

Desert Dunes

9 The golden dunes of this sizzling, empty land stretch
21 out as far as the eye can see. They weave across the
30 landscape like a snake. Soft mounds moulded by the
38 wind are covered in rippled patterns. The minute
46 grains of speckled sand glide across the surface,
55 continuing to move and dance in the warm breeze.

65 The heat of the midday sun beats down harshly on
74 the desert floor, leaving it parched, cracked and dusty.
84 The only water is a mirage. It's an illusion to
87 trick the eye.

97 A line of mighty camels frames the horizon as they
106 trek across the fierce and barren land. The only
115 audible sounds are their distant grunts and an eerie
121 hum from the ever-moving sands.



Quick Questions



1. Which words or phrases in this text give us the impression that the atmosphere is strange and unpleasant?



2. Look for an example of a simile in the text. How does this add meaning?



3. Why do you think the author chose to use the word 'fierce' to describe the land?



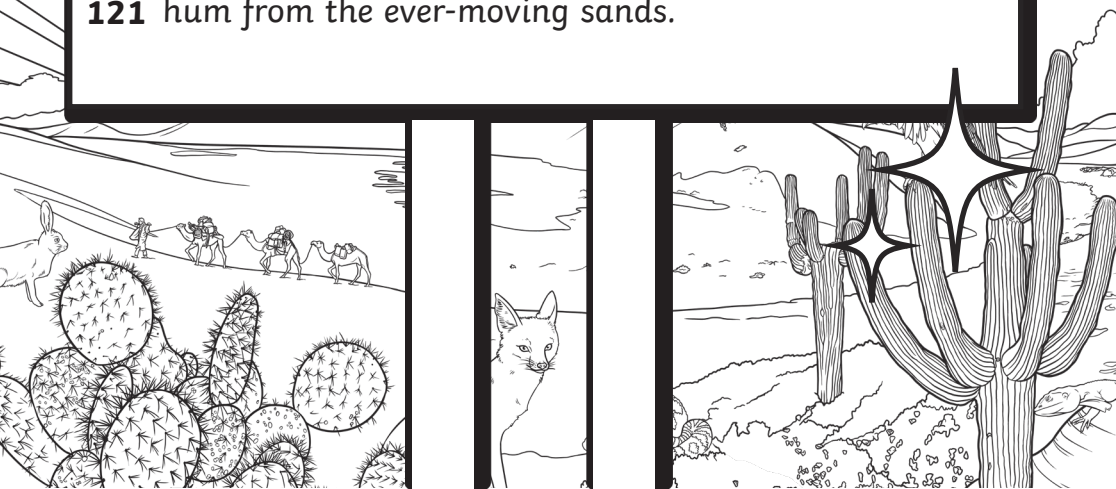
4. What does the word 'parched' tell us about the desert floor?

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Answers



1. Which words or phrases in this text give us the impression that the atmosphere is strange and unpleasant?

beats down harshly; fierce and barren land; eerie

2. Look for an example of a simile in the text. How does this add meaning?



The simile 'like a snake' adds meaning because it helps the reader to visualise the shape of the dunes and how they look.

3. Why do you think the author chose to use the word 'fierce' to describe the land?



Accept any reasonable inference, such as: I think the author used the word 'fierce' to describe the land because it is sizzling hot, parched and barren. The word 'fierce' emphasises that it's an unpleasant place.

4. What does the word 'parched' tell us about the desert floor?



The word 'parched' tells us that the desert floor is extremely dry.