information on a new Venn diagram on the board.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compare-and-contrast worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses aloud.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about different types of deserts and the people who live there. You learned that, for thousands of years, people have adapted to deserts. Now that you know this information, do you think people living in the desert will need to continue to adapt in the future? If so, why?

Build Skills

Phonics: Vowel digraph *ai*

- Write the words *pain* and *rain* on the board and say them aloud with students.
- Have students say the long /a/ vowel sound aloud. Then run your finger under the letters in the words as students say the whole words aloud. Ask students to identify the letters that stand for the long /a/ sound in the words *pain* and *rain*.
- Underline the letters *a* and *i* in the word *pain*. Explain to students that the letters *a* and *i* together are called a *vowel digraph*. The vowel digraph *ai* makes the long /a/ vowel sound. Say the following words with the vowel digraph *ai* aloud one at a time: *rail*, *snail*, *drain*. Have volunteers spell the words aloud as you write them on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students look through the book to find all the vowel digraph *ai* words (*rain(s)*, *main*, *trained*, *raised*, *rainfall*, *terrain*, *plains*).

Grammar and Mechanics: Prepositions

- Explain that *prepositions* are words that show a relationship between things. They provide information about *where*, *when*, *how*, *why*, and *with what* something happens. For example, in the sentence *I'll do this after lunch*, the word *after* is a preposition that provides information about when something happens.
- Ask students to turn to page 5. Write the following sentence on the board: *In this book, you will learn about two desert peoples*. Point to the word *In*. Have a volunteer explain how the preposition is used in this sentence (it explains where you will learn about desert peoples).
- Explain that prepositions are also defined as relationship indicators; they explain the relationship of a subject to the rest of the sentence. Have a volunteer draw a rabbit on the chalkboard. Have another volunteer draw a cactus in front of the rabbit. Write the following sentences on the board: *The rabbit goes _____ the cactus. The rabbit is _____ the cactus.*
- Next, draw a line from the rabbit *over*, *under*, *through*, *beside*, and *to* the cactus, one at a time. Have a volunteer come to the board and write each preposition in the correct sentence.



- **Check for understanding:** Have students look through the text and circle examples of prepositions. Record on the board the prepositions that students identify in the book. Discuss the type of information each preposition provides (how, when, why, and so on) and how each one links the words in the sentence.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [prepositions worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: Number words

- Explain that when reading aloud, readers will sometimes encounter different symbols, numbers, and abbreviations in the text. Good readers read these parts of the text fluently, just as they read the words.

- Direct students to page 8. Ask them to find the numbers in the text (*49° Celsius, 120° F, 30.5 centimeters, 12 in*). Review or explain that the numbers are called *cardinal numbers* and that they are used to describe an amount. Point out that a cardinal number is read in the same manner as the written word for the number. Practice reading the numbers and symbols aloud. Explain that when reading *30.5*, it is read “thirty point five.”
- Write the numbers from page 8 on the board and have volunteers come to the board to write their word equivalents (*forty-nine, one hundred twenty, thirty point five, twelve*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 13. Ask them to find the numbers in the text (*9 million square kilometers, 3.5 million sq mi, 25 millimeters, 1 in*). Have volunteers read the numbers and symbols aloud. Write the numbers on the board and ask other volunteers to come to the board to write their word equivalents (*nine million, three point five, twenty-five, one*).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [number words worksheet](#).

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently or with a partner. Encourage repeated timed readings of a specific section of the book.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students create a Venn diagram and compare and contrast something at home (for example, two foods, two people, and so on).

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing Connection

Provide print and Internet sources for students to further research one of the following desert peoples: Kalahari Bushmen, Atacama Indians, or Australian Aborigines. Have them write an informational report, including at least three paragraphs and two illustrations or photographs. Require an error-free final copy to be read aloud to a partner of their choice. Display their work on a bulletin board titled *Desert People*.

Visit [Writing A–Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on expository report writing.

Social Studies Connection

Using books and Internet reference materials, have groups of students research the types of clothing, baskets, and other things worn and used by each of the six groups of desert people mentioned in the book. Have students create Desert Art posters that show written and visual examples of various kinds of desert clothing. Post them on the *Desert People* bulletin board alongside their reports from the Writing Connection activity.

Skill Review

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- accurately use details from the text to create section summaries during discussion and on a separate piece of paper
- compare and contrast nonfiction details within the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify vowel digraph *ai* during discussion and in book
- correctly identify and use prepositions during discussion and on a worksheet
- fluently read number words within the text; accurately use number words in sentences on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)