

Name: _____

Date: _____

Deserts

Read the passage below carefully.

Deserts are hot and dry places where little or no rain falls. Few plants and animals can live in deserts because there is not enough water for them to drink. The plants in the desert have long roots that spread out to find water. Some species, like cactus, have thick stems to store water.

Certain animals have learnt to live in the desert. The elf owl makes its nest in a cactus, and the cactus protects the bird from the hot sun. The spadefoot toad also dislikes the sun. It uses its feet to dig a hole in the ground and goes to sleep. It only wakes up when it starts to rain.

The most interesting desert animals of all is the camel. This animal can go for several days without food or water. It uses the fat kept in its hump for energy, and stores water between the muscles of its body. Camels are very useful to people who live in the desert, as they can carry heavy loads. They do not sink into the soft sand because of the special pads on their feet. Their milk is nutritious and can be drunk.

It is difficult for humans to live in the desert because of the lack of water. However, water can be found at an oasis. This is a small area in desert where there is a pool of water. Date palms and grass grow around it, and if the pool is big enough, people will settle here.

There are many deserts in the world. One of the biggest is the Sahara in Africa. In some deserts, oil is found below the sand and rocks. Deep oil wells are drilled to bring it to the surface.

Section A

What does each word refer to?

1. them - _____
2. its - _____
3. It - _____
4. They - _____
5. it - _____

Section B

Answer these questions in complete sentences.

1. What are deserts?

2. Why do desert plants have long roots?

3. Why is life in the desert is difficult?

4. How do camels survive living in the desert?

5. Why does the cactus have thick stem?

6. What does the cactus protect the elf owl from?

7. How does spadefoot toad lives in the desert?

8. What two ways do camels help human in the desert?

9. Why is finding oasis in the desert so important?

10. How is the oil in the desert brought to the surface?
