Name: _____ Date: _____

Why the Fennec Fox Has Giant Ears

Circle group

The fennec fox is the smallest kind of fox in the world. But its ears are huge for its size. They look nearly as big as the rest of its head. The ears are not just for show. They help the fox live in the Sahara desert.

In the day, the Sahara is very hot. The fennec fox rests in a burrow it digs in the sand. It is cooler there. When the sun goes down, the fox comes out to hunt.

The ears do two jobs. First, they keep the fox cool. Inside the ears are many tiny blood vessels near the skin. Warm blood flows through them, and heat escapes into the air. A big ear has a big surface, so a lot of heat can leave.

Second, the ears are great for listening. The fox can hear faint sounds of small animals, such as insects and lizards, on or under the sand. Then it pounces or digs to catch them.

Its pale fur helps it blend in with the sand. Thick fur on its feet keeps its paws from burning.

Questions

1. Where does the fennec fox live?

_____

_____

2. Where does the fox rest during the day?

_____

_____

3. How do its ears help it stay cool?

_____

_____

4. What can the fox hear with its large ears?

_____

_____

5. Why does the fox hunt after the sun goes down?

_____

_____

6. How does the pale fur help it?

_____

_____

Words to know

burrow: a hole in the ground dug by an animal
vessels: thin tubes that carry blood
surface: the outside layer of something
pounces: jumps on something suddenly

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: _____

Why the Fennec Fox Has Giant Ears

Triangle group

The fennec fox is the smallest kind of fox in the world, but its ears are enormous for its size and can look nearly as large as the rest of its head. These ears are not just for decoration, because they help the fox survive in the Sahara desert.

During the day, the Sahara is scorching hot. The fennec fox rests in a burrow it digs in the sand, where it is cooler and shaded from the sun. When the sun goes down, the fox comes out to hunt.

The ears do two jobs. First, they help the fox stay cool. Inside the ears are many tiny blood vessels near the skin, and when warm blood flows through them, extra heat escapes into the air. A large ear has a large surface, so a great deal of heat can leave the body.

Second, the ears are excellent for listening. A fennec fox can hear the faint sounds of small animals, such as insects and lizards, moving on or under the sand, and it then pounces or digs to catch them.

Other parts of the fox are made for the desert too. Its pale fur helps it blend in with the sand, and thick fur on its feet keeps its paws from burning on the hot ground.

Each part of the fennec fox fits its home.

Questions

1. Where does the fennec fox live?

_____

_____

2. Where does the fox rest during the day?

_____

_____

3. How do its ears help it stay cool?

_____

_____

4. What can the fox hear with its large ears?

_____

_____

5. Why does the fox hunt after the sun goes down?

_____

_____

6. How does the fox's pale fur help it?

_____

_____

Words to know

burrow: a hole in the ground dug by an animal
scorching: extremely hot
vessels: thin tubes that carry blood
surface: the outside layer of something
pounces: jumps on something suddenly

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: _____

Why the Fennec Fox Has Giant Ears

Square group

The fennec fox is the smallest kind of fox in the world, yet its ears are enormous for its size and can look nearly as large as the rest of its head. These ears are far more than decoration, because they help the fox survive in the Sahara desert.

During the day, the Sahara is scorching hot, so the fennec fox rests in a burrow that it digs in the sand, where it is cooler and shielded from the sun, and when the sun sets, the fox emerges to hunt.

The ears perform two separate jobs. First, they help the fox keep cool. Inside the ears are many tiny blood vessels close to the skin, and when warm blood circulates through them, extra heat escapes into the surrounding air. A large ear has an extensive surface, so a considerable amount of heat can leave the body.

Second, the ears are excellent for listening. A fennec fox can detect the faint sounds of small animals, such as insects and lizards, moving on or beneath the sand, and it then pounces or digs to capture them.

Other features of the fox are suited to the desert as well. Its pale fur helps it blend in with the sand, and thick fur on its feet protects its paws from the burning ground.

Every part of the fennec fox fits its home.

Questions

1. Where does the fennec fox live?

_____

_____

2. Where does the fox rest during the day?

_____

_____

3. How do its ears help it stay cool?

_____

_____

4. What can the fox detect with its large ears?

_____

5. Why does the fox emerge to hunt after sunset?

6. How does the pale fur help the fox?

Words to know

burrow: a hole in the ground dug by an animal
scorching: extremely hot
vessels: thin tubes that carry blood
surface: the outside layer of something
pounces: jumps on something suddenly

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: Why the Fennec Fox Has Giant Ears

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

Circle: Why the Fennec Fox Has Giant Ears

Easier · 183 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.9

1. In the Sahara desert.
2. In a burrow in the sand.
3. Heat escapes from blood flowing near the skin of the big ears.
4. Faint sounds of small animals on or under the sand.
5. The day is very hot, and the night is cooler.
6. It blends in with the sand.

Triangle: Why the Fennec Fox Has Giant Ears

This passage · 225 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5

1. In the Sahara desert.
2. In a burrow it digs in the sand.
3. Heat escapes from blood flowing near the skin of the big ears.
4. The faint sounds of small animals moving on or under the sand.
5. The day is scorching hot, and the night is cooler.
6. It blends in with the sand.

Square: Why the Fennec Fox Has Giant Ears

Harder · 228 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.3

1. In the Sahara desert.
2. In a burrow that it digs in the sand.
3. Extra heat escapes from the blood flowing near the skin of the large ears.
4. The faint sounds of small animals moving on or beneath the sand.
5. The day is scorching hot, and the night is cooler.
6. It helps the fox blend in with the sand.