

Non-Fiction: Comprehension Practice 6

Read Text A in the insert, and answer questions 1–8.

Text A

What is a desert?

A desert is a place where it almost never rains. Deserts are the driest places on Earth. Nearly one quarter of the land on our planet is desert. However, the animals and plants that live there have found clever ways to survive the harsh, dry conditions.

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Some deserts are hot and sandy but some are very cold! Deserts in some cold regions, like the Arctic, get less rain than Africa's Sahara desert! Deserts can also be pebbly, rocky, mountainous or even a mixture of these.

Wild weather

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Even in hot deserts, the weather is extreme. Clear blue skies mean that these deserts are almost always sunny and hot during the day. But at night, it is very different. Desert nights are very cold because there are no clouds to keep in the day's warmth so people who live in the desert light fires to keep warm after dark.

Although it may be freezing at midnight in the desert, by midday it is really hot so animals have to hide from the sun. Desert squirrels use their bushy tails to help them live with these extremes of weather. In the cold night, the tail is like a fluffy blanket. But, during the hot day, it is an excellent shade from the sun.

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Gust of dust!

Sometimes, desert winds gather sand. This stays in the air in storms that can last for days, which makes it hard to see and hard to breathe.

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1) Look at the first paragraph (lines 3-6). Give one adjective that means difficult. **harsh**

2) Look at the second paragraph (lines 7-9). Name two kinds of desert mentioned in the text.

- **rocky / sandy**
- **pebbly / mountainous**

3) Look at the third paragraph (lines 11-14).

(a) Explain how the desert weather is 'extreme'. Give two ideas.

- **Desserts are hot during the day**
- **and/but very cold at night**

(b) Look at line 14.

What kind of word is **light** in this sentence? Tick one box.

noun

preposition

pronoun

verb

(c) Look at line 18. Which word does it replace?

tail

4) Look at lines 19-21.

(a) Give one example of rhyme.

gust / dust

(b) Give one preposition.

for / in

(c) Give one way sandstorms cause problems.

They make it hard/difficult to see / to breathe.

5) Which of these is true of all deserts? Tick one box.

They are dry.

They are cloudy.

They are sandy.

They are windy.

6) How does the writer organize the information in Text A?

By using paragraphs

7) What is Text A about? Tick one box.

desert storms

the Sahara Desert

animals of the desert

deserts around the world

8) Your friend is doing a school project about Africa. Do you think Text A would help your friend? Tick one box.

If Yes.

The explanation is: It has (a few) facts / (some) information about Africa's Sahara Desert /the Sahara (which is in Africa).

• If No.

The explanation is: It isn't (really/just) about Africa. / It is about deserts all over the world. / It doesn't have much/any information about Africa. / It doesn't have enough information to be useful.