



Diary of One Desert Night

Introduction

In *Around One Cactus: Owls, Bats and Leaping Rats* a young boy is curious about what animals live in the Sonoran Desert. Before nightfall he leaves, missing the excitement as the Desert creatures awaken for the night. In this activity students will explore the creatures in *Around One Cactus* and create a diary of significant events that may have occurred overnight.

Materials Needed

- ◆ A copy of the book *Around One Cactus: Owls, Bats and Leaping Rats*
- by Anthony Fredericks

Key Concepts

- ◆ Organisms' patterns of behavior relate directly to the environment (kinds and numbers of other living organisms, the availability of food and resources, and physical characteristics of the environment.)

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. After reading *Around One Cactus* invite each student to select one of the creatures.
2. After reviewing the "Field Notes" for that animal in the back of the book, encourage the student to conduct library research about their chosen animal.
3. After discovering more fascinating facts about their animal, invite each student to create a diary of events that occurred over one night as told from the perspective of that animal.
4. Following are some prompts which may help students focus their diary entries:
 - ◆ What does your animal eat and how does it find its food?
 - ◆ How large is your animal's family? Do they live together or alone?
 - ◆ What is the most fascinating fact about your chosen animal? How does this help them to survive?

Nature Connections

- ◆ Invite students to imagine they are living in the desert and are writing to a friend to convince him or her to visit for several days. What features or attractions should be pointed out in the letter? Afterward, invite students to imagine they are in an urban environment and writing to a friend who lives in the desert - inviting that person for a visit.
- ◆ Invite students to gather data on the various Native American tribes that live (or have lived) in the Sonoran desert. How did they survive? What did they grow or hunt? What were some of their uses for cacti?

Additional Resources

Camping in the Desert

<http://www.camping.com/community/camp-styles/1307>

Discovery Channel - Desert Survival Tips

http://www.yourdiscovery.com/survival_zone/environments/Survival%20By%20Environment_Desert%20Survival.pdf

Desert Habitat Facts

http://www.defenders.org/wildlife_and_habitat/habitat/desert.php

