

## SUMMARY OF THE LESSON

Deserts are the driest and the hottest places on earth. For long periods they get no rain and bear the hot sun. Still so many kinds of creatures live there. It is a wonder how they manage to get water and food there.

The fact is that every creature finds ways to fight the heat, hunger and thirst. The gerbils (a kind of desert rat) spend the hot day in cool underground holes. Dark beetles catch drops of water on their legs.

Not all deserts are seas of sand dunes. Some are rocky and dotted with small bushes while others are sprinkled with colourful flowers during the spring.

There are more than 2300 kinds of snakes around the world. Some are long or poisonous, others are small and harmless. In the deserts of America live rattlesnakes. They are very dangerous and poisonous. They can feel the movement of a person, but cannot hear any sound. They live on mice, and squirrels. The large pythons can do without eating for a year.

The other animal in the desert is mongoose. Mongooses travel in groups and eat small creatures. They hunt together. They too have their enemies like hawks, eagles and large snakes. Mongooses are famous for killing snakes. The female mongooses raise their kitten inside hollow logs or old termite mounds.

Another notable animal found in the desert is the camel. Some are wild, but most are domesticated by people. A thirsty camel can drink upto thirty gallons of water at a time. Normally it meets its need of water from desert plants. It can survive for upto ten months without drinking any water.

There are two kinds of camel. The Dromedary camel has a single hump. The Bactrian camel has two humps. Humps act as storage containers. They are not used for storing water. They are full of fat which keeps them alive for several days. A camel's mouth is so tough that no thorn can pierce into it.

## TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

## WORKING WITH THE TEXT

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A. 1. Talk to your partner and say whether the following statements are true or false.

- (i) No animal can survive without water.
- (ii) Deserts are endless sand dunes.
- (iii) Most snakes are harmless.
- (iv) Snakes cannot hear, but they can feel vibrations through the ground.
- (v) Camels store water in their humps.

Ans. (i) True (ii) False (iii) True (iv) True (v) False

## 2. Answer the following questions.

- (i) How do desert animals survive without water? (1)
- (ii) How do mongooses kill snakes? (6)
- (iii) How does the hump of the camels help them to survive when there is no water? (9)

Ans. (i) The desert animals find ways to survive for many days without water. Gerbils keep themselves cool in underground holes. The beetles catch drops of moisture on their legs. The camels get moisture from desert plants.

(ii) Mongooses have very swift reactions. They get away fast when the snake tries to strike. They trouble the snake till it is tired. Then they attack and kill the snake. They themselves don't get any injury.

(iii) The hump of the camel is meant for storing fat and not water. That fat meets the camel's need of water and nourishment.

**B. Read the words/phrases in the box. With your partner find their meanings in the dictionary.**

|                  |           |         |             |
|------------------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| harsh conditions | harmless  | survive | intruder    |
| threatened       | predators | prey    | continually |

**Fill in the blanks in the following passage with the above words/phrases.**

All animals in forests and deserts struggle to \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_. Though most of the animals are \_\_\_\_\_, some are dangerous when \_\_\_\_\_. If an \_\_\_\_\_ is noticed, they attack or bite to save themselves. They struggle \_\_\_\_\_ for food and water. Some animals are called \_\_\_\_\_ because they \_\_\_\_\_ on other animals.

**Ans.** All animals in forests and deserts struggle to *survive* in *harsh conditions*. Though most of the animals are *harmless*; some are dangerous when *threatened*. If an *intruder* is noticed, they attack or bite to save themselves. They struggle *continually* for food and water. Some animals are called *predators* because they *prey* on other animals.

### SPEAKING

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**Look at these sentences.**

- Deserts are the driest places on earth.
- Gerbils spend the hottest part of the day in cool underground burrows.

**Now form pairs. Ask questions using a suitable form of the word in brackets. Try to answer the questions too.**

**Do you know**

1. Which animal is the \_\_\_\_\_ (tall)?
2. Which animal runs the \_\_\_\_\_ (fast)?
3. Which place on earth is the \_\_\_\_\_ (hot) or the \_\_\_\_\_ (cold)?
4. Which animal is the \_\_\_\_\_ (large)?

5. Which is the \_\_\_\_\_ (tall) mountain in the world?
6. Which is the \_\_\_\_\_ (rainy) place on earth?
7. Which is the \_\_\_\_\_ (old) living animal?

**Can you add some questions of your own?**

- Ans.**
1. Giraffe is the tallest animal.
  2. Leopard runs the fastest.
  3. Aziza Libya is the hottest and the Verkhoyansk (Russia is the coldest).
  4. Blue whale is the largest animal.
  5. Mount Everest is the tallest mountain in the world.
  6. Mawsynram (Meghalaya) is the rainiest place on earth.
  7. Giant tortoise is the oldest living animal.

### THINKING ABOUT LANGUAGE

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**A. Look at these sentences.**

- Most snakes are quite harmless, but a few are poisonous.
- Most snakes lay eggs, but the rattlesnake gives birth to its young.

**Now write five sentences like these using 'most' and the clues below.**

1. (90% of) people are honest (10%) are dishonest.

2. (Lots of) fruit have plenty of sugar, (some) citrus fruit are low in sugar.

3. (Every soft drink except this one) has lots of 'empty calories'.

4. (The majority of) films are romances, (a few) are on other topics.

5. (A majority of) people agree that he is a good leader, (just a few) disagree.

- Ans.**
1. Most of the people are honest, but a few are dishonest.
  2. Most of the fruits have plenty of sugar; but some citrus fruit are low in sugar.
  3. Most of the soft drinks except this one have lots of empty calories.
  4. Most of the films are romances, only a few are on other topics.
  5. Most of the people agree that he is a good leader, just a few disagree.

**B. Look at these sentences.**

- Animals *cannot* survive for long without water.
- So desert animals *have* to find different ways of coping.

**The first sentence says what cannot happen or be done; the second tells us what must, therefore, be done, what it is necessary to do. Complete these sentences using cannot and have to/has to.**

1. You \_\_\_\_\_ reach the island by land or air; you \_\_\_\_\_ go by boat.
2. We \_\_\_\_\_ see bacteria with our eyes; we \_\_\_\_\_ look at them through a microscope.
3. He \_\_\_\_\_ have a new bicycle now; he \_\_\_\_\_ wait till next year.
4. Old people often \_\_\_\_\_ hear very well; they \_\_\_\_\_ use a hearing aid.
5. Road users \_\_\_\_\_ do what they wish; they \_\_\_\_\_ follow the traffic rules.
6. She \_\_\_\_\_ accept this decision; she \_\_\_\_\_ question it.
7. You \_\_\_\_\_ believe everything you hear; you \_\_\_\_\_ use your own judgement.

- Ans.**
1. You *cannot* reach the island by land or air; you *have to* go by boat.
  2. We *cannot* see bacteria with our eyes; we *have to* look at them through a microscope.

3. He *cannot* have a new bicycle now; he *has to* wait till next year.
4. Old people often *cannot* hear very well; they *have to* use a hearing aid.
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**WRITING**

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**Imagine you are journeying through a desert. Write a couple of paragraphs describing what you see and hear.**

**Ans.** A desert is not a place worth living. It is a nightmare to journey through the Thar Desert. From my personal experience I know how hot the deserts are. I saw endless expanse of sand and sand dunes. Only here and there I saw a few thorny bushes. There are very few birds. The camel is a common sight. There are only small villages around oases. Life is very hard there. Water is scarce, so is greenery.

We hear the blowing of hot winds and the howling of sand storms. We can hear the calling of mongooses and the howling of jackals. Now and then we can hear the tinkling of bells round the neck of camels.

□□□

## ★ Whatif

Shel Silverstein

### SUMMARY OF THE POEM

The narrator is a young girl. Her mind is sometimes filled with doubts and fears. At night such unpleasant situations haunt her.

She wonders what will happen if she loses her power to speak, or if the school closes the swimming pool, or if she gets beaten up, or if somebody puts poison in her cup. It is also possible that she may get sick and die, or fail in the examination, or stop growing in height, or is hit by lightning. The other such bad situations are that the wind may tear up the kite, or a war breaks out, or her teeth grow irregularly, or she may never learn to dance.

When she wakes up next morning, everything looks fine and normal. But her fears return at night again.

### TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

#### WORKING WITH THE POEM

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1. (i) Who is the speaker in the poem?
- (ii) With your partner list out the happenings the speaker is worried about.
- (iii) Why do you think she/he has these worries? Can you think of ways to get rid of such worries?

**Ans.** (i) Shel Silverstein, the poetess, is the speaker in this poem.

- (ii) The speaker is worried about the following happenings.
1. She becomes dumb.
  2. The swimming pool is closed.
  3. She fails in the examination.

4. She gets beaten up.
5. Her parents get divorced.
6. She is hit by lightning.
7. She gets sick and dies.

(iii) Most of our worries are born out of baseless fears. With a strong will power and the right positive attitude to life, one can get rid of such worries.

#### 2. Read the following line.

Some Whatifs crawled inside my ear.

Can words crawl into your ear? This is an image. The poet is trying to make an image of what she/he experiences. Now with your partner try and list out some more images from the poem.

**Ans.** We all think in terms of words. Our mind remains active all the 24 hours. It doesn't rest even at night. It is crowded with ideas, both sweet and bitter. In this way words, creating a picture or scene, enter one's mind and ears.

Dreams are also action packed scenes. We talk, shout, tremble with fear and sweat at night.

#### 3. In groups of four discuss some more 'Whatifs' that you experience in your day to day life and list them out.

- (i) The thieves and killers sometimes force their way into house.
- (ii) Supposing a mechanic or telephone lineman or an electrician knocks on the door.
- (iii) Strangers, salesmen and vendors press the call-bell to gain entry.
- (iv) Beggars and fakirs also frighten me.
- (v) Then there are nasty monkeys and cats entering the kitchen through the half closed door.
- (vi) What will happen in case an earthquake comes or lightning strikes us?

**And now write a poem of five or six lines with the 'Whatifs' that you have listed.**

**Ans.** Do it yourself.