**ProTalk**

Discussion Files



# C1. Survival in the desert

Afaq Language Center

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# Goals

- Can read and understand a lengthy text on the topic of desert survival.
- Can evaluate some strategies for surviving in the wild and explain my own view of the concept of 'survival of the fittest'.



# What do you think?

‘Man can live about forty days without food, about three days without water, about eight minutes without air, but only for one second without hope.’

– Charles Darwin

# Survival stories



What is your favourite film, book or TV show about survival in the desert, on an island, or somewhere else?

# Getting lost

## Have you ever got lost? How did it happen?





# Getting lost

If you were to become lost in the desert, what would you do first?



**Read the text and summarize it.**

# Survival in the desert

Italian police officer Mauro Prosperi was **fulfilling** a lifelong dream when he entered the The Marathon des Sables, a 250-kilometre race across the desert that is considered to be one of the world's most difficult **endurance** races. After a sandstorm caused him to lose his sense of direction Prosperi knew he would be lost, and he immediately did something that would save his life later: he urinated in a bottle.



**Read the text and summarize it.**

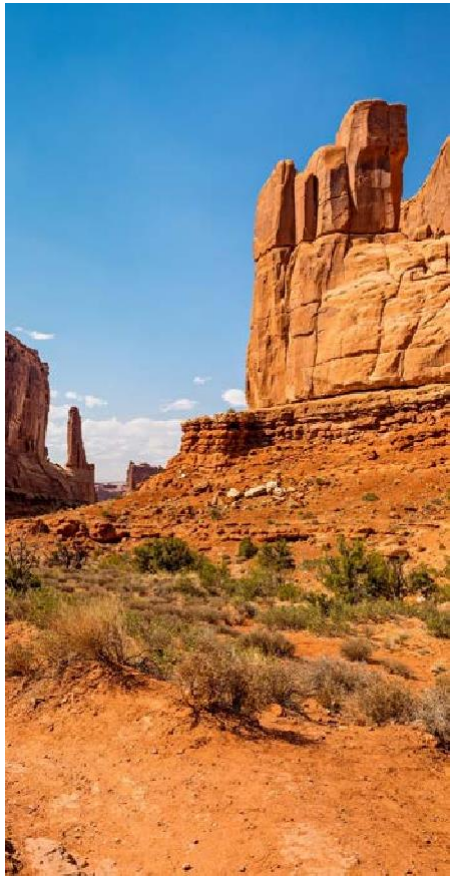
# Survival in the desert

Getting lost in the desert is a frightening and life-threatening **ordeal**, but there are some things people can do to raise their chances of survival. It's said that humans can survive weeks without food—Ghandi went without for 21 days on a hunger strike—but water is a far more essential element for the body, especially in the desert heat. By urinating in a bottle, Prosperi had ensured he would have something to **sustain** himself within the hours or days ahead.



**Read the text and summarize it.**

# Survival in the desert



The biggest threats to survival in the desert are **dehydration** and **exposure** to the elements, both the harsh daytime sun and the cold of night. After water, cover or shelter should be a high priority, with long trousers and sleeves an absolute given.

When Victoria Grover broke her leg and became stranded in the deserts of Utah, she remembered the survival course she had taken 40 years earlier. She used her walking stick and scarf to make a **leg brace**, then slept during the daytime and stayed awake all night, **huddled** under her **poncho**. For the first three nights she was able to gather firewood, but on the fourth her leg hurt too badly. Thankfully, she was rescued the next day with just mild **hypothermia**.

**Read the text and summarize it.**

# Survival in the desert

Some people manage to survive in the desert out of **sheer luck** more than knowledge or skill. During World War II, a group of South African airmen got lost in the Libyan desert and were forced to land when one plane ran low on fuel. They sent another plane to **scout around** for help, and in the meantime drank 75 litres of water between the group. The search team had no luck, and after three days the men were out of fuel and water...



## Do you know these words from the text? Discuss the meanings with your teacher and use each in a sentence.

endurance

ordeal

to huddle

exposure

to fulfill

to scout around

to sustain

dehydration

hypothermia

# Dangers in the desert

**The text mentions dehydration and exposure to be the biggest threats to survival in the desert. What other threats might there be? Below are some ideas.**





# Survival in the wilderness

**There are plenty of places where it's difficult to survive. How would survival techniques differ from the desert in the locations below?**









# Imagine that...

**You want to challenge yourself to a one-day hike through the desert.**



1 What can you do to prepare for the hike? What would you include in your rucksack?

# Imagine that...

**You‘ve finished your prep and the big day is here. You‘re on the hike!**



1 What can you do to prepare for the hike? What would you include in your rucksack?



2 What can you do while hiking to avoid getting injured or lost?

# Imagine that...

**You've tried your best but the worst happened. You're lost!**



1 What can you do to prepare for the hike? What would you include in your rucksack?



2 What can you do while hiking to avoid getting injured or lost?



3 What actions can you take to increase your chances of surviving, and being rescued?

## Sheer luck

Have you ever achieved anything out of sheer luck? Describe your experience.

# Charles Darwin's theory of *Survival of the fittest*



Do you believe in survival of the fittest? Why or why not?

# Just for fun

If you were stranded on a deserted island and could only have three things from home with you, what would they be and why?



# Describe your emotions

**Make a list of different words you would use to describe how you'd feel in each situation.**

| Getting lost | Getting rescued |
| --- | --- |
| | |

# Presentation

Using one of your lists from the previous activity, prepare a two-minute presentation imagining either getting lost or getting rescued. Include several reasons to support your point of view.
Give your presentation to the class. Answer questions and get feedback.

