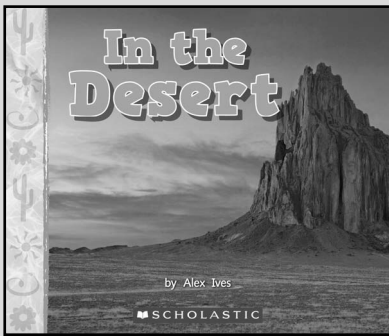


# In the desert



## In the Desert Teachers' Notes

**Learning objective:** Year 1, 7b: Use syntax and context when reading for meaning

**Key words:** in, the, you, may

**Cross-curricular/theme links:** Geography: desert environment

**Genre:** Non-fiction

**NC level:** Approximately Level 1C

**Assessment:** AF1, Level 1: Some awareness of punctuation marks

**Word count:** 35

### Getting started

Read the title and back cover blurb together. Ask: "What are deserts like? What types of animals and plants live there?" Share the children's ideas. Flip through the book to establish that it is about some of the things you can feel, hear and see in the desert.

### Guided reading

**Pages 2-4:** Most of the words should be decodable for children working at Letters and Sounds Phase 5, so encourage the children to think about the meaning of what they are reading. Does the picture on page 2 look like a typical desert to the children? Can they identify the tall plants as cactuses? On page 3, check that they pause at the ellipsis (...). Encourage them to guess what they might feel, before turning to page 4.

**Pages 5-6:** Pause after page 5 for the children to guess what they might hear. On page 6, help them with 'rattle' if necessary, and check that they pause at the full stop. Do the children know that rattlesnakes can rattle their tails?

**Pages 7-8:** Encourage the children to predict before turning to page 8. Did they know that cactuses could have flowers like the one on page 8? Check that they understand the syntax of this sentence and pick up that 'bloom' is a verb here.

### Speaking and listening

- Working as a group, the children could make up their own oral version of the text, based on their own classroom or playground. ('In the classroom you may see...' and so on.)

### After reading

Use these questions to help children talk about the text.

- Which senses does this book ask us to think about?
- Can you remember what the book tells us we could feel, hear and see in the desert?
- Did you find any of the pictures in the book surprising? What surprised you?

### Reading into writing

The children could write and illustrate their own new version of the text, based on the ideas generated in the Speaking and Listening session.

### Book quiz for children

- 1 What does the book say we may see in the desert?
- 2 What is unusual about the snake in the book?
- 3 What is the weather like in the desert, according to the book?

### Support for less confident readers

Although the text is mostly decodable, this book presents reading challenges in the form of some unusual syntax and vocabulary. Encourage children to pause during their reading and talk about the meaning of the text, and if necessary help them to understand it.

### Extension for more confident readers

Children could do some research to find out about things they could smell or taste in the desert, to add to the book.