

Year 6 General Studies

Deserts of the World

Sahara - Africa

The Sahara is the largest desert on Earth. It covers about 8,600,000 square kilometres in northern Africa. The Sahara includes at least part of 10 countries—Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, and Sudan—plus the territory of Western Sahara. The Sahara is the hottest region in the world during the day in summer. Temperatures above 49° C are common. The air becomes much cooler when the sun sets. Rain is very rare. When rain does fall, it often comes in powerful storms.



Great Victoria – Australia

The Great Victoria Desert stretches across southern Australia. It lies in the states of Western Australia and South Australia. Sand dunes cover much of the desert. In some places a layer of tightly packed pebbles covers the ground. Summers in the Great Victoria Desert are very hot. Winters are cooler, and night time temperatures may drop below freezing. The desert gets only about 15 to 25 centimetres of rain each year. Few people live in the Great Victoria Desert. The government of Australia uses parts of the desert for weapons testing. Some Aboriginal people live in the eastern regions. There are also several national parks in the desert.



Gobi – Asia

The Gobi is a vast desert in central Asia. It covers parts of Mongolia and China. The word gobi means “waterless place” in the Mongolian language. The Gobi is surrounded by mountain ranges. Its land is mostly rocky plains with some hills. Summer in the Gobi is very hot, and winter is cold and harsh. Temperatures range from -40° C in January to 45° C in July. The Gobi gets very little rain and snow. There are few rivers that flow year-round. Most of the water is underground. Because of the dry climate, few plants grow in the Gobi. Rough grasses and low bushes are most common. Animals of the Gobi include wild camels and horses, gazelles, and antelope.



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Questions

1. What desert is classified as the hottest region in the world?

2. The Sahar Desert stretches across 10 North African countries.

True / False

3. The Great Victoria Desert is Australia's largest desert. Which two states is it situated in?

4. Which of the three deserts mentioned is the largest?

5. How much rain does the Great Victoria Desert receive annually?

6. Night time temperatures can drop below freezing in deserts.

True / False

7. Where does the Gobi Desert get its name from?
