

Read the passage and answer each question.

The Desert

A desert is a very dry barren land. Deserts get less than 25 centimeters of rainfall each year. They cover about 33% of land area on the Earth. Deserts are mainly found in Western parts of America, Central Australia, Western Asia and North and South Africa.

Deserts can either be hot deserts or cold deserts. Hot deserts are covered with sand, rocks, hills and even mountains. The largest and hottest desert in the world is the Sahara desert in North Africa. The driest desert in the world is the Atacama Desert in South America.

Cold deserts are called 'Tundra' and are covered with snow or ice. Cold deserts are also called 'Polar deserts' because they can be found close to the North and South poles. The Himalayas also have cold deserts which are known as 'Montane deserts'. Antarctica is the world's largest cold desert.

There are very few animals that can survive in the desert. Camels, snakes, lizards, gazelles, foxes and some types of deer are a few of these animals. Rodents and lizards dig a burrow for themselves in the sand. These help them escape from the hot rays of the sun. Camels also store water in their humps. Only plants that have thick and fleshy stems like a cactus exist in deserts. The cactus stores water in its thick stem.

Many deserts are extremely hot during the day and have cold nights. Dust or sandstorms can also take place when the wind blows loose sand from the surface.

