



Desert Lands

Key Vocabulary:

desert	A region with very little rainfall (less than 25cm /year)
precipitation	Rainfall
latitude	Distance North or South of the Equator
longitude	Distance East or West from Prime Meridian(Greenwich, England)
cartography	The production of maps
topography	Detailed mapping of the features of a small area
transpiration	Loss of water from vegetation into the atmosphere
evaporation	Changes water into water vapour
biome	Naturally occurring areas with similar landscapes and climates where similar organisms are found. Eg. forest,desert
desertification	When land gradually changes into a desert, usually because of extreme climate change

Key Knowledge:

Causes of Desertification

Over Cultivation/Poor Farming Methods – land is used relentlessly for crops and does not have chance to recover. Over time, nutrients are depleted and the soil become useless.

Overgrazing – where animals eat all the vegetation, soil is left exposed and easily erodes.

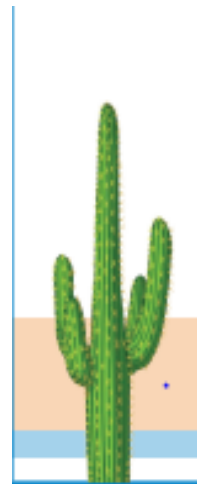
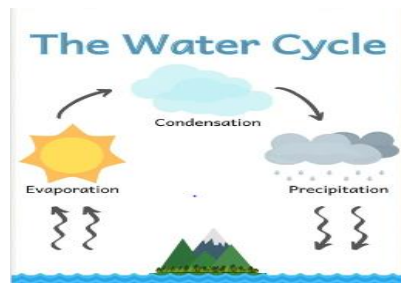
Deforestation – cutting down trees exposes the soil, which is then easily eroded.

Climate Change – reduced rainfall and increased temperatures causes vegetation to die, leaving the soil exposed.

Civil War – in some countries, people are forced to remain in areas resulting in overuse of the land. Pollution to water supplies can also be an issue.

Do you remember?

The water cycle from science?



Plants, such as cacti, are adapted for conditions in the desert:

- Shallow / wide roots to gather as much water as possible
- Small leaves
- Succulents store water in the stem
- Thick, waxy coating to prevent excess water loss
- Spines/toxins to deter animals