Name: _____ Date: _____

The Kangaroo Rat Never Needs a Drink

Circle group

In a hot desert, water is hard to find. Many animals travel far to reach a pond or a stream. The kangaroo rat does not need to. It is a small desert animal of North America.

The kangaroo rat can live its whole life without a sip of water. It gets what it needs from its food. Its main meal is dry seeds. When its body breaks down the seeds, a little water is made inside it.

It also wastes very little water. Its waste is strong and dry. Its nose catches moisture from its breath.

Its habits help too. The desert sun is hot, so it stays out of it. By day, it rests in a cool burrow. It often plugs the door with soil. At night, it comes out to find seeds. It hops on its long back legs. Its long tail helps it balance.

It uses every drop with care.

Questions

1. Where does the kangaroo rat live?

_____

_____

2. How does the kangaroo rat get water?

_____

_____

3. How does it save water?

_____

_____

4. What does it do during the day?

_____

_____

5. How does it get around?

_____

_____

6. Why does it come out at night?

_____

_____

Words to know

desert: a very dry place that gets little rain
burrow: a hole or tunnel an animal digs to live in
moisture: a small amount of water
habits: things a living thing does again and again
balance: to stay steady and not fall over

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Kangaroo Rat Never Needs a Drink

Triangle group

In a hot desert, water is hard to find. Many animals travel far to reach a pond or a stream. The kangaroo rat, a small desert animal of North America, does not need to.

It may seem strange, but the kangaroo rat can live its whole life without taking a sip of water. It gets what it needs from its food. Its main meal is dry seeds. When its body breaks down those seeds, a little bit of water is made inside it, and the animal uses it.

The kangaroo rat also wastes very little water. Its kidneys make strong, dry waste, and its nose helps catch moisture from its breath before it escapes.

Its habits help too. The desert sun is very hot, so the kangaroo rat stays out of it. By day, it rests in a cool burrow, and it often plugs the door with soil to keep the heat out. At night, when the air is cooler, it comes out to hunt for seeds. It hops on its long back legs, a bit like a tiny kangaroo, and its long tail helps it balance.

Its name comes from this hopping. By being clever with every drop, the kangaroo rat has made a home in a place that looks empty to people.

Questions

1. Where does the kangaroo rat live?

_____

_____

2. How does the kangaroo rat get the water it needs?

_____

_____

3. How does the kangaroo rat save water in its body?

_____

_____

4. What does the kangaroo rat do during the day?

_____

_____

5. How does the kangaroo rat get around?

_____

_____

6. Why does the kangaroo rat come out at night instead of in the day?

_____

_____

Words to know

desert: a very dry place that gets little rain
burrow: a hole or tunnel an animal digs to live in
moisture: a small amount of water
habits: things a living thing does again and again
balance: to stay steady and not fall over

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Kangaroo Rat Never Needs a Drink

Square group

In a scorching desert, water is extraordinarily difficult to find, and many animals must travel great distances to reach a pond or stream. The kangaroo rat, a small desert dweller of North America, has no such need.

Remarkably, the kangaroo rat can live its entire life without taking a single sip of water. It obtains what it requires from its food. Its principal meal is dry seeds, and when its body breaks them down, a small amount of water is produced inside it, which the animal puts to use.

The kangaroo rat also wastes almost no water. Its kidneys produce concentrated, dry waste, and its nose recovers moisture from its breath before it can escape.

Its habits contribute as well. Because the desert sun is so fierce, the kangaroo rat avoids it. During the day it rests in a cool burrow, often sealing the entrance with soil to keep the heat out. At night, when the air is cooler, it emerges to search for seeds, hopping on its long back legs while its tail helps it balance, rather like a miniature kangaroo.

By using every drop wisely, the kangaroo rat has built a home in a place that looks empty to people.

Questions

1. Where does the kangaroo rat live?

_____

_____

2. How does the kangaroo rat obtain the water it needs?

_____

_____

3. How does the kangaroo rat conserve water in its body?

_____

_____

4. What does it do during the day?

_____

_____

5. How does the kangaroo rat move around?

_____

_____

6. Why does the kangaroo rat emerge at night rather than during the day?

_____

_____

Words to know

desert: a very dry place that gets little rain
burrow: a hole or tunnel an animal digs to live in
moisture: a small amount of water
habits: things a living thing does again and again
balance: to stay steady and not fall over

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: The Kangaroo Rat Never Needs a Drink

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: The Kangaroo Rat Never Needs a Drink

Easier · 153 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.2

1. In hot deserts of North America.
2. A little water is made inside its body when it breaks down dry seeds.
3. It makes dry waste and its nose catches moisture from its breath.
4. It rests in a cool burrow and often plugs the door with soil.
5. It hops on its long back legs and balances with its tail.
6. The air is cooler at night, so it stays out of the hot sun.

Triangle: The Kangaroo Rat Never Needs a Drink

This passage · 214 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.6

1. In hot deserts of North America.
2. A little water is made inside its body when it breaks down dry seeds.
3. It makes dry waste and catches moisture from its breath in its nose.
4. It rests in a cool burrow and often plugs the door with soil.
5. It hops on its long back legs and balances with its tail.
6. The air is cooler at night, so it loses less water and stays safe from the heat.

Square: The Kangaroo Rat Never Needs a Drink

Harder · 202 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.3

1. In scorching deserts of North America.
2. A small amount of water is produced inside its body when it breaks down dry seeds.
3. It produces dry waste, and its nose recovers moisture from its breath.
4. It rests in a cool burrow, often sealing the entrance with soil.
5. It hops on its long back legs and balances with its tail.
6. The air is cooler at night, so it avoids the fierce desert sun and loses less water.