



# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY 403

## DESERT LANDS

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# DESERT LANDS

Deserts are very dry places. They are found all over the world. In this LIFEPAC® you will learn to find the world's deserts on a map. You will learn about the animals and plants that live in the deserts. You will learn about the minerals that are found there. You will also study some of the peoples who live in the desert. Life is hard in the desert, and you will learn why.

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## OBJECTIVES

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you should be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAC.

When you have finished this LIFEPAC, you should be able to:

1. Locate seven of the great deserts of the world on a map.
2. Know the continents and some map features.
3. Explain how moisture is blocked from reaching a desert.
4. Explain how plants and animals live in the desert.
5. Describe seven of the major deserts of the world.
6. Describe the traditional ways of life in the desert.
7. Know the names and locations of some desert people.
8. Explain how modern inventions help people to live in the desert.





## VOCABULARY

**Study these new words.** Learning the meanings of these words is a good study habit and will improve your understanding of this LIFE PAC.

**Arabian Peninsula** (ə rā' bē ən pe nin' sə lə). A piece of land in southwest Asia surrounded by the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Persian Gulf.

**altitude** (al' tə tūd). Height above the level of the ocean.

**aquifer** (äk wə fér). A large body of underground water.

**barren** (bar ən). Not able to produce much.

**burrow** (bér' ō). A hole in the ground used by an animal for shelter.

**cactus** (kak' təs). A fleshy plant with spines instead of leaves that grows in hot, dry regions of America.

**canal** (kə nal'). Passage dug to carry water.

**caravan** (kar' ə van). A group of travelers with their animals and goods.

**climate** (klī' mit). The kind of weather a place most often has.

**coast** (kō st). The land along the sea.

**continent** (kon' tə nənt) One of the seven great masses of land on earth. (North America, South America, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, Antarctica).

**continuous** (kən tin' yū əs). Without a stop or break.

**crop** (krop). Plants grown or gathered by people for their use.

**dew** (dü). Moisture from the air that collects on cool surfaces at night.

**domesticate** (də mes' tə kāt). To make a wild animal tame.

**dune** (dün). A hill of sand heaped up by the wind.

**evaporate** (i vap' ə rāt). To change from a liquid into a gas.

**export** (ek spôrt'). To send goods out of one country for sale and use in another.

**fertilizer** (fér' təl ī zér). A substance put into or on the soil to make it produce more.

**fog** (fog). Thick mist.

**gorge** (gôrj). A deep, narrow valley, usually steep and rocky.

**gourd** (gôrd). The fruit of a vine whose hard, dried shell is used for cups, bowls, and other utensils.

**hibernate** (hī' bər nāt). To spend part of the year sleeping, or dormant.

**irrigation** (ir' ə gā' shən). Supplying land with water.

**lava** (lä' və). The hot, melted rock that flows out of a volcano.

**livestock** (līv' stok). Farm animals.

**mine** (mīn). A large hole dug in the earth to get out coal, salt, gold, or anything valuable.

**mineral** (min' ə r ə l). Anything that is not a plant, animal, or other living thing. Usually a valuable rock or liquid taken from the earth

**modern** (mod' ə r n). Of the present time or times not long ago.

**moisture** (mois' ch ə r). Water spread in very small drops in the air or on a surface.

**Moslem** (moz' l ə m). A believer in the religion of Islam.

**nomad** (nō' m ə d). A member of a tribe that moves from place to place to find food, or pasture for its animals.

**oasis** (ō ā' s i s). A place in the desert where water is found.

**ornament** (ô r' n ə m ə n t). Something that adds beauty.

**plain** (plā n). A flat stretch of land.

**preserve** (pri z ə r v'). To prepare food to keep it from spoiling.

**riverbed** (riv' ə r b e d'). The channel in which a river flows.

**rodent** (rō d' n t). Any of a group of animals with large front teeth that are used for gnawing. Includes rats, mice, and squirrels.

**Sahel** (s ə h e l'). An area south of the Sahara Desert that has periods without enough rain for crops and pasture.

**scenery** (s ə' n ə r ē). The general appearance of a place.

**sparse** (sp ə r s). Thinly scattered; occurring here and there.

**surround** (s ə r ound'). To be on all sides of; enclose.

**traditional** (tr ə d i sh' ə n ə l). A way of behaving or living that is taught to children by their parents for many generations.

**Tropic of Cancer** (trop' i k u v k ə n' s ə r). An imaginary line north of the equator that marks the northern boundary of the tropical zone.

**Tropic of Capricorn** (trop' i k u v k ə p' r ə k ō r n). An imaginary line south of the equator that marks the southern boundary of the tropical zone.

**unique** (yü n ē k'). Being the only one of its kind.

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**Note:** These words appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used in this LIFE PAC. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, review the definition.

**Pronunciation Key:** hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, īce; hot, ōpen, ôrder; oil; out; cup, pūt, rüle; child; long; thin; /ʒh/ for then; /zh/ for measure; /ə/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /i/ in pencil /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.

# I. WHAT IS A DESERT?

A desert is a place where very little rain falls and very few plants grow. Most deserts are very hot, too. Very few plants and animals can live in a desert because of the heat and lack of food.

Even in the desert, however, God has created life. Special plants and animals can live in the hot, dry deserts of the world. People, also, have learned how to live in the desert. They use the plants and animals God put there to help them survive.

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**Review these objectives.** When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

2. Know the continents and some map features.
3. Explain how moisture is blocked from reaching a desert.
4. Explain how plants and animals live in the desert.

**Review these words.**

burrow

cactus

dew

domesticate

dune

evaporate

fog

hibernate

moisture

preserve

rodent

Tropic of Cancer

Tropic of Capricorn



**Desert scene in Arizona, which is part of the Sonoran Desert. Saguaro Cacti are common in this type of desert.**