

Why Can Plants Grow in the Desert?



Level: E9 Word Count: 114

Little Books of Answers

Curriculum Connection	Plants
Content Vocabulary	bush, cactus, close, creosote, deep, desert, dry, ground, grow, keeps, leaves, live, long, lots, mesquite, much, need, octillo, plants, roots, runs, save, sharp, sleeps, spikes, stems, tree, wakes, water, wet, without, yucca
Visual Literacy Element	relationship chart
Critical Thinking	further research
Comprehension Strategy	hypothesizing
High-Frequency Words	because, can, down, from, get, has, in, into, is, it, its, little, not, of, the, there, they, this, up, when, where

Before Reading

Prior Knowledge – Discuss the Topic

- Discuss deserts. Ensure that the students understand that a desert is a place where there is very little rain each year. Discuss plants and what they need to live and grow. Ensure that the students understand that plants need water to live and grow.

- Give each student a copy of the book *Why Can Plants Grow in the Desert?* Have them read the title.
- Ask the students to set the purpose for reading by asking, *Why would you read this book? What do you think you will find out as you read this book?*
- Discuss the cover photo. Ask questions such as – *What can you see in this photo? How do you think this plant can live in the desert?*
- Have the students turn to the title page. Ask questions similar to those that you asked about the cover photo.
- Discuss the cover and the title page. Explain to the students that they still don't know how these plants survive in the desert. Invite them to make educated guesses (hypotheses) as to how the plants survive. Tell them that as they read the book they will find out if their guesses were right or not.

Introduce the Vital Vocabulary

- Ask the students to turn to the Vital Vocabulary.
- Discuss each of the photos. Have the students read the labels. Assist them where necessary.
- Tell the students that the Vital Vocabulary words are in the book and will help them with their understanding as they read.

Take a Photo Walk

- Take a photo walk discussing each photo in the book.
- Invite the students to read the captions and labels as they discuss each photo. Ensure that you provide the vocabulary for those students who are not familiar with the English language or have limited conceptual knowledge. Have those students read the labels and captions with you.
- To ensure and enrich understanding say things such as – *Plants have different ways of surviving in the desert. They have something about them which is different from plants that don't grow in the desert. You call this adapting. These plants have adapted so that they can get and keep the water they need when there is very little water.*
- Discuss the chart on page 15. Read the chart with the students and discuss how it helps organize and explain the information.

Read the Book

- Ask the students to read the title on the cover, title page, and the vital vocabulary, again.
- Remind them to think about the purpose for reading the book as they read. Revisit the purpose before they start reading if necessary.
- Have the students read the book aloud independently. Remind them to check the words and the photos to make sure that what they are reading makes sense and looks right.
- Move around the group listening and helping individual students as necessary.
- Ask any students who finish reading the book ahead of the group, to revisit the book again and find the page they found the most interesting. Have them share this information with the group at the end of the lesson.

After Reading

Comprehension

- Check literal comprehension by asking these questions:
Which tree has lots of stems to store water?
How does a yucca get water?
What does the octillo plant do when it is dry?
What are the two ways a creosote bush gets water?
- Check inferential comprehension by asking these questions:
How does sleeping when it is dry help the octillo plant survive?
Why have some plants adapted by growing long roots?
How could the little leaves on the creosote bush save water?
Could these desert plants grow in other places? Why or why not?
- Have the students revisit their original hypotheses. Were some of them nearly right? Do they now know how plants can live in the desert?

Critical Thinking

- Have the students turn to page 16 and look at the photo. Tell the students that their task is find how this tree can grow in the desert.

Fluency

- Invite the students to read the book again with a partner.
- Have the weakest reader in the group reread the book to you.

Writing

- Have the students write about a desert plant. Assist with spelling where necessary. Have the students illustrate their story.

Independent Follow-Up Activities

- Have the students complete the photocopiable activities.

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Write a story about the photo.



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Name:



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Draw and write.

I like the part about

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