

# Hotel Saguaro Study Guide

## Objectives

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This study guide, when used before and after viewing the *Hotel Saguaro* puppet show, will enhance the learning experience. **Students will walk away with knowledge of desert plants and the interactions between plants, animals and humans. Students will have a better understanding of how this relationship works and how students themselves are a part of that relationship.** This study guide and the show are designed for students in kindergarten through second grade. During the show, students will see rod puppets and learn how they work. There will also be a question and answer style discussion following the show where students will discuss the story, the relationship between plants, animals and humans, as well as see actual artifacts from a saguaro cactus. Following the show, we encourage you to use this study guide to further the learning process. This guide was created for grades kindergarten through second grade, so feel free to tailor the activities to your specific class needs and grade level.

## Arizona Common Core Standards

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### Reading Literature, Writing, and Speaking and Listening Standards:

K.RL.3. With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story. (Pre and post show discussion, bulletin board activity)

1.RL.3. Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details. (Pre and post show discussion, bulletin board activity)

2.RL.3. Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges. (Pre and post show discussion, bulletin board activity)

K.W.3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened. (Writing Prompts, Build a Puppet)

1. W. 3. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure. (Writing Prompts)

K-2. W. 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects. (Writing Prompts)

K-1. W. 8. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. (Writing Prompts)

K. SL. 2. Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood. (Post-show discussion)

1. SL. 2. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. (Post-show discussion)

2. SL. 2. Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. (Post-show discussion)

### Life Science Standards:

K.3.PO 1. Identify some plants and animals that exist in the local environment.

1.3.PO 3. Describe how plants and animals within a habitat are dependent on each other.

## The Story

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Hotel Saguaro tells the story of a young saguaro named Sammy. Sammy is beginning to notice the plants and animals that share his desert home. He is frightened by some and fascinated by others. Sammy's wise, old grandfather shares what he has learned about the animals that use them as shelter throughout his long life in the Sonoran Desert. Together they explore the desert's web of life. The story explores the following teaching points: a great variety of life can be found in the Sonoran Desert; special adaptations allow plants and animals to thrive; the variety of the desert's web of life and how we who live in the desert can affect it.

## The Characters

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Sammy Saguaro

Grandpa Saguaro

White Wing Dove

Rattlesnake

Elf Owl (Mama, Papa and Baby)

Woodpecker

Kangaroo Rat

Long-nosed Bat

## Activities to do Before the Show

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- Brainstorm a list of animals that might live around and/or in a saguaro with your students. Don't worry if any of them are incorrect, you'll go back and review this list after the show and make changes based on what they have learned.
- Talk briefly about what the show is about using the story outline above and talk briefly about what being a good audience member means (ie being quiet, listening, sitting throughout the whole show, etc.)
- Begin the bulletin board activity (see below).

## Activities to do After the Show

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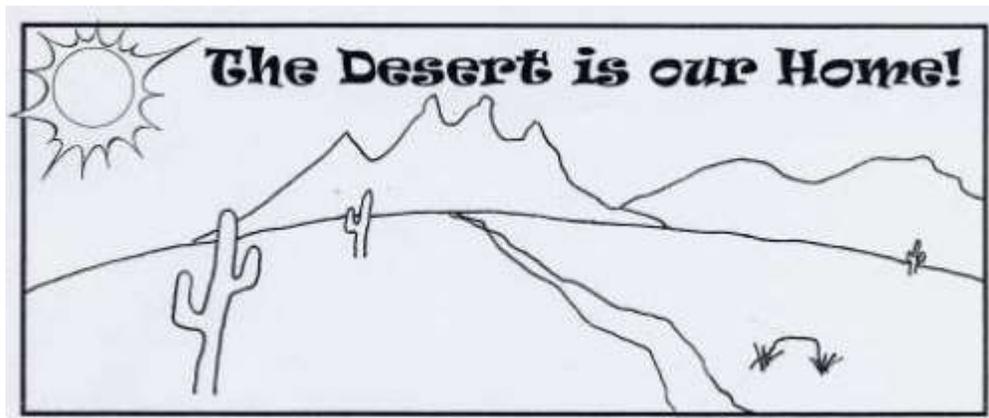
- Discuss each character from the show and ask the students for one to two facts that they learned about each (this is also usually started in the post-show discussion with the puppeteer).
- Ask about the relationships that animals have with saguaros (using them for food, shelter, etc.)
- Finish the bulletin board activity. Also, choose any additional activities below that you believe would suit your students and their learning process.

## Create a Desert Bulletin Board

**Objectives:** To introduce students to the desert environment as a home to plants, animals, and people and to encourage students to think about how they all work together.

### Pre-show Activities:

- Begin by having your students go to the library to select books and magazines (or do a web search) that reflect desert themes to use as resources. You can also choose these resources for your students and have them available in the classroom. Use these resources to begin a discussion about what animals live in the desert.
- Have students create a bulletin board entitled “The Desert is our Home.” Students can design the letters to look like plants and animals of the desert. Students can design the bulletin board to have a desert sun, sky, and a few plants that we know are in the desert. However, space should be left below the title to create a desert scene that will be finished after viewing the puppet show. (See example below).



### Post-show Activities:

- Students complete the bulletin board by adding the plants and animals they discovered during the puppet show. You can use general outlines of these plants and animals or have students free-hand their own drawings.
- After specific plants and animals have been added to the bulletin board, students could:
  - Use yarn to connect plants, animals and habitat features that interact with each other. We call this a life-web. Different colors of yarn can be used to represent different types of relationships (ex. green for food and blue for water). Plants and animals might be connected to just one thing or to many things. Discuss why this might be. Ask about how the students themselves might have connections to plants, animals, and the desert habitats and how they are connected in the life-web.
  - Discuss the concept of habitat. Habitats include the food, water, shelter and space an organism needs to survive. Ask if they identify some of these things on the bulletin board. Ask about the student's own habitat - what provides the shelter, food, water and space that they need to survive?
  - Discuss the impact that removing single animals, plants, or habitat features would have on the remaining organisms. For example, ask which animals would be affected by the removal of a saguaro and how those animals would be impacted.

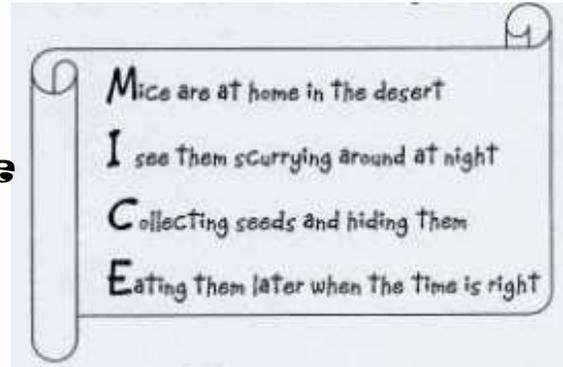
## Writing Activities

**Objectives:** To reinforce facts about the desert animals seen in the show, to review the show's story and to create their own desert narrative. To enhance writing skills and creativity.

### Activity One: *Poems Begin with Just One Word*

Students will write a poem about the desert and its' animal inhabitants by having the first letter of each line spell out one of the following words:

**Saguaro      Rain      Snake**  
**Desert      Day      Sammy**  
**Bat      Night      Tortoise**  
**Dove      Cactus      Sun**  
**Wind      Coyote      Flower**  
**Owl      Tree      Hawk**



### Activity Two: *Poetry of Words*

Students will pick a plant or animal from the show and/or from your desert bulletin board (you can use the words above as examples or the character's names) and fill in the chart below. In the chart there is a list of questions followed by a list of words. Students will answer the question using that number of words. Words like "the" and "and" count. Make sure students use only the number of words permitted. This is a great chance to talk about poetry and how it can be very free-flowing. When students finish filling in the chart, transfer each line in the same order onto a separate sheet of paper, have students create a title and read their poem aloud. Students can also create their own drawing of the animal or plant their poem is about. Encourage students to be creative and really think about the questions that are asked.

**Question                      # of Words      Answer to Question (use only number of words allowed)**

What is your plant/animal?	1	
What shape is it?	2	
What color is it?	3	
What is it doing?	2	
Make a wish for it	1	

**Example:**

The Desert's Tree of Life  
 Mesquite  
 Spreading Tall  
 Green, Yellow, Brown  
 Giving Life  
 Survive

### Activity Three: *Desert Narrative*

- Have students begin by choosing a plant or animal from the show and/or from your desert bulletin board. If you did activity two, encourage students to choose a different animal or plant.
- Encourage students to think about what that plant or animal might be doing in the desert right now. Make sure students are thinking about that character from the show as a real-life character. Encourage them to use their imagination. Who could they be talking to? What could they be struggling with or thinking about right now?
- Have students to think of a short story about that character and begin by writing just a few sentences or by brainstorming their thoughts. This could easily be changed into a group activity where the group chooses one character and thinks of a few different things that could happen to that character. Students can write their story and you can edit it as individuals or as a group.
- After students write their own story they can:
  - Write their story as a narrative from that character's point of view or their own (whichever they did not do first).
  - Draw a picture of their character and what is happening to them.
  - Make a puppet of that character. Paper lunch bags are a great base for hand puppets. The puppets can be decorated with cut up construction paper, crayons, or glued on items. Students can use their puppets to tell their story to the class. Or, if using this as a group activity, students can create a short puppet show using their story and put on a show for the class.



## Resources

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Arizona Department of Education:

<http://www.azed.gov/>

Desert animal coloring pages:

<http://www.pima.gov/cmo/sdcp/kids/color/sdkColor.html>

<http://www.first-school.ws/theme/animals/coloring-pages/desert.htm>

Desert Botanical Garden:

<http://www.dbg.org/>

Great Arizona Puppet Theater:

<http://azpuppets.org/>

Please send any thoughts or appreciation letters to the Great Arizona Puppet Theater at:

302 W Latham St  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

*We love hearing from you and your students!*