

Lesson at a Glance

- The **desert areas** of the world are characterised by **low rainfall, scanty vegetation** and **extreme temperatures**. Depending on the temperatures there are **hot deserts** as well as cold deserts.
- **Sahara** is a hot desert covering a large part of North Africa and Ladakh is a cold desert lying in the Great Himalayas on the eastern side of Jammu and Kashmir in India.
- Sahara is the world's largest desert.
- The Sahara desert touches eleven countries—Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Sudan, Tunisia and Western Sahara.
- The Sahara desert is the vast stretches of sand. There are also gravel plains and elevated plateaus with bare rocky surface.
- The **climate** of the Sahara desert is scorching hot and parch dry. The rainy season is very short. The day temperature may soar as high as 50°C. But nights may be freezing cold.
- **Vegetation** in the Sahara desert is comprised of cactus, date, palms and acacia. Date palms are found near oasis. So far animals are camels, hyenas, jackals, foxes, scorpions, several varieties of snakes and lizards are found in this desert.
- Various groups of people such as the Bedouins and Tuaregs, live in the Sahara desert. These groups are **nomadic tribe** and they rear goats, sheep, camels and horses. They get milk and hides from these animals. These nomadic tribes wear heavy robes to protect themselves from dust storms and hot winds.
- People get water from the **oasis** in the Sahara desert and the Nile valley in Egypt. They grow crops like rice, wheat, barley and beans.
- The Sahara desert is undergoing fast change due to the discovery of oil in Algeria, Libya and Egypt. Other minerals found here are iron, phosphorus, manganese and uranium.
- Trucks are now used in the salt trade.
- The nomadic herdsmen with change of time are now migrating to cities for better job opportunities in oil and gas operations.

- Ladakh is a cold desert. The Karakoram range in the north and the Zaskar mountains in the south enclose it. Several rivers flow through Ladakh. Several glaciers are found here, for example the Gangri glacier.
- The climate of Ladakh is extremely cold and dry. The day temperatures in summer are just above zero degree and the night temperatures are below - 30°C. This desert receives very little rainfall. There is always a chance of both sunstroke and frost bite.
- Ladakh has poor vegetation. There are scanty patches of grasses. Groves of willows and poplars are seen in the valleys.
- Several species of birds such as robins, redstarts, Tibetan snow cock, raven and hoopoe are found here. The animals of Ladakh are wild goats, wild sheep, yak and special kinds of dogs.
- People living in this desert are either Muslims or Buddhists.
- Famous Buddhist monasteries are Hemis, Thiksey, Shey and Lamayuru.
- People grow crops like barley, potatoes, peas beans and turnips during the summer season. During the winter months they are engaged in festivities and ceremonies.
- The women of Ladakh are hardworking. They can manage indoor and outdoor activities skilfully.
- Leh is the capital of Ladakh.
- Ladakh is a famous tourist place. The tourists from within India and abroad like to visit the gompas.
- Ladakh is being modernised fast. But people are very conscious here. They know the ways to live in balance and harmony with nature.

■ TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED ■

9. 1. Answer the following questions briefly:
- (a) What are the two types of deserts found in the world?
 - (b) In which continent is the Sahara desert located?
 - (c) What are the climatic conditions of the Ladakh desert?
 - (d) What mainly attracts tourists to Ladakh?
 - (e) What type of clothes the people of the Sahara desert wear?
 - (f) Name the trees that grow in Ladakh.

- Ans.** (a) The two types of deserts found in the world are hot deserts and cold deserts.
- (b) The Sahara desert is located in Africa.
- (c) The climate of the Ladakh desert is extremely cold and dry due to its high attitude which varies from about 3,000 m in Kargil to more than 8,000 m in the Karakoram. The air at this attitude is so then that the heat of the sun can be felt intensely. The day temperatures in summer are just above zero degree and the night temperatures are below -30°C . Winters are extremely cold with temperatures below -40°C for most of the time. There is very little rainfall in this region. It is as low as 10 cm every year. The area experiences freezing winds and burning hot sunlight. There is always a chance of sunstroke and frost bite at the same time.
- (d) Ladakh is a famous tourist place. The tourists from within the country and abroad enjoy visiting Buddhist monasteries that dot the Ladakhi landscape with their traditional gompas. The meadows and glaciers in Ladakh also attract these tourists. The ceremonies and festivities in which the local people keep themselves engaged during winter months are great attractions to the tourists.
- (e) The people of the Sahara desert wear heavy clothes.
- (f) Scanty patches of grasses and shrubs, groves of willows and poplars, fruit trees such as apples, apricots and walnuts.

Q. 2. Tick the correct answer:

- (i) Sahara is located in which part of Africa?
 (a) eastern (b) northern
 (c) western.
- (ii) Sahara is what type of desert?
 (a) cold (b) hot
 (c) mild.
- (iii) The Ladakh desert is mainly inhabited by
 (a) Christians and Muslims
 (b) Buddhists and Muslims
 (c) Christians and Buddhists.

- (iv) Deserts are characterised by
 (a) Scanty vegetation (b) heavy precipitation
 (c) low evaporation.
- (v) Hemis in Ladakh is a famous
 (a) temple (b) church
 (c) monastery.
- (vi) Egypt is famous for growing
 (a) wheat (b) maize
 (c) cotton.

Ans. (i)–(b), (ii)–(b), (iii)–(b), (iv)–(a), (v)–(c), (vi)–(c).

Q. 3. Match the following:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| (i) Oasis | (a) Libya |
| (ii) Bedouins | (b) Monastery |
| (iii) Oil | (c) glacier |
| (iv) Gangri | (d) depressions with water |
| (v) Lamayura | (e) cold desert |
| | (f) Sahara |

Ans. (i)–(d), (ii)–(f), (iii)–(a), (iv)–(c), (v)–(b).

Q. 4. Give reasons:

- (i) There is scanty vegetation in the deserts.
 (ii) People of the Sahara desert wear heavy robes.

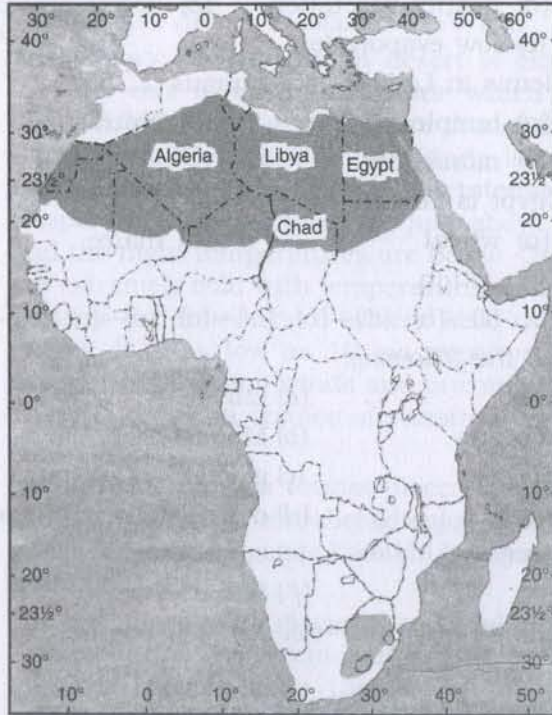
Ans. (i) The climate of the deserts is either very hot and dry or very cold and dry. Both the conditions are not favourable for the growth of vegetation. Besides this, there is poor rainfall in the deserts. Due to lack of sufficient water, deserts usually have scanty vegetation.

- (ii) People of the Sahara deserts wear heavy robes in order to protect themselves from the dust storms and hot winds.

Q. 5. Map skills:

- (i) On the outline map of Africa, mark the Sahara desert and any four countries around it.
 (ii) On the outline map of India, mark the Karakoram Range, Zaskar Range, Ladakh and Zojila pass.

Ans. (i)



Ans. (ii)

