



Wanted: Desert Creatures

Introduction

Invite students to create a "Wanted" poster for some of the more dangerous creatures in *Around One Cactus*. By identifying prominent features, unique characteristics and fascinating facts, students will uncover how physical adaptations and learned behaviors help animals survive in the desert.

Materials Needed

- ◆ Poster/Paper
- ◆ Pens, Pencils, Crayons, Markers
- ◆ Other art supplies

Procedure

1. Assign one of the animals from *Around One Cactus* to each student.
2. Have each student divide a piece of paper or poster board in half by drawing a line across the middle.
3. On the top half, have each student draw a picture of their animal using the art from the book as a guide.
4. On the bottom half of the sheet, have students describe physical features, unique characteristics and fascinating facts that will help someone locate this creature. Divide these facts into the following four categories:
 - ◆ **Distinguishing Features:** How can this animal be easily identified?
 - ◆ **Weaknesses:** What are this animals weaknesses? Does it have poor eyesight?
 - ◆ **Strengths:** What are this animals strengths? Is it poisonous? Super-fast?
 - ◆ **Habits:** Where does the animal sleep? How often does it eat? Does it need lots of water? Does it play dead, or run away when confronted? Does it fight back?

Key Concepts

- ◆ Each organism has different structures for different functions.
- ◆ All organisms have different needs.
- ◆ The environment must supply the needs of organisms.

For standards correlation please see our website.

Nature Connections

- ◆ Invite students to participate in a game of "Charades." Each student can select an appropriate desert animal and demonstrate its movements for others to guess.
- ◆ Invite students to rewrite part of the story from the perspective of one of the animals. For example, how would the rattlesnake view the actions of the other animals? How would the long-nosed bat view the other creatures?

Additional Resources

Saguaro National Park

http://www.americansouthwest.net/arizona/saguaro/national_park.html

The Life Cycle of the Saguaro Cactus

<http://www.nps.gov/archive/sagu/Saguaros/saguaro.htm>

Desert Biomes

<http://www.desertusa.com>

Sonoran Desert Fact Sheet

<http://www.desertmuseum.org/kids/oz/long-fact-sheets/>

