



The Saguaro Examiner

Introduction

In this activity, students explore the animals of the Sonoran Desert by creating their own newspaper full of desert events and facts. Using Anthony Fredericks' book *Around One Cactus: Owls, Bats and Leaping Rats* as a reference, students will discover the amazing animals that live in and around the Saguaro Cactus.

Materials Needed

- ◆ *Around One Cactus: Owls, Bats and Leaping Rats*
- by Anthony Fredericks

Key Concepts

- ◆ A system is an organized group of related objects or components.
- ◆ Interactions occur in systems.
- ◆ Behavior is influenced by internal cues (hunger) and external cues (changes in the environment).

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. Divide students into several groups.
2. Invite each group to put together a "cactus newspaper" that presents interesting facts and observations about the animals that live in and around a Saguaro Cactus.
3. Students should use the same sections as their local newspaper. For example, Sports - how fast scorpions or other animals run; Food and Health - different diets of herbivores and carnivores; Homes for Rent - different places where animals sleep in and around the cactus.
4. Event specific newspapers can also be included. For example, the day it rained in the desert, the hottest day in the desert, a nightlife feature, or brave creatures of the daytime.
5. Invite students to distribute their newspaper to other classrooms. Encourage other classrooms to create their own newspaper with a different mini-habitat and then compare newspapers in class.

Nature Connections

- ◆ Invite students to create posters or advertisements to attract other students to this book. What information, data or illustrations should be included? Students may wish to hand their illustrations or posters throughout the school or in the library.
- ◆ Invite students to survey others who have read the book. Ask them to make lists of all the creatures in the book and question others about who their favorite animals are. They can then tabulate the results and present them in the form of bar graphs, pie charts or line graphs.

Additional Resources

Write to the following parks and request brochures to display in the classroom:

Death Valley National Park
Death Valley, CA 92328

Joshua Tree National Park
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

Great Basin National Park
Baker, NV 89311

Big Bend National Park
Big Bend, TX 79834

