

Name _____

Date _____



Deserts

A biome is a region characterized

By a certain climate, plant and animal life.

Deserts are one of those biomes, right?

They cover $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Earth, and they're known for being dry.

Why? 'Cause they exist in a location

Where evaporation is greater than precipitation.

They can be hot, over 100 degrees,

But in the Antarctic, there's a desert where you'll freeze.

See, deserts are made when the air becomes dry,

And four different factors could be the reason why.

One: latitude. About 30 degrees from the equator,

Your chances of seeing a desert become greater.

Two: ocean currents that are cold.

Those are typically found on a continent's west coast.

Three: rain shadow — missing out on the rain

That only falls on one side of a mountain range. Strange!

We have a desert like that out in Cali,

One of the hottest spots on Earth: Death Valley.

Four: central location on a continent.

The farther from the ocean, the drier it'll probably get.

Deserts, they cover one-third of the Earth, and they're increasing in size.

And they're so dry, it takes a special type of plant or animal to survive.

(x2)

Now to call such a dry biome home,

Desert plants and animals evolved to survive on their own,

Developing ways to obtain and hold water.

Cacti — they can do that like no other,

With sprawling roots that grow shallow in the ground,

So they can soak up all the water that's around.

And they can store the water in their rubbery stems,

And since they don't have leaves, all the water stays in.

Plus, another part of their design:

To keep animals away, they have sharp spines.

It's so hot, most animals rest during the day,

But at night when it cools down, they come out to play.

Like kangaroo rats, they live in underground dens

Where it's cool, so they don't sweat, just chill with their friends.

Then there's Texas horned lizards; on their backs they have scales

With channels in between that hold water like a pail.

Or the sandgrouse flies around in the desert sun,

But it uses its feathers to soak up water like a sponge.

All of these creatures found ways to live

In the desert, where there's not a lot of water to give.

And as climate change progresses, and the temperatures rise

Deserts are heating up and increasing in size,

And taking over farmland — desertification.

One day we may have to make our own adaptations.

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