Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus
2nd Grade Literacy Curriculum

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Final Unit Project
FLA 518
5/17/10
Introduction
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Unit Introduction

1. Title: Keys to Comprehension

2. Grade Level: 2nd grade

3. Target Group: Transitional bilingual Classroom


5. Source of Lesson: New Haven Public Schools Literacy Curriculum Unit 3 Week 1 Lessons

6. 3-4 Learning Goals:

   a. I want my students to know how to use the text to support their answers.

   b. I want my students to know how to determine the main idea of a section of text.

   c. I want my students to know how to create a title for a given section of text that is appropriate for the content being covered in the section.
Narrative

In order to make these lessons more comprehensible for the transitional bilingual students, a variety of modifications have been made to the lessons and text. The strategies used to modify this lesson include: sheltered strategies, adjusted discourse, adjusted speech pacing, and enhanced interaction. These changes will help the transitional bilingual students to better understand the lessons and therefore help them do better on the district assessment that these lessons help prepare them for.

One of the strategies addressed in this lesson is realia. Some of the vocabulary can be a bit obscure for ELLs and may be very problematic for them. Therefore, bringing in pieces of realia to help describe and explain unknown vocabulary will help them better understand the text and make stronger connections to what they are learning about the Saguaro Cactus. Realia is used in every lesson to review new vocabulary prior to reading the section of text.

In addition to the realia, the use of word walls is important to help students recall and use the new vocabulary addressed in the text. The word wall will be added to with words and pictures to accompany the words when possible. The students will be able to refer to the word wall when working in pairs and also when writing their responses.

Another strategy used is enhanced interaction amongst the students. They have an opportunity to discuss the answers to the questions prior to having to write a response. This is important because the students can work together to make meaning out of what they are learning and then they can demonstrate their understanding individually through a written response.
The written response in another adjustment made to this lesson. The levels of English proficiency in the transitional bilingual classroom vary and not every student can be expected to produce the same work. However, all students need to show that they are learning. There are five different level worksheets that are included in these lessons to account for the varying levels of English proficiency.

In order to make the text more comprehensible for the students, it has also been modified. In the book, there are some lengthy sentences that can be confusing to ELLs, which I have modified to make them shorter and easier to read. However, the text changes do not make the text simpler; it makes it more comprehensible. I have left important vocabulary in the text, which will have to be addressed during the lesson. I only modified text that needed to be changed to make the story more comprehensible. The majority of the text remained unchanged.

The modifications to this lesson will make a great difference in what the students will be able to learn and produce. The original lesson was difficult and in many cases above their level of English proficiency. With the modifications listed here and the other modifications featured in the lesson, all students participating in the lesson will be successful.
Lesson 1
Lesson 1
Performance Indicators

Lesson 1 Content Objective:
Students will be able to use the text Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus to support their answer to the question “What is this selection mainly about?”.

Lesson 1 Language Objectives:
Students will be able to read along while the teacher reads aloud the selection of text and answer orally, with a partner, the question “What is this selection mainly about?”.

Students will be able to read along while the teacher reads aloud the selection of text and write an answer to the question “What is this selection mainly about?”.

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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Write what the selection of text is mainly about</td>
<td>Write a paragraph using 3 sentences that tell what the selection is mainly about and use examples from the text.</td>
<td>Write a sentence to tell what the selection is mainly about using the text to support your answer.</td>
<td>Write a sentence by filling in the blanks to tell what the selection of text is mainly about.</td>
<td>Write a sentence by filling in the blanks to tell what the selection of text is mainly about with the support of a word bank.</td>
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<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Orally tell what the selection of text is mainly about to a partner</td>
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## Functional/Notational Chart
### Lesson 1

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<th>Expressions</th>
<th>Words</th>
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<tr>
<td>Notice/Determine</td>
<td>The evidence in a selection of text to determine the main idea</td>
<td>The evidence from this selection is ____________ lives in the saguaro cactus.</td>
<td>The owl, the gila woodpecker, the elf owl, the Harris hawk</td>
<td>Present Tense Nouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain</td>
<td>Explain what the main idea of the selection is</td>
<td>This selection is mainly about ____________</td>
<td>Animals, birds, owls, saguaro cactus, homes, nests, eggs, sleep</td>
<td>Present Tense Nouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>KWL Chart</td>
<td>In the desert there is/are ____________</td>
<td>Sand, cacti, animals, insects, plants</td>
<td>Present Tense Nouns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 1

*Denotes that the following selection is taken from the original lesson

Materials:
- Cactus plant
- Rubber band
- Balloon
- Accordion (or a picture of one)
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus (Copies of book with modified text)
- Worksheets (Some with answer frames, word banks, etc) for written response

Before Reading (10 Minutes):

1. **Prior Knowledge:** Students will create a KWL Chart (as a class; with the teacher) to determine what they already know about cacti and what they would like to know (The Learned section of the chart will be completed at the end of the unit).
2. **Realia:** Hold up each item of realia (one at a time) and start a discussion about what it is, where they have seen it, what its characteristics are, etc.
   a. Cactus plant
   b. Accordion (or a picture of one if the band/music teacher does not have an accordion to borrow)
3. **Vocabulary Review:**
   a. Harm (Page 3)
   b. Stretches (Page 3) ^Use a rubber band to demonstrate stretching
   c. Accordion-like pleats (Page 3) ^Use the accordion or picture of an accordion to demonstrate what the pleats of the cactus look like
   d. Expand (Page 3) ^Use a balloon to demonstrate expanding
4. **Intro to Focus:**
   a. The teacher will ask “What is this selection mainly about?”
      i. What does this question mean?
      ii. How do we answer it?
      iii. What is our job today while we are reading?
5. **Reading Strategy:**
   a. Notice what the main idea or topic sentence is in each paragraph. You can identify the topic sentence if all the other sentences support the topic or if the author is giving examples.
   b. Figure out what is common throughout the selection.
   c. Ask yourself, “What is the author telling me overall, what is this mostly about?” or “What is the main idea?”

During Reading (15 Minutes):

1. The teacher will read pages 1-6 aloud while the class reads along in their text.
a. The teacher will read slowly and clearly to allow for students of varying language levels to comprehend the text.
b. The teacher will stop after each paragraph to check for understanding. Students will be given the opportunity to ask for clarification and to paraphrase what was read.
c. The teacher should ask the students questions throughout the reading of the section to check for understanding also. The questioning should be varied to help students with different language abilities. (See performance indicators; page 4)

2. While reading along with the teacher, the students will complete listening guides based on their language level (See pages 8-12).
3. Use chart paper to notice the evidence of the main idea of the selection
4. Rephrase/paraphrase the evidence and write it on the chart paper in kid friendly language.

5. **Notice the evidence (Teacher models):**
   a. Pages 4: Paragraph 1: Bird makes room for its eggs in the cactus.
   b. Page 6: Paragraph 1: The owl uses the nest to sleep in during the day.
   c. Page 6: Paragraph 2: The hawks (type of bird) use the saguaro cactus to make their home.

6. **Applying other strategies (Teacher models)*:**
   a. Wondering: I wonder if other animals depend on the Saguaro Cactus.
   b. Connecting: I can make a connection. I have been to a desert in Arizona and seen the enormous (huge, really big) Saguaro Cacti. They are very tall.

**After Reading (15 Minutes):**
1. “What is this selection mainly about?”
2. **Modeling:**
   a. Oral: The teacher will model how to discuss the answer to the question with a partner.
   b. Written: The teacher will model how to respond to the question on the board for the students. The teacher will model how to use the question to start the answer: “This selection is mainly about…”

3. **Applying:**
   a. Students will do “Think-Pair-Share” with a partner to discuss what they think the selection was mainly about; using the book to help them.
   b. Students will then return to their desks and complete a writing activity answering the question “What is this selection mainly about?” (See attached worksheets which include different answer frames for varying language abilities on pages 13-17).

4. **Differentiation:**
   a. See performance indicators (Page 4)
   b. See leveled worksheets (Page 5)

5. **Closure:**
   a. Students can share their work with a partner at their table.
A strange and wonderful tree grows in the desert. It is called a saguaro (sa-WAHR-O) cactus.

There are many unusual shapes in the saguaro world.
The saguaro grows in the Sonoran desert, which is in parts of Arizona, California, and Mexico. This cactus can grow as tall as fifty feet. It can weigh up to several tons. It can live for two hundred years.

The saguaro’s sharp spines protect it from harm. The accordion-like pleats in its skin expand in the rain. This stores extra water for the long dry times.
When you stand in the desert, everything is quiet. If you listen carefully, you can hear the wind moving past the spines.
Now there is another sound: tap, tap, tap. The holes you see in the saguaro trunk are made by the Gila (Hee-la) woodpecker. In the spring, he pecks a hole for his mate’s eggs.

The saguaro forms a hard lining around the nests. When the cactus dies it leaves the forms behind on the ground. They are called “saguaro boots” by the Indians who use them to hold food.
When the Gila woodpecker moves out, the elf owl moves in. This is the tiniest owl in the world. It is just 5 inches long. The owl hunts for food at night and sleeps during the day. Because of the thick lining and the moisture, the nest stays cool even on the hottest day.

Harris’ hawks are the largest birds to make their homes in the saguaro cactus. They can have as many as four hawks in the same territory.

Sometimes the hawks use each other as perches. As many as three birds have been seen stacked on top of a saguaro! This is called Back Standing.
Listening Guide: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus
Pages 1-7

Put a check ✓ next to the words when you hear them.

________ saguaro
________ cactus
________ desert
________ Sonoran
________ Arizona
________ Mexico
________ California
________ spines
________ accordion-like pleats
________ Gila Woodpecker
________ owl
________ hawk
________ nest
Listening Guide: *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus*

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

- __________ saguaro
- __________ cactus
- __________ desert
- __________ Sonoran
- __________ Arizona
- __________ Mexico
- __________ California
- __________ spines
- __________ accordion-like pleats
- __________ Gila Woodpecker
- __________ owl
Listening Guide: *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus*  
Pages 1-7

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

__________________ saguaro
__________________ cactus
__________________ desert
__________________ Sonoran
__________________ Arizona
__________________ Mexico
__________________ California
__________________ spines
__________________ accordion-like pleats
__________________ Gila Woodpecker
Listening Guide: *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus*
Pages 1-7

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

___________________ saguaro

___________________ cactus

___________________ desert

___________________ Gila Woodpecker

___________________ Arizona

___________________ Mexico

___________________ California
Listening Guide: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus
Pages 1-7

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

___________________ saguaro
___________________ cactus
___________________ desert
___________________ Gila Woodpecker
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: In 3 sentences, tell what the selection of text is mainly about. Use examples from the text to support your answer.
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Write a sentence to tell what the selection is mainly about. Use the text to support your answer.
Desert Giant: The World Of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Write a sentence to tell what the selection is mainly about. Then draw a picture to go with it.

This selection is mainly about ________________________________

My Picture
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Fill in the blanks to tell what the selection is mainly about. Then draw a picture to go with it.

This selection is mainly about the ___________ that make their ___________ in the ___________ cactus.

My Picture
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Fill in the blanks to tell what the selection is mainly about. Use the words in the Word Bank to complete the sentence. Then draw a picture to go with it.

Word Bank

animals  saguaro  homes

This selection is mainly about the ________ that make their ________ in the ________ cactus.

My Picture
Lesson 2 Content Objective:
Students will be able to use the text *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus* to support their answer to the question “This section of text does not have a title. What could be a title for it? Support your answer with details from the text.”

Lesson 2 Language Objectives:
Students will be able to read along while the teacher reads aloud the selection of text and answer orally, with a partner, the question “This section of text does not have a title. What could be a title for it? Support your answer with details from the text.”

Students will be able to read along while the teacher reads aloud the selection of text and write an answer to the question “This section of text does not have a title. What could be a title for it? Support your answer with details from the text.”

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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Write a title for this section of text</td>
<td>Write a paragraph using 3 sentences to create a title for the section of text, supporting the title with details from the story.</td>
<td>Write a sentence to create a title for the section of text, using the text to support the answer.</td>
<td>Write a sentence to create a title for the section of text with the support of a sentence starter.</td>
<td>Write a sentence by filling in the blanks to create a title for the section of text.</td>
<td>Write a sentence by filling in the blanks to create a title for the section of text with the support of a word bank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Orally tell what a good title for this section of text would be</td>
<td>Tell a partner in 3 complete sentences what a good title for this section of text would be</td>
<td>Tell a partner in 1 complete sentence what a good title for this section of text would be</td>
<td>Tell a partner what a good title for this section of text would be with the support of a sentence starter.</td>
<td>Tell a partner what a good title for this section of text would be with the support of a sentence starter and using one or two words to fill in the blanks.</td>
<td>Tell a partner what a good title for this section of text would be using one or two words.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>Discuss what we read and learned about the Saguaro Cactus yesterday</td>
<td>Yesterday we learned that Saguaro Cacti</td>
<td>Grow in the desert, are tall, can live for 200 years, have sharp spines, can weigh a lot</td>
<td>Verbs and Adjectives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yesterday we learned that _______ lives in the Saguaro Cactus.</td>
<td>The owl, the gila woodpecker, the elf owl, the Harris hawk</td>
<td>Present Tense Nouns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create/Explain</td>
<td>Create a title for the section of text and support it with details</td>
<td>A good title for this section would be _______</td>
<td>Animals, Pollinating Saguaro Cacti, Flowers Blooming, Fertilizing Flowers</td>
<td>Verbs and Present Tense Nouns</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 2

*Denotes that the following selection is taken from the original lesson

Materials:
- Picture of a flower bud (a real flower bud if available)
- Picture of pollen
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus (Copies of book with modified text)
- Worksheets (Some with answer frames, word banks, etc) for written response

Before Reading (10 Minutes):
1. **Prior Knowledge:** The teacher will ask students questions about what was read yesterday in Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus
   a. The class will create a word wall with vocabulary from the text that was learned the day before. As the class reviews the words, the teacher will add the words to the word wall and include picture representation of the words when able.
2. **Realia:** Hold up each item of realia (one at a time) and start a discussion about what it is, where they have seen it, what its characteristics are, etc.
   a. Picture of a flower bud
   b. Picture of pollen
3. **Vocabulary Review:**
   a. Blossom (pg. 9)
   b. Nectar (pg. 9)
   c. Pollinate (pg. 9)
   d. Fertilize (pg. 11)
4. **Intro to Focus***:
   a. The teacher will say “This section does not have a title. What could be a title for it? Support your answer with details from the text.”
      i. What is our job today while we read?
      ii. How will we decide what a good title would be?
5. **Reading Strategy***:
   a. Read each paragraph carefully. Notice the main idea that the author is trying to express.
   b. Figure out what is common between all of the paragraphs
   c. Ask yourself, “What would the reader learn about this selection from an appropriate title?” Remember, a title would give your reader a quick preview of what they will be reading.
   d. Determine a title that would best fit the selection.

During Reading (15 Minutes):
1. The teacher will read pages 7-11 aloud while the class reads along in their text.
   a. The teacher will read slowly and clearly to allow for students of varying language levels to comprehend the text.
b. The teacher will stop after each paragraph to check for understanding. Students will be given the opportunity to ask for clarification and to paraphrase what was read.

c. The teacher should ask the students questions throughout the reading of the section to check for understanding also. The questioning should be varied to help students with different language abilities. (See performance indicators; page 18)

2. The students will complete listening guides while reading/listening to the story (See pages 23-27).

3. Use chart paper to notice the main idea that the author is trying to express

4. Rephrase/paraphrase the details and write it in kid friendly language on the chart paper

5. **Notice the evidence (Teacher models)**:
   a. Pages 8-9: Picture: Bats flying towards the flowers
   b. Page 9: Paragraph 2: Bats drink the nectar. Pollen sticks to their noses. Carry it to the next flower
   c. Pages 10-11: Picture: Dove’s beak in the flower
   d. Page 11: Paragraph 1: Doves drink nectar. Every animal that drinks nectar picks up pollen to fertilize the next flower.

**After Reading (15 Minutes):**

1. “What would be a good title for this section? Support your answer with details from the text.”

2. **Modeling:**
   a. Oral: The teacher will model how the language needed to complete the “Think-Pair-Share” activity.
   b. Written: The teacher will model how to respond to the question on the board, referring to the graphic organizer made to notice the details.

3. **Applying:**
   a. The teacher will post and review a writing strategy to help students completely answer the question.
      i. **Writing Strategy**
         1. Write what the title would be.
         2. Give a reason why it is a good title.
         3. Give an example from the text to support this.
   b. Before writing their answers, students will do “Think-Pair-Share” with a partner to discuss a good title for the section.
   c. Students will then return to their desks to answer the open-ended question using a worksheet that is catered to their language level (See attached pages 28-32 for various worksheets).

4. **Differentiation:**
   a. See performance indicators (Page 18)
   b. See leveled worksheets (Page 19)

5. **Closure:**
a. Students can share their work with the class by reading their answer aloud. Allow students to extend their talk by having what they want to express already written and refer to it in order to produce extended talk.

b. Review what we are learning to do today.
Nighttime. The moon shines in the dark sky. It is May, time for the saguaro to blossom. Out of the top of the cactus the buds emerge and open into large, white flowers with yellow centers. Each flower opens only once, at night, and closes the next afternoon.

Suddenly you hear wings flapping. A bat has come to drink the nectar from the center of the flower. As the bat drinks, the pollen sticks to its face and the bat carries it with him to pollinate the next flower.
The next morning, a dove arrives. They like to drink the nectar, too. One lands on top of the saguaro cactus and puts its head way inside. A butterfly and bee fly around the petals of the flower. Every animal that drinks the nectar picks up pollen and carries it on to fertilize the next flower. When the flower is fertilized, the fruit can begin to form.

It is very hot under the desert sun. By early afternoon, the flowers that opened at night have closed, and the doves have flown to the shade to rest.
Listening Guide: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus
Pages 8-11

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

__________ blossom
__________ flower
__________ pollinate
__________ nectar
__________ pollen
__________ doves
__________ fertilize
__________ afternoon
__________ fruit
__________ flown
__________ flapping
__________ sticks
Listening Guide: *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus*
Pages 8-11

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

- blossom
- flower
- pollinate
- nectar
- pollen
- doves
- fertilize
- spines
- afternoon
- fruit
- flown
Listening Guide: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus
Pages 8-11

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

__________ blossom

__________ flower

__________ pollinate

__________ nectar

__________ pollen

__________ doves

__________ fertilize

__________ afternoon

__________ fruit
Listening Guide: *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus*
Pages 8-11

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

_________ blossom

_________ flower

_________ pollinate

_________ nectar

_________ pollen

_________ doves

_________ fertilize
Listening Guide: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus
Pages 8-11

Put a check next to the words when you hear them.

____________ blossom
____________ flower
____________ pollinate
____________ nectar
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: In 3 sentences, create a title for this section of text using details to support your title.
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Write a sentence to create a title for this section of text using details to support your title.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Write a sentence to create a title for this section of text. Then draw a picture to go with your title.

A good title for this section would be ________________________

My Picture
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Fill in the blanks to create a title for this section of text. Then draw a picture to go with it.

A good title for this section would be __________ the Saguaro because it is mostly about ___________ that drink the ___________ and fertilize the flowers along the way.

My Picture
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Fill in the blanks to create a title for this section of text. Use the words in the Word Bank to complete the sentence. Then draw a picture to go with it.

Word Bank

fertilizing  animals  nectar

A good title for this section would be _____________ the Saguaro because it is mostly about _____________ that drink the _______ and fertilize the flowers along the way.

My Picture
Lesson 3
Lesson 3 Content Objective:
Students will be able to use the text *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus* to support their answer to the question “What is the main idea of this section? Give evidence to support your answer.”

Lesson 3 Language Objectives:
Students will be able to read along while the teacher reads aloud the selection of text and answer orally, with a partner, the question “What is the main idea of this section? Give evidence to support your answer.”

Students will be able to read along while the teacher reads aloud the selection of text and write an answer to the question “What is the main idea of this section? Give evidence to support your answer.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Write the main idea of the section</td>
<td>Write a paragraph using 3 sentences to tell the main idea of the section, supporting it with evidence from the story.</td>
<td>Write a sentence to tell the main idea of the section, using the text to support the answer.</td>
<td>Write a sentence to tell the main idea of the section with the support of a sentence starter.</td>
<td>Write a sentence by filling in the blanks to tell the main idea of the section with the support of a word bank.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Orally tell what the main idea of the section is</td>
<td>Tell a partner in 3 complete sentences what the main idea of the section is.</td>
<td>Tell a partner in 1 complete sentence what the main idea of the section is with the support of a sentence starter.</td>
<td>Tell a partner what the main idea of the section is with the support of a sentence starter and using one or two words to fill in the blanks.</td>
<td>Tell a partner what the main idea of the section is using one or two words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Functional/Notational Chart

**Lesson 3**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Expressions</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Gramm. Structures</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notice/Determine</td>
<td>The evidence in a selection of text to determine the main idea</td>
<td>The <em><strong>1</strong></em> help harvest the saguaro fruit by <em><strong>2</strong></em>.</td>
<td>1. children, women, men 2. catch the fruit, scoop the pulp, remove pebbles, gather wood</td>
<td>Pronouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain</td>
<td>Explain what the main idea of the selection is</td>
<td>This selection is mainly about _____.</td>
<td>The Tohono O’odham Indians, harvesting the saguaro fruit, roles (jobs) of everyone in the community,</td>
<td>Subjects and Verbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 3

*Denotes that the following selection is taken from the original lesson

**Materials:**
- Model of a gathering pole
- Wire mesh
- Pebbles
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus (Copies of book with modified text)
- Worksheets (Some with answer frames, word banks, etc) for written response

**Before Reading (10 Minutes):**
1. **Prior Knowledge:** The teacher will ask students questions about what was read yesterday in Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus
   a. How does a saguaro cactus get fertilized?
   b. What animals help to fertilize the saguaro cactus?
2. **Realia:** Hold up each item of realia (one at a time) and start a discussion about what it is, where they have seen it, what its characteristics are, etc.
   a. Model of a gathering pole
   b. Pebbles
   c. Wire mesh
3. **Vocabulary Review:**
   a. Stalks (pg. 13)
   b. Harvest (pg. 13)
   c. Pulp (pg. 13)
4. **Intro to Focus***:
   a. The teacher will say “What is the main idea of this section? Give evidence to support your answer.”
      iii. What is our job today while we read?
      iv. How do we use the text as evidence?
5. **Reading Strategy***:
   a. Notice what the main idea or topic sentence is in each paragraph. You can identify the topic sentence if all the other sentences support the topic or if the author is giving examples.
   b. Figure out what is common throughout the selection.
   c. Ask yourself, “What is the author telling me overall, what is this mostly about?” or “What is the main idea?”

**During Reading (15 Minutes):**
1. The teacher will read pages 12-15 aloud while the class reads along in their text.
   a. The teacher will read slowly and clearly to allow for students of varying language levels to comprehend the text.
b. The teacher will stop after each paragraph to check for understanding. Students will be given the opportunity to ask for clarification and to paraphrase what was read.

c. The teacher should ask the students questions throughout the reading of the section to check for understanding also. The questioning should be varied to help students with different language abilities. (See performance indicators; page 33)

2. Students will complete the listening exercise while listening/following along/reading the story (Pages 38-42)

3. Use chart paper to list the evidence of the main idea of the selection of text

4. Rephrase/paraphrase the evidence and write it in kid friendly language on the chart paper.

5. Notice the evidence (Teacher models)*:
   a. Page 13: Paragraph 2: The young women and children go out in the desert with buckets
   b. Page 13: Paragraph 3: Women scoop the bright red pulp. They carry it back to camp.
   c. Page 14: Paragraph 1: At the campsite men gather (collect) wood
   d. Page 14: Paragraph 2: They make jams and candies and wines

6. Applying Other Strategies (Teacher models):
   e. The teacher will say, “I am noticing that the illustration (picture) is showing the people (the community) working together working together to harvest the saguaro fruit.”

After Reading (15 Minutes):

1. “What us the main idea of this section? Give evidence to support your answer.”

2. Modeling:
   a. Oral: The teacher will model the language necessary for the students to complete the group work.
   b. Written: The teacher will model how to respond to the question on the board, referring to the graphic organizer made to notice the evidence.

3. Applying:
   a. The teacher will post and review a writing strategy to help students completely answer the question.
      i. Writing Strategy
         1. Write what the section is mainly about
         2. Give a reason how you can tell.
         3. Give an example from the text to support this.
   b. Before writing their answers, students will work in groups of varying language levels to discuss what happened in the section and what it is mainly about. Students should use the book to help them with their discussion and can also use their L1 to help support their group members with less English proficiency.
   c. Students will then return to their desks to answer the open-ended question using a worksheet that is catered to their language level (See pages 43-47).

4. Differentiation:
a. See performance indicators (Page 33)
b. See leveled worksheets (Page 34)

5. **Closure:**
   a. Students can share their work with the class by reading their answer aloud.
   b. Review what we are learning to do today.
By June, the saguaro blossoms have dried into brown stalks, and fruit has formed from the bases. The seeds are ripening, and the fruit begins to split open, showing its bright red insides.

As they have done for a long time, the Tohono O’Odahm Indians begin to harvest the saguaro fruit. The young women and children go into the desert with buckets and gathering poles made from the saguaro ribs. Wooden crosspieces are wired onto the top and middle of the pole to pull down the ripe fruit.

The children try to catch the fruit as it falls. Sometimes they steal a taste of the sweet, juicy pulp.

As the fruit falls, the women scoop the bright red pulp full of tiny black seeds into buckets. When the buckets are full, they are carried back to camp.

The women leave the red shells of the saguaro fruit on the ground facing up to the sky. This is the O’odham offering for the rain.
At the campsite, the men gather wood for the fire, and the old women remove any pebbles from the fruit pulp. Then the pulp is mixed with water and cooked for a long time until it is thick and sweet. Finally, the cooked pulp is poured through wire mesh to separate the juice from the seeds.

The O'odham make jams and candies, syrups and wines out of the saguaro fruit. Harvest is a time of celebration because there is good saguaro food to eat and soon the rains will come.
Name ______________________ Date ____________

Listening Exercise: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Circle any word you hear in the story and fill in the blanks.

The Tohono O’Odham Indians harvest the saguaro ______.

The young _______ and _______ go into the _______ to gather the fruit.

The _____ gather _____ for the fire.

The Tohono O’Odham Indians make ______, ________, ________, and _______ from the _______ _______.


Listening Exercise: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Circle any word you hear in the story and fill in the blanks.

The Tohono O’Odham Indians harvest the saguaro_____.

The young _______ and _______ go into the _______ to gather the fruit.

The _____ gather _____ for the fire.

The Tohono O’Odham Indians make jams, candies, syrups, and wines from the _______ _______.

Name_____________________________ Date_________________
Listening Exercise: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Circle any word you hear in the story and fill in the blanks.

The Tohono O’Odham Indians harvest the saguaro ______.
The young women and children go into the _______ to gather the fruit.
The men gather ______ for the fire.
The Tohono O’Odham Indians make jams, candies, syrups, and wines from the _______ _______. 
Listening Exercise: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Circle any word you hear in the story.

The Tohono O’Odham Indians harvest the saguaro fruit.
The young women and children go into the desert to gather the fruit.
The men gather wood for the fire.
The Tohono O’Odham Indians make jams, candies, syrups, and wines from the saguaro fruit.
Listening Exercise: Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Circle any word you hear in the story.

The Indians harvest the saguaro fruit.
The young women and children go into the desert to gather the fruit.
The men gather wood for the fire.
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: In 3 sentences, tell what the main idea of the section is. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Write a sentence to tell what the main idea of the section is. Use the text to support your answer.
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Write a sentence to tell what the main idea of the section is. Then draw a picture to go with it.

The main idea of the section is ________________________________

My Picture
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Fill in the blanks to tell what the main idea of the section is. Then draw a picture to go with it.

The main idea of the section is that everyone in the ____________ helps _____________ the saguaro fruit.
Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus

Directions: Fill in the blanks to tell what the main idea of the section is. Use the words in the Word Bank to complete the sentence. Then draw a picture to go with it.

Word Bank

community harvest

The main idea of the section is that everyone in the ____________ helps ____________ the saguaro fruit.
Checklists
FLA 518: Sheltered ELL Strategies Checklist

Write the page numbers and any other identifying features to identify those parts of your lessons that employ the following strategies.

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<td>1,2,3</td>
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<td>Explain</td>
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<td>Create</td>
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<td>Discuss</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
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<td>Listen</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
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Original Lessons
Grade 2

Desert Giant
The World of the Saguaro Cactus
By: Barbara Bash

Unit 3- First Book

CMT Objective:
A-1: Determine the main idea (non-fiction) or theme/lesson within a written work.

Genre:
Non-Fiction
This is intended as a 5 day lesson plan.

*Desert Giant*

**Pages 1-27**

- Daily Reading Planner for Reading: Pages 1-3
- Daily Reading Planner for Reading: Pages 4-6
- Daily Reading Planner for Reading: Pages 7-11
- Daily Reading Planner for Reading: Pages 12-15
- Daily Reading Planner for Reading: Pages 16-27
- Planner for Applying and Reflecting on Reading: *Desert Giant* (independent practice)
**DAILY READING PLANNER**

**CMT Objective:** A1: Determine the main idea (non-fiction) or theme/lesson within a written work.

**Text:** *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus* by Barbara Bash  
**Pages** 4-6

### BEFORE READING

| Establish prior knowledge, purpose, and predictions | Prior Knowledge: Share what you have learned about the saguaro cactus from this non-fiction text so far.  
Prediction: How do you think the saguaro can be useful to others?  
Purpose: Let's read to find out how the saguaro cactus is useful to animals. |
|---|---|

**Introduce/Review Vocabulary**

| Suggested vocabulary: shelter (something that provides cover from weather and/or protection from danger) The saguaro cactus gives shelter to many desert animals.  
Select vocabulary words (tier 2 words) according to your students' needs.  
What does the word *nocturnal* mean in this sentence? In the evening, the *nocturnal* animals searched for food while the other animals slept.  
A. a plant eating animal  
B. an animal that is awake during the night  
C. an animal that is awake during the day  
D. a meat eating animal |

### Introduce the Focus Strategy

**MODEL EXPLAIN HOW TO FIND EVIDENCE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION**

**A1:** Which statement best tells what this selection is mainly about?

- A. The saguaro boots were used by the Indians as food containers.  
- B. Many birds depend on the saguaro as a home, food or protection.*  
- C. Saguaro are big cacti.  
- D. The Harris hawks are large birds that make their homes in the saguaro.

**Reading Strategy**

1. Notice what the main idea or topic sentence is in each paragraph. You can identify the topic sentence if all the other sentences support the topic or if the author is giving examples.
2. Figure out what is common throughout the selection.
3. Ask yourself, "What is the author telling me overall, what is this mostly about?" Or "What is the main idea?"

### DURING READING

**Apply the Focus Strategy**

**MODEL FOR STUDENTS HOW YOU FIND EVIDENCE AS YOU READ**

**A-1:** Which statement best tells what this selection is mainly about?

- Notice the evidence
  - pg. 4: Paragraph 1: the gild bird makes room for its eggs in the saguaro  
  - pg. 6: Paragraph 1: the elf owl uses the nest during the day to sleep  
  - pg. 6: Paragraph 2: the Harris hawks use the saguaro to make their home and for perching

On chart paper list evidence of main idea or on an overhead copy of selection underline or note evidence of the main idea of this selection.

- Male carpenter bird pecks a hole in the cactus for his mate's eggs  
- Elf owl moves into the Gila woodpecker's old nest

**Apply Other Strategies (Teacher Think-aloud)**

**Wondering:** I wonder if other animals depend on the saguaro cactus.  
**Connecting:** I can make a connection. I have been to a desert in Arizona and seen the enormous saguaro cacti. They are very tall and stand like people across the desert.

### AFTER READING

**CMT Discussion Questions**

**A-1:** Which statement best tells what this selection is mainly about?

- A. The saguaro boots were used by the Indians as food containers.  
- B. Many birds depend on the saguaro for a home, food and/or protection.*  
- C. Saguaro are big cacti.  
- D. The Harris hawks are large birds that make their homes in the saguaro.

**MODEL Response for Students**

Write the multiple choice question on chart paper and model the response for students. Refer to the graphic organizer made earlier.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Selection strategy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Think about the common topic throughout the selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Read each answer choice carefully.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ask yourself, “What is the author mostly talking about?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Eliminate the choices that have nothing to do with what the pages were mostly about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Choose the answer that has the most evidence from the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A2:** What words would you use to describe the setting of where the saguaro tree lives?

**B3:** You can tell from this selection of text that the saguaro is important to the desert animals. Cite evidence that supports this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflect on strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What strategies do you need to use in order to find out what a selection of text is mainly about?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CMT Objective: Determine the main idea (non-fiction) or theme/lesson within a written work.

Text: *Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus*

**BEFORE READING**

| Establish prior knowledge, purpose, and predictions | Prior Knowledge: Share how the saguaro helps the desert community. 
Predictions: (Show the pictures on pages 7-11.) Look at the pictures in today’s selection. What do you think this next part will be about? 
Purpose: As we read today, think about a good title for this selection. |

| Introduce/review vocabulary | Suggested vocabulary: concept word: pollinate (transfer pollen and fertilize plant) The birds and bats help to pollinate the saguaro’s flowers. 
Select vocabulary words (tier 2 words) according to your students’ needs. |

| Introduce the focus strategy | MODEL 
EXPLAIN HOW TO FIND EVIDENCE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION |

| Introduce the focus strategy | A-1: This selection does not have a title. What could be a title for it? Support your answer with details from the text. 
Reading strategy |

1. Read each paragraph carefully. Notice the main idea that the author is trying to express. 
2. Figure out what is common between all of the paragraphs. 
3. Ask yourself, “What would the reader learn about this selection from an appropriate title?” Remember, a title would give your reader a quick preview of what they will be reading. 
4. Determine a title that would best fit the selection. |

| DURING READING | Apply the focus strategy |

| Model for students how you find evidence as you read | A-1: This selection does not have a title. What could be a title for it? Support your answer with details from the text. 
Notice the evidence |

- pg. 8-9: picture of the bats going towards the flowers 
- pg. 9: Paragraph 2: bat drinks the nectar, the pollen dust sticks to its face...carries it to the next flower 
- pg. 10-11: picture of the dove’s beak in the center of the flower, the butterflies 
- pg. 11: Paragraph 1: ...dove drinks the nectar ... every creature that drinks the nectar picks up ...pollen...to fertilize the next flower, the fruit can begin to form |

On chart paper or on an overhead note evidence of the main idea of this selection that will lead to a good title for it. (*Good Titles should focus on the fact that birds and insects help to pollinate the saguaro.*) 
- Bats, birds, insects drink the nectar of the saguaro flower |

| Apply other strategies (Teacher think-aloud) | Noticing: I’m noticing non-fiction text features. On page 11, there is a diagram of a flower. Each part is labeled. The diagram teaches the reader about the different parts of a flower. |

| AFTER READING | CMT discussion questions |

| Model response for students | A-1: This selection does not have a title. What could be a title for it? Support your answer with details from the text. 
On chart paper, write the open-ended question, with answer frame. Model the response for students. Refer to the graphic organizer made earlier. 
Writing strategy |

1. State what the title would be. Example: A good title for this selection would be *Fertilizing the Saguaro’s Flowers* 
2. Give a reason why this is a good title. Example: A good title for this selection would be *Fertilizing the Saguaro’s Flowers* because pages 7-11 are mostly about how creatures drink from flower to flower, fertilizing them along the way. 
3. Give an example from the text to support this. Example: A good title for this selection would be *Fertilizing the Saguaro’s Flowers*, because pages 7-11 are mostly about how creatures drink from flower to flower, fertilizing them along the way. Another example would be that as the long nosed bat drinks the nectar, pollen dust sticks to its face...carries it to the next flower, the fruit can begin to form. |
face and gets carried along to the pollinate or fertilize the next flower.

D2: If you had to give a talk to your class about what you have learned about the saguaro so far, what two important parts would you include in your speech?

C1: Think about what the text says in general about the saguaro. It what ways does it remind you of other plants or trees that you have read in other non fiction books?

| Reflect on strategy | What do you need to do if you are giving a new title to selection that you have read? Why do you think it would be important to give appropriate titles to reading material? |
**DAILY READING PLANNER**

**CMT Objective:** CMT Objective: Determine the main idea (non-fiction) or theme/lesson within a written work.

**Text:** Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus  
**Pages:** 12-15

### BEFORE READING

| Establish prior knowledge, purpose, and predictions | Prior Knowledge: Share how the flowers of the saguaro cactus get fertilized. Why is it important that the flowers get fertilized?  
Prediction: Looking at the illustration pgs 12-15, what information might you learn about the saguaro now? How do you know this?  
Purpose: As we read today, think about what the selection is mainly about. |
| Introduce/review vocabulary | Suggested vocabulary: harvest (pg. 13)  
Select vocabulary words (tier 2 words) according to your students’ needs. |

### REVIEW HOW TO FIND EVIDENCE TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION

**Reading strategy**

1. Notice what the main idea or topic sentence is in each paragraph. You can identify the topic sentence if all the other sentences support the topic or if the author is giving examples.
2. Figure out what is common throughout the selection.
3. Ask yourself, “What is the author telling me overall, what is this mostly about?” Or “What is the main idea?”

### DURING READING

| Apply the focus strategy | A-1: What is the main idea of this section? Give evidence to support your answer. |
| PROMPT STUDENTS TO LOCATE EVIDENCE AS YOU READ | Notice the evidence  
pg. 13: Paragraph 2: The young women and children go out into the desert with buckets…  
pg. 13: Paragraph 3: …women scoop the bright red pulp…carried back to camp.  
pg. 14: Paragraph 1: At the campsite, the men gather wood…  
pg. 14: Paragraph 2: …make jams and candies and wines… |
| Apply other strategies | Noticing: I’m noticing that the illustrations show how the community works together to harvest the saguaro fruit. |

### AFTER READING

| CMT discussion questions | A-1: What is the main idea of this section? Give evidence to support your answer. |
| GUIDED PRACTICE REVIEW RESPONSE STRATEGIES; DO NOT MODEL; STUDENTS MAY USE ANSWER FRAME TO RESPOND | A. Saguaro flowers are fertilized and then form fruit.  
B. The Tohono O’odham Indians like the taste of the fruit.  
C. The fruit of the saguaro cactus is harvested and enjoyed by the Tohono O’odham Indians.*  
D. The men gather wood for the fire. |

**Selection strategy**

1. Think about the common topic throughout the selection.
2. Read each answer choice carefully.
3. Ask yourself, “What is the author mostly talking about?”
4. Eliminate the choices that have nothing to do with what the pages were mostly about.
5. Choose the answer that has the most evidence from the text.

Write the multiple choice question and open-ended question, with answer frame, on chart paper.
Model the responses for students. Refer to the graphic organizer made earlier.

**Writing strategy**

1. Write a topic sentence. Example: The main idea of this section is the fruit of the saguaro cactus is harvested and enjoyed by the O'odham Indians.
2. Give a reason why you think this. The main idea of this text is ____. I think this because the selection was mostly about how the Indians work together to pick and use the fruit.
3. Give an example to support this. Example: The main idea of this text is ____. I think this because ______. An example that supports this is that the O'odham women and children go out to the desert to collect the bright red pulp of the ripe saguaro fruit.

C2: Which part of the text is most interesting to you so far? Use information from the text to support your answer?

A2: Which word best describes the saguaro?

**Reflect on strategy**

What do you need to do in order to identify what a selection is mainly about? Why do you think it is important to determine what a selection is mainly about?
DESERG
GIANT
The World of the Saguaro Cactus
BARBARA BASH
A strange and wonderful tree grows in the desert. It is called a saguaro (sa-WAHR-o) cactus, and its Latin name is *Cereus giganteus*.

There are many unusual shapes in the saguaro world. Walking out among them, you might feel as though you’re surrounded by people – the Saguaro People.
The saguaro grows in the Sonoran desert, which stretches through parts of Arizona, California, and Mexico. This cactus can grow as tall as fifty feet, weigh up to several tons, and live for two hundred years.

The saguaro's sharp spines protect it from harm. The accordion-like pleats in its skin expand in the rain, storing extra water for the long dry times.
When you stand in the desert, everything is quiet. But if you listen closely, you can hear the sound of the wind moving past the spines. Hissississississississ...
Now there is another sound: tap... tap-tap... The holes you see in the saguaro trunk are made by the "carpenter bird"—the Gila (HEE-lah) woodpecker. In the spring, the male pecks deeply into the soft flesh of the cactus to make a room for his mate's eggs to hatch.

The saguaro flesh forms a hard, callous lining around the nests. When the cactus dies and decomposes, these hollow forms are left behind on the ground. They are called "saguaro boots" by the Indians, who use them as food containers.
When the Gila woodpecker moves out of its nest, the elf owl moves in. This is the tiniest owl in the world, measuring just five inches long. The elf owl is nocturnal, hunting for small insects, centipedes, and scorpions at night and sleeping in the nest during the day. Because of the thick lining and the moisture stored in the saguaro's flesh, the nest stays cool even on the hottest days.

Harris' hawks are the largest birds to make their homes in the saguaro. They raise their young in nests of twigs lined with leaves and grasses. Living in cooperative societies, much like wolves, up to four hawks can inhabit the same territory.

Sometimes the hawks use each other as perches. As many as three birds have been seen stacked on top of a saguaro! This is called Back Standing.
Nighttime. The moon shines in the dark sky. It is May, time for the saguaro to blossom. Out of the top of the cactus, high above the ground, the buds emerge and open into large, milky-white flowers with yellow centers. Each flower opens only once, in the cool of the night, and closes by the following afternoon.

Suddenly you hear a flapping of wings. A long-nosed bat has come to drink the nectar hidden deep in the center of the flower. As the bat drinks, the pollen dust sticks to its face and is carried along to pollinate the next bloom.
The next morning the white-winged doves arrive. They like to drink the flower nectar, too. One lands on top of the saguaro and dunks its head way inside. A queen butterfly alights on a petal, and a bee circles around, buzzing. Every creature that drinks the nectar picks up more pollen and carries it on to fertilize the next flower. When the flower is fertilized, the fruit can begin to form.

Stamen—the male part of the flower that produces the pollen

Stigma—the female part that catches the pollen

Ovary—the container for the eggs (the fruit will form here)

Style—the slender tube that carries the pollen to the eggs

It is very hot out under the desert sun. By early afternoon, the flowers that opened the night before have closed, and the doves have flown into the shade to rest.
By June, the saguaro blossoms have dried into brown stalks, and fruit has formed from the bases. The seeds are ripening, and the fruit begins to split open, revealing its bright red insides.

As they have been doing for centuries, the Tohono O'odham (toh-HO-no o-0-dahm) Indians begin the saguaro-fruit harvest. The young women and children go out into the desert with buckets and gathering poles made of saguaro ribs bound together. Wooden crosspieces are wired onto the top and middle, forming the prongs that pull the ripe fruit down.

The children try to catch the fruit as it falls. Sometimes they steal a taste of the sweet, juicy pulp.

As the fruit is knocked down, the women scoop the bright red pulp full of tiny black seeds into buckets. When the buckets are full and heavy, they are carried back to the camp.

The women leave the red outer hulls behind on the ground, open and facing up to the sky. This is the O'odham offering for rain.
At the campsite, the men gather wood for the fire, and the old women remove any pebbles from the fruit pulp. Then the pulp is mixed with water and cooked for a long time until it is thick and sweet. Finally, the cooked pulp is poured through wire mesh to separate the juice from the seeds.

The O'odham make jams and candies, syrups and wines out of the saguaro fruit. Harvest is a time of celebration because there is good saguaro food to eat and soon the rains will come.
Back at the saguaro, more fruit is ripening. The curved-billed thrasher comes to eat the sweet pulp, and harvester ants scurry around gathering the seeds. The horned lizard waits by the fallen fruit for the ants to walk by. In a flash he catches one with his long, fast, sticky tongue.
Nighttime. More fruit has dropped to the ground, and the air is cool. A coyote arrives to lick the fruit pulp out of the fallen rinds. Nearby, some javelina (jav-a-LEAN-a) pigs grunt and snort as they scoop up the sweet fruit.

It is a feasting time for the Indians, animals, birds, and ants. Everyone loves the saguaro fruit.
After providing food and homes for so many creatures, the saguaro eventually dies. Sometimes old age and weakening tissue make it prey to bacteria. The soft outer flesh falls away, exposing the saguaro ribs, which spread out like a big whisk broom. At other times, strong winds or lightning knock the saguaro to the ground, where it gradually decomposes.

Now a whole new set of creatures moves in to live in the saguaro...
Inside the dead saguaro, termites chew the wood. A black widow spider spins her web. The giant desert centipede searches for insects. On top of a downed saguaro, a banded gecko basks in the sun, while underneath, a cactus mouse stores seeds in its cheek pouches and a spotted night snake curls in the cool darkness.
Deep inside, water is released as the saguaro decomposes, and the aquatic beetle swims through the channels. A large hister beetle probes the dark tunnels in search of fly larvae and small insects. The stripe-tailed scorpion looks for prey amidst the rubble, while a giant millipede searches for decaying saguaro tissue to feed on.
While one saguaro dies, another begins its new life. Each fruit-bearing saguaro produces millions of seeds, but most are eaten before they can sprout. The seeds that do germinate grow so slowly that the tiny saguaros are easily knocked over by animals or washed away by flash floods.

The only saguaros that have a chance of survival are those that begin their growth in the shelter of a "nurse plant." The canopy of the larger tree protects the young saguaro, and for many years it grows safely. Eventually the nurse plant dies, but by then the saguaro is strong enough to stand alone. After fifty years, it begins to produce flowers and fruit. After seventy-five years, the saguaro's arms start to appear... .

Saguaro seeds
Four-month-old seedlings
Two years old
Twelve years old
When it is one hundred fifty years old,
the cactus giant towers quietly
over the desert.