



School-Home Connection

Your child is reading “Saguaro Cactus,” by Paul and Shirley Berquist. In this selection the authors describe the life cycle of the giant saguaro cactus and explain its importance as a center of life in the desert. The saguaro grows slowly at first, standing only about 10 feet tall after 50 years. Over the next 25 years, though, it grows as tall as 50 feet, develops arms, and becomes home for a variety of birds and other creatures. Many saguaros live to an age of 200 years before they die, topple over and decompose.

Cactus Care

Borrow a plant-care book from the library and learn how to grow a cactus indoors or outdoors. Read aloud with your child the sections on cactus care. Then work together to make a list of the things you would have to do if you decided that you wanted to grow a cactus.

VOCABULARY

Guess the Word

The following words are new vocabulary your child has learned while reading “Saguaro Cactus”:

brush	habitat
spiny	topple
teeming	decompose

Discuss the meanings of these words with your child. During the next week you might use the words to play a guessing game with clues like this one: “I’m thinking of a word that begins like *destruction* and ends like *suppose*. What word am I thinking of?” (*decompose*)



TIME TO READ

Encourage your child to read for at least 30 minutes outside of class each day.

Food from the Desert

Work with your child to find out which foods grow well in desert regions, and make a list of them. Your list might include hot peppers, grapefruit, dates, and cactus leaves.) Then work together to plan a meal that features one or more of these desert foods. If possible, prepare and serve the meal. Your child might enjoy making illustrated menus to give to family members.

