



Desert Explorations Through Poetry

DESERT INDOORS®

Environmental Education Activities for Students at Home

(This activity was created in accordance with shelter-in-place. Remember to practice social distancing and stay local.)

Module: *I Can Read and Share: Desert Poetry for Grades K-5*

Topic: English Language Arts and the desert

Objective/Learning Goal: Children will be able to understand how they can share scientific information through creating poetry. They will be able to practice alliteration and learn about the desert through reading and/or creating a poem.

Glossary:

- **Alliteration** – The occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning or adjacent of closely connected words, rhyming words.
- **Ecosystem** – The surroundings (both living and non-living) of a geographical area in which species live.
- **Habitat** – The natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism.
- **Plain** – A large area of flat land with few trees.
- **Rhyme** – The correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially when these are used at the ends of lines of poetry.

Materials: *Graphic organizer, poem, paper, pencil, access to the internet.*

Indoor Activity:

Build Background Knowledge - Ask your kids what they already know about poetry? Have they ever read a *rhyming* poem (like Humpty Dumpty)? What about an acrostic poem? How about a limerick? What do they already know about the Mojave Desert, its vistas, open *plains*, the *habitat*, *ecosystem*?

Have your kids use the poem written below to practice reading fluency. What did they notice about the poem? You can have them (or help them) fill out the graphic organizer to help remember the poem or you can use it to look up more information about the desert.

Younger students can draw lines to match words to pictures in the poem. They can underline sight words. They can also highlight the rhyming words.

Older students can use the poem as an example. They can look up more information about the Mojave Desert through a simple web search or on **mdlt.org**. Alternatively, they can safely go for a walk making notes about what they see. Students can then use the graphic organizer to write down more information about the desert.

After they have done research, older students can create their own poem using *alliteration* or rhyming words. Challenge them to use multisyllabic words and contractions appropriately.

Follow-up/Discussion - *What did you learn? How do you feel about using your creativity to create informational poems about the desert? Do you feel like it would have been easier to write a poem about your own experiences in the desert? What was the most interesting thing you learned about the desert?*

Kids can then take time to draw or illustrate their favorite plant, animal, or bird. They can also illustrate their poem, drawing pictures to match their poem.

We would love to hear how your creative writing project went and to have you share your own poems with mary@mdlt.org. We invite students to share their voice and creativity through poetry which we will display at MDLT's Fall Desert Discovery Field Studies and Desert Indoors Showcase.

Your work may also be selected to appear in Cholla Needles magazine. If your work is selected, you will receive a free contributor's copy of the magazine.

Why is the Desert Dry?

Why is the Desert Dry?

I see the open land and think I know why.

It gets little rain,

On its vast open plain.

In the spring, there are pretty flowers.

That is where the desert gets its power,

To make the visitor stop,

And watch the Jack Rabbits hop.

The Mojave is dry,

Especially in the month of July.



I Can Read Informational Text

Poem or Book Title:

3 Facts Learned:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Sketch or Drawing:
(Show What You Know)



Key Idea:

Something Interesting I Learned:

Notes and My Thoughts:
