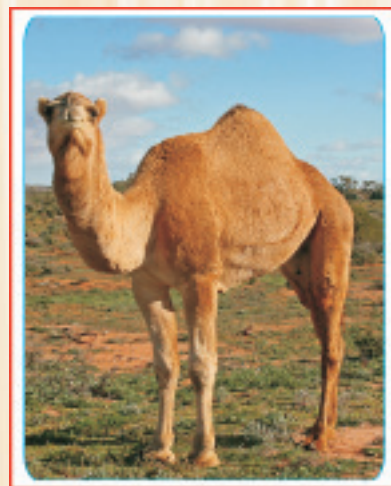


LET'S BEGIN

- Name four deserts of the world.
- Name the places where camels are found.
- Find the difference between a hot desert and a cold desert.

Sama's father, a doctor by profession was transferred from Srinagar to Nubra valley in Ladakh. He asked his daughter to spend her summer vacation with him in Nubra. Both the father and the daughter stayed as paying guests at Dixit Dolma's house. Sama and Dolma became friends at very first sight and, therefore, Sama asked Dolma to tell her something about Nubra.



Dolma : Do you know that Ladakh is a desert?

Sama : Oh! You are kidding me.

Dolma : No, no. It is true. Ladakh is known not only as a desert but in fact, a cold desert.

Sama : It is wonderful. I had heard only about the Sahara in Africa and the Thar in Rajasthan. Oh! it is thrilling to know that right now I am enjoying the magnificence of one of the most beautiful cold deserts of the world.

Dolma : One more speciality is the camel in Ladakh.

Sama : Now you're kidding me again. It is like a bald man carrying a comb or an Eskimo enjoying an ice cream.

Dolma : No, no. I am telling you the truth. I will arrange a meeting with Moosa Ali on Sunday.



- **Zoological name**

Camelus Bactrianus

- **Herbivore**

Prefers grass leaves and shrubs but will eat dry vegetation and salt bush that other mammals avoid.

- **Habitat**

Steep grassland, mainly valleys and canyons in mountainous areas.

A few wild herds exist in Nubra.

Sama was very curious to know who this Moosa Ali was. However, it was a bright Sunday morning and Sama was very happy because she had no other friends at Nubra. Sama and Dolma after enjoying gur gur tea and Mukh Mukh, left for Moosa Ali's home.



Description

- Length 10 feet
- Height 7 feet
- Weight 1500 pounds
- Light to dark brown coat, short in summer with thin mane on chin, shoulder, hind legs and humps.
- Winter coat longer, thicker and darker.



Sama was surprised to see the camel calf in the company of a boy. Dixit Dolma pointing towards the boy said, “Look he is Moosa Ali.”

After exchanging pleasantries, Dolma asked Moosa Ali to tell them something about the Bactrian Camel.

Moosa Ali asked them to accompany him along with his camel calf into the vicinity of his village, Diskit, where a group of wild Bactrians was present.





The Bactrian Camel is originally a native of Mangolia where it is called the Haftkai. However, it is also found in remote areas of the Gobi and Taklamakan deserts in Mangolia and China where it was heavily hunted for its hide and meat.

It is interesting to know that most of the transport across the Karakoram and Silk route was on the double humped Bactrian Camel because of its outstanding performance on the mountains and desert trails.

The Bactrian Camel is one of the best prepared mammals for the harsh extremes of the desert. Faced with the scorching heat, chilling cold and scarcity of food and water, many animals struggle but the wild Haftkai faces all the odds. The Camel can cover around 50 kms a day.

The Camel's long narrow nostril and dense eyelashes efficiently prevent damage from sandstorms. It sweats and urinates little, thus prolonging resistance to thirst.





Special Adaptation

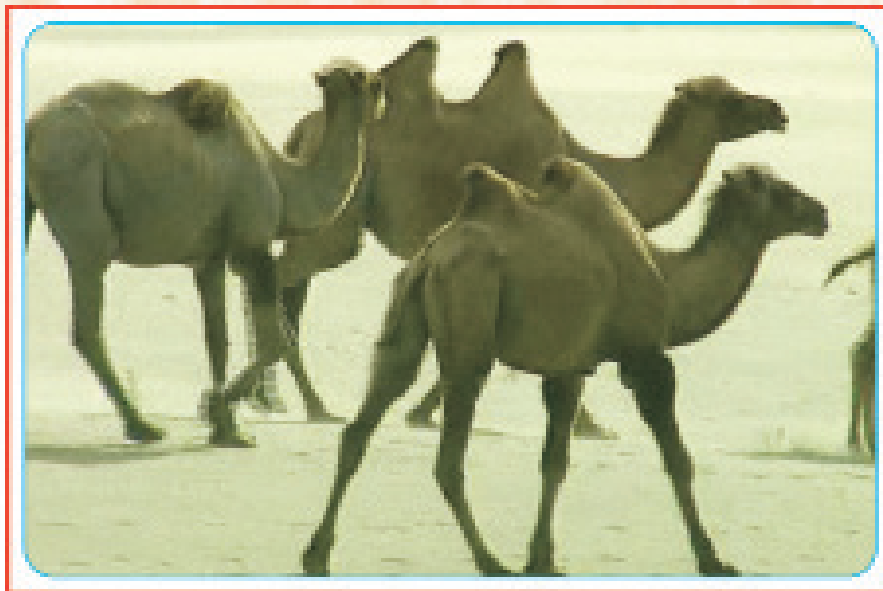
- Snowshoe effect prevents sinking in sand as the body weight rests on sole pads with only front ends of the hooves touching the ground.
- Long legs allow the camel to travel great distances easily.
- Thick calloused knees protect the joints when the animal lies down.

Sama : It is so great to see the camel calf clinging to Moosa Ali.

Moosa Ali : I have many times tried to find the camel calf's mother, so that the camel can join its herd, because I take it as my moral duty.

Dolma : It is so happy with you. It treats you as its mother.

The most noticeable feature of the Bactrian camel is its two humps. At the hump, the average height of the Camel is 7 feet. A common misconception is that the camel's humps are used for storage of water. In reality, the humps contain a huge amount of fat, approximately thirty six kgs, which is used when the food is scarce. This feature gives the camel the ability to live for many days without food.





Sama : Nowadays one hardly finds harmony between man and animal. It seems that the two cannot co-exist. Encroaching upon the animal world deprives the animal world of their habitat. Every now and then we hear about a tiger killing a man and a man killing a bear.

Gestation

- 12-15 months followed by single birth.
- Life span : 40 years.

Status

- **Endangered**
- Former wide range of this species has been dramatically reduced due to competition with domestic herds, particularly for water.



Moosa Ali : The population of the Bactrian Camel is also declining currently. The Bactrian Camel is found only in Mangolia, China and Ladakh (Nubra) and the number of wild Bactrian Camel is a few thousand world wide. However, the encouraging thing in Nubra is that it is increasing in number.

Dolma : What's the reason behind it?

Sama : Obviously, man-animal relationship. Didn't you notice the camel calf's love for Moosa Ali?

Moosa Ali : It is a symbiotic relationship – a hope for the wild Bactrian Camel to survive and grow in number which has otherwise almost reached the brink of extinction.



Dolma : Well, Moosa, you had taken a chance to look for the reunion of camel calf with its herd but could not find the calf's mother. So the story goes on between the two of you.

Moosa Ali : Yes, the camel calf is my companion and the two of us will face the hard times ahead of us together.

Courtesy: Dept of EMRC, Kashmir University

The film Moosa Ali's Camel has been produced and scripted by Shafqat Habib at EMMRC, KU.



Glossary

Nubra	: a valley in Ladakh
acquaint	: make aware of or familiar with
gur gur tea	: tea drunk in Ladakh
mukh mukh	: a type of snack
Haftkai	: Bactrian Camel is called Haftkai in Mongolia
scorching	: intensely hot
chilling	: very cold
scarcity	: lack of something
symbiotic	: interaction between two different organisms living in close physical association, in which both of them are benefited

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

1. Where is the Bactrian Camel found?
2. What is the most noticeable feature of the Bactrian Camel? How does it help the Camel?
3. How does the Bactrian Camel adapt itself to different environment?
4. Is the camel calf happy with Moosa Ali? If yes, why do you think so?
5. What are the factors responsible for increase in the population of the Bactrian Camel in Nubra?

LANGUAGE WORK

Fill in the blanks:

1. In J&K, the Bactrian Camel is found in _____ .

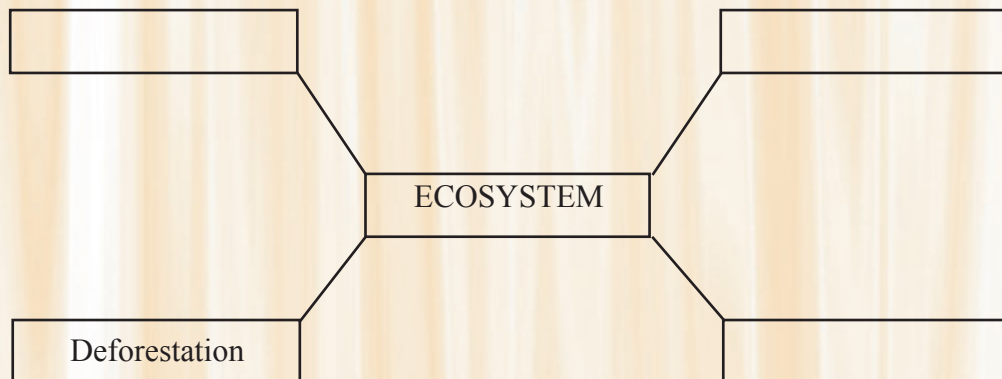


2. _____ is the name of Moosa Ali's village.
3. The humps of the Camel do not store _____ but _____ which is used when the animal falls short of food.
4. The Bactrian Camel is also called _____ in Mongolia.
5. The average height of the double humped camel is _____ and its weight is _____.



LET'S WRITE

1. Sum up your ideas of a healthy ecosystem in a small paragraph.
2. How is our ecosystem disturbed? Mention at least four causes. One is done for you.



3. Write an e-mail informing your friend about the flora and fauna of your place.
4. Write down the names of any four deserts.

GRAMMAR WORK

- I. Study this sentence:

It is the valley of Kashmir that contains glorious mountains, gardens, sacred places and the world's famous lakes.



This sentence has two parts: a) ‘It is the valley of Kashmir’, and (b) ‘Kashmir has glorious mountains, gardens, sacred places and the world’s famous lakes’. But, in the second part instead of ‘Kashmir’ we have used ‘that’ which refers to ‘Kashmir’. When words like ‘that’, ‘who’, and ‘which’ (in fact, most of the **wh-words**) refer to a noun that has been mentioned before, it is called a **relative pronoun**. In the following sentences, the underlined words are all relative pronouns and the clause that begins with a relative pronoun is called a relative clause;

- i. Ahmad is the boy who lives next door.
- ii. This is the house which/that Mohan lives in.
- iii. Is that the boy whose brother is a singer?

Sometimes a relative pronoun can be omitted also:

- i. This is the photo I like the best. (OR that/which I like the best)

Now, fill in the blanks with **that/which/who/whose** in the following sentences (sometimes you can have a sentence without them):

- i. Do you know the teacher.....won this year’s best teacher award?
- ii. The foodwe eat gives us energy.
- iii. The picture..... she gave me actually belongs to Nisha.
- iv. Uneasy lies the head..... wears the crown.
- v. Agha Shahid Ali was a Kashmiri poet.....lived in America.
- vi. This is the house.....walls broke because of yesterday’s earthquake.
- vii. Fruit.....contains lot of vitamins is good for health.
- viii. A thief is a person.....steals things.
- ix. The manphoned didn’t tell his name.
- x. An aeroplane is a machineflies.



II. 'Lakes' is the plural of 'lake'. What is the plural of the following words:
(Some words may have it and some may not. Just Check them.)

watch	radio	sheep	daughter	palace	knife
shrine	army	toy	Kashmiri	cat	leaf
room	baby	lorry	ox	cow	tomato
carrot	fruit	novel	book	chip	fly
news	bookcase	workman	classroom	teapot	inkpot
camel	advice	information	fish	pony	deer

Some nouns have no singular, e.g. scissors, trousers, clothes, etc.

Can you find some more such nouns?

Tongue Twister

Picky People pick Peter-Pan Peanut butter

It is the peanut-butter picky People pick.