

Lesson: *Survivors of the Desert: A Comparison of traditional Bedouin and Puebloan cultures.*

Grade Levels: 3rd-5th: Time for Lesson: 3-45 min. lessons

Unit: This lesson could be a stand alone lesson or a part of a larger, cross-curricular unit; the chosen peoples to compare could also be substituted with other desert dwellers/environments. The lesson could be adaptable for social studies, multi-cultural studies, literature, or to support a larger science unit on deserts.

Introduction: Wandering around the tiny village of Dana, Jordan (Tafilah Governorate) overlooking the Wadi Dana, I couldn't help but notice how similar many things were to the traditional Pueblos of the American Southwest. Cultural artifacts such as colorful hand-woven blankets, pottery, and silver jewelry for sale at the local women's co-op, are all items that can be seen throughout the Pueblos. The villagers had a variety of livestock (horses, goats, sheep) in the area and lived in stone buildings with rock chinking between larger stones. Although Bedouins traditionally lived in tents, many also have more "modern" homes, but still use/visit their tents when convenient. I think the same can be true of modern Pueblos who often live in "modern" homes but go back to their traditional Pueblo for feast days and special events. Both are examples of cultures who have adapted and flourished in often harsh and challenging desert environments.

About 33% of the Earth is made up of some kind of desert environment. Deserts vary greatly from one place to another. Generally a desert is defined as an area receiving less than 10 inches of precipitation a year. Despite the harshness of many desert environments, National Geographic estimates that more than 1 billion people live in desert environments.

(<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/desert>) With this in mind, I decided to create a lesson comparing/contrasting two desert peoples I have come in contact with throughout the year.

Essential Question: How have people adapted to life in a desert environment?

Lesson Objectives:

The purpose of this lesson is to compare/contrast how 2 different cultural groups have, not only, learned how to survive in desert type environments, but have successfully adapted and still participate in many aspects of their traditional cultures.

CCSS Standards(Common Core):

- **Social Studies 3.22** Create a model to demonstrate how geographic factors influence where people settle and how people make adaptations to the environment to make a location more suitable for settlement.
- **Social Studies 3.29** Examine the various ways people earn a living to meet their basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter, and how this has changed over time in various world communities.
- **Social Studies 4.11** Describe the different groups of people that have settled in New Mexico throughout history and describe their contributions to New Mexico cultures. ● **Social Studies 4.23** Explore how geographic factors influence locations of settlement and use of natural resources to meet basic needs of humans.
- **Social Studies 5.28** Examine and explore how the physical environment influences human population and land use.
- **Reading Literature 3b 4a 5a** Students will develop an understanding of people, cultures, and societies and explore self-identity through literature, media, and oral tradition.

Relevant Vocabulary:

- **Desert:** An area receiving less than 10 inches of precipitation a year.
- **Bedouin:** Nomadic Arab tribes living in the desert regions of Arabia, North Africa, and the Levant.
- **Puebloan:** Native people living in the Southwestern United States tracing back thousands of years.
- **Nomadic:** Moving from place to place
- **Agricultural:** Farming
- **Domesticate:** Taming an animal order to provide food, power or company.
- **Sedentary:** Staying in one place
- **Culture:** All the ways of life including art, tools, beliefs, religion, customs, etc. of a group of people; “the way of life for an entire society”
- **Cultural Artifacts:** man-made objects that are important to a cultural group and their way of life; any object made, used or modified by humans.

Materials/Supplies:

- A wide selection of age appropriate books from their school library/ public library about traditional Bedouins and Puebloans
- Pictures of Bedouins and Puebloans available online
- Examples of their cultural artifacts that reflect their unique traditional lifestyles(pictures or actual artifacts)
- Age appropriate Youtube videos and websites
- Compare/contrast recording sheet, and artifact recording sheets(#1 and #2 providing different levels of support).

Lesson Procedures:

1. I would start off by asking students what they know about deserts and the people who live

- in them such as: What makes a desert so unique? What types of things do people need to live in a desert environment? How do people survive/adapt to living in a desert?
2. Discuss what the terms culture and cultural artifacts mean; discuss examples of each. To help students understand what they are looking for, use students' "modern lifestyles" and list examples of cultural artifacts in their own lives before looking at other cultures.
 3. For this activity we are going to examine 2 groups of desert dwellers: Bedouins and Puebloans.
 4. Ask students how they think people have *traditionally* adapted to desert type environments. You could use a graphic organizer to record their responses.
 5. Put students in small groups and give each group a cultural artifact sheet. Students will use this sheet to record their observations at each station.
 6. Students will rotate around the room to various stations; stations will depend upon grade levels, number of students, and available sources of information. At each station, students will examine, discuss, and record the items on the cultural artifact sheet; they may also want to sketch the items as they rotate through the stations. Allow students 15-20 minutes at each station before rotating.
 7. Examples of stations: Youtube videos and websites about traditional Puebloans and Bedouins, library books about Puebloans and Bedouins, pictures of various aspects of each culture, and items from each culture as available.
 8. Stations could include pictures/examples such as weavings, pottery, petroglyphs, herding animals, pictures/seeds of crops such as bean, squash, and corn, pictures of clothing, homes, common tools used, etc.
 9. After students have rotated through the stations, discuss and record on a T-chart/Smart Board as a whole group, noting similarities/differences and the possible reasons for such. What do these artifacts reveal about the people they represent?
 10. Students, as a group, will then record their findings/conclusions on the Group Comparison/Contrast Sheet as a final assessment.