

# ENGLISH

## CHAPTER 3: THE DESERT



# THE DESERT

## ~Summary~

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Believe it or not, **deserts** are not merely the land of **sand** and **dryness** but the home of some varieties of plants and animals. It's a common misconception that deserts are devoid of water because some deserts have water in them. Water resources occur in the form of springs and wells in those deserts. This water-available region in deserts is called 'Oasis'. Generally, a desert receives not more than 25 centimeters (10 inches) of precipitation a year, and so rainfall is one of the essential factors that determines the dry condition of the desert.

Water from **springs** and **wells** spreads through **Oasis**, which helps in maintaining its fertility. With the existence of Oasis among deserts, plant, human and animal life is possible.

Nonetheless, some deserts exist without water. As a result, only a few plants can survive in those sandy regions.

While it may be true that a **desert ecosystem** is not the same as a forest, it has its **advantages** as forests. Like forests that give out food, paper, woods, oil, minerals, etc., deserts give gold, copper, oil, minerals, sand, etc.

Like the rich **forests** and **oceans**, deserts play a **vital** role in the **earth**, covering about **one-fifth** of its surface. Thus, deserts are **not useless** sand-filled regions as some think but a **valuable** and **essential** part of the **earth's surface**.

## ~Conclusion~

Deserts are therefore either too hot or too cold. These extreme conditions make life difficult in such areas. But despite such harsh conditions, deserts also have beautiful landscapes with oasis and sand dunes. This is why deserts are as much a place of wonder as the deep ocean or the dense forests.

## NCERT SOLUTIONS

### Questions (Page No. 16-17) (Comprehension Check - I)

Question 1. From the first paragraph

- a. pick out two phrases which describe the desert as most people believe it is;
- b. pick out two phrases which describe the desert as specialists see it.

Which do you think is an apt description, and why?

Answer:

- a. The phrases which describe the desert as most people believe it is are: endless stretch of sand, hot, dry, waterless, without shelter.
- b. The phrases which describe the desert as specialists see it are: a beautiful place; the home of a variety of people, animals and plants; the sight can be as rewarding as that of any tropical garden.

Question 2. The phrases on the left in the following box occur in the text.

Match each of them with a phrase on the right.

an endless stretch of sand	fertile place with water and plants in a desert
waterless and without shelter	not visible because the grass is thick
an oasis	nothing but sand as far as one can see
hidden by a cover of grass	no water and no shade

Answer:

an endless stretch of sand	fertile place with water and plants in a desert
waterless and without shelter	no water and no shade
an oasis	fertile place with water and plants in a desert
hidden by a cover of grass	not visible because the grass is thick

### Questions (Page No. 19) (Comprehension Check - II)

Question 1. A camel can do without water for days together. What is the reason given in the text?

Answer: A camel can do without water for days together. Camels sweat very little. They can withstand high temperatures. They don't need to sweat to keep themselves cool. That's why they don't lose water and thus, can store it for a longer time.

Question 2. How do the smaller desert animals fulfil their need for water?

Answer: The smaller desert animals take various measures to fulfil their need for water:

Some of them burrow underground in the day time and come out only at night to eat.

Some others eat other animals and get the moisture from the meat.

Some eat plants and seeds and obtain plant juices.

Question 3. In a desert the temperature rises during the day and falls rapidly at night. Why?

Answer: Deserts do not have moisture cover. So, the temperature rises during the day and falls rapidly at night.

## Questions (Page No. 19) (Exercise)

Answer the following questions:

Question 1. Describe a desert in your own way. Write a paragraph and read it aloud to your classmates.

Answer: A desert is a place which is hot and receives less rainfall. It is not entirely dry. Oasis is a green island in the desert where a well/ spring gives water to the plants around. Camels can store water for a long time. Thus, they can survive on deserts for long. That's the reason camel is called the ship of the desert.

Question 2. Go to the library and collect information about the lifestyle of people in desert areas— their food, clothes, work, social customs, etc. Share this information with the group.

Answer: Do it yourself.