

TOPIC PACKS · Y2-Y5

# Deserts Week

Five days about the driest places on Earth

## Day 1 — What's a desert?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Day 2 — Map the deserts

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



**Day 3 — Plant and animal adaptations**


---



---



---



---



---



---

**Day 4 — Desert cultures**


---



---



---



---



---



---

**Day 5 — Desertification**


---



---



---



---



---



---

**Major deserts — quick reference**

Desert	Where	Type	Famous for
Sahara	North Africa	Hot	Biggest hot desert (9.2 million km <sup>2</sup> )
Arabian	Middle East	Hot	Vast sand seas; oil



Desert	Where	Type	Famous for
Gobi	Mongolia/China	Cold	Dinosaur fossils; nomadic herders
Kalahari	Southern Africa	Hot, semi-arid	San people; meerkats
Atacama	Chile	Hot, very dry	Driest place on Earth (outside poles)
Australian Outback	Australia	Hot	Aboriginal heritage; Uluru
Antarctica	South Pole	Cold (technically a desert)	Largest desert on Earth
Sonoran	Mexico/USA	Hot	Saguaro cacti; iconic 'cowboy' landscape
Patagonian	Argentina	Cold, dry	Penguins; dinosaur fossils

## Desert facts to wow children with

**How can Antarctica be a desert?** Less than 250mm of precipitation per year — it's so cold that water rarely falls as rain

**Driest place on Earth** The Atacama Desert in Chile — some areas haven't had measurable rain in centuries

**How camels survive** They DON'T store water in their humps (myth!) — humps store FAT. Camels are just very efficient with water

**Sahara temperatures** Summer days: 50°C+. Winter nights: below freezing. Big day/night swings are normal in deserts

**Sahara was once green** Around 6,000 years ago, the Sahara had lakes and forests. Climate shift made it desert

**How long can a camel go without water** Up to 10 days without water in moderate conditions; can drink 100 litres at once when they find it

**Coldest place in the world** A weather station in Antarctica recorded -89.2°C in 1983. That's a desert.

