



THE BIRTH OF THE OASIS

A cold-blooded snake and a warm-blooded camel become friends.

Directed by Marion Jamault

France / 2022 / 9' / 2D Animation



The Birth of a Shadow

Only one of the shadows in the adjacent image matches our friends, the camel and the snake... But which one?



1/ Explore the different environments of the savannah, the desert, the oases and the different animals that inhabit them. Is it like in the movie? Where in the world do we find oases? What are they used for?

2/ The opening titles show branches and leaves from different trees. It is your turn to create a botanical list with items you find near your home. This will give you an idea of the variety of bushes and trees around you.

3/ The Wolof language: listen to this language and learn a few words. Maybe some students in your class speak it. Ask them who they speak it with and where they come from.

4/ See Marion Jamault's graphic design on her website <https://marion-jamault.com/> and discover part of the making of the film, notably on her Instagram account <https://www.instagram.com/marion.jamault>

5/ The film tells us about the creation of dunes and oases. Imagine your own version of the creation of these landscapes. The film seeks to go one step further than a simple children's fairy tale. It tells us of an unwavering friendship, fundamentally opposite in every way, immersed in the hot and arid plains of the desert. Our two protagonists, a camel and a snake, complement each other admirably in this colorful story where solidarity acquires its full meaning. This journey, rich with its vibrant universe, is a delight for the viewer, who is lulled by the fluidity of its narrative.



The Birth of the Oases aims to go one step further than a simple children's fairy tale. It tells us of an unwavering friendship, fundamentally opposed in every way, immersed in the hot and arid desert plains. Our two protagonists, the camel and the snake, complement each other with admiration in this colorful story where solidarity acquires its full meaning. This journey, rich in its vibrant universe, enchants the viewer, lulled by the fluidity of its narrative.

PRIORITIES

The film is presented as a wildlife documentary, explaining the characteristics of each of our two animals. On the one hand, the hill worm: cylindrical body, pointed skull, circular snout that filters moisture, its green color and its inability to warm up due to its cold blood. On the other hand, the camel, which is a warm-blooded animal, hotter than molten lava, reflects the heat of the sun on its humps, bringing the blood to a boil, and its yellow fur emphasizes its increase in temperature. The warm blood is paralleled with volcanoes and the cold with that of the gray earth. The two animals are in stark contrast. At first, they hate each other, mocking each other's physical condition: a small, crawling devil and a large, hunchbacked horse, the film plays on the prejudices of these animals. These prejudices are skillfully subverted by the reptile: when it is small, it stretches to position itself on top of the camel and with its poisonous tongue, it greedily tickles the camel's belly.



“I OFFER YOU WARMTH, YOU OFFER ME COLD”

This contrast inevitably leads to a complementarity, two simultaneous gifts that will forge friendship. Together, they have the right temperature. The shapes interlock and curl, “your burnt back warms my blood and my frozen scales calm your fever”. From there, a true mutual aid between the two partners begins. the snake creates a ladder to help the camel catch food, the first can cook an egg on the back of the second, the reptile’s skin turns milk into ice, the snake takes the form of a buoy to float on water. The dance scene crystallizes the happiness of coexistence. Time nevertheless passes through the long white beard of the camel, which has grown very old. From yellow, it has become its complementary color, blue. Then it returns to its homeland, the desert, to die. As a sign of honor, the undulation of the snake, which remained to it, follows the great dunes, like the two humps of a camel. In every place that the snake had touched with those wet scales, life springs up: from the vegetation, an oasis.

THE DESERT

This desert setting is intended as an unknown place inhabited by other animals, transporting us completely into a world shaped by African inspirations and born from the imagination of Marion Jamault: lemurs, ostriches, birds, turtles, monkeys, fennec foxes, lions, lizards. This story tells us the birth of oases and gives way to the excitement of rich nature and abundant wildlife inhabited by tapirs, gazelles, hippos, flamingos, warthogs, cheetahs, marmosets, and even giraffes. Percussion music and African songs take us on a journey to the rhythm of the snake and the advances of the camel. Once their friendship and solidarity are sealed, they will go far in life. Part of the song is sung in Wolof. Wolof is a West African language, spoken mainly in Senegal, but also in Gambia and Mauritania.

GRAPHIC AND METAPHORICAL

The world of the film “The Birth of Oases” is very graphic. It plays with elegant geometric shapes, almost rounded, made of cut paper, with many layers overlapping, creating relief and a sense of depth. This technique gives the story a special atmosphere. To depict this land of scorched earth, the tones are black and gray, with pink vegetation and a bright yellow sun. We feel the weight of the heat where “the sun shines in all seasons, even at night”, with the fluid movements of its inhabitants as they cross its landscapes, which are transformed throughout the story. With a lot of humor, the director plays with shapes: a fried egg becomes the sun, it is simply a matter of perspective. And friendship, “at the right temperature”, gives birth to these extraordinary landscapes.



AUTHOR'S INTENT

The meeting between the two characters at the beginning of the film will define the personality of each character, while also playing with certain prejudices and deviations. The snake is often a negative figure in fairy tales, described as charming and insidious. The camel, like the viewer, is suspicious of the reptile, imagining that such a creature could only be full of evil intentions. Ultimately, these prejudices are dismantled as the snake turns out to be cunning and benevolent. His proposal allows both characters to live more enjoyable lives. Thus, the film deals with the concepts of diversity and tolerance.” Excerpt from the director's note in the pre-production archive for the film *The Birth of the Oases*

DISCOVERING THE OASIS

The short film you saw explains, with a beautiful story, how oases are born.

Remember the story and put the parts of the adjacent image in order:



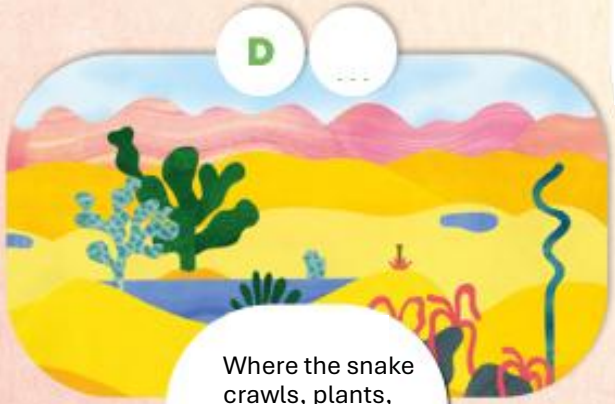
A. The camel, now old and sick, returns to live in the desert of its childhood before dying.



The snake sits on the camel's back to cool it.



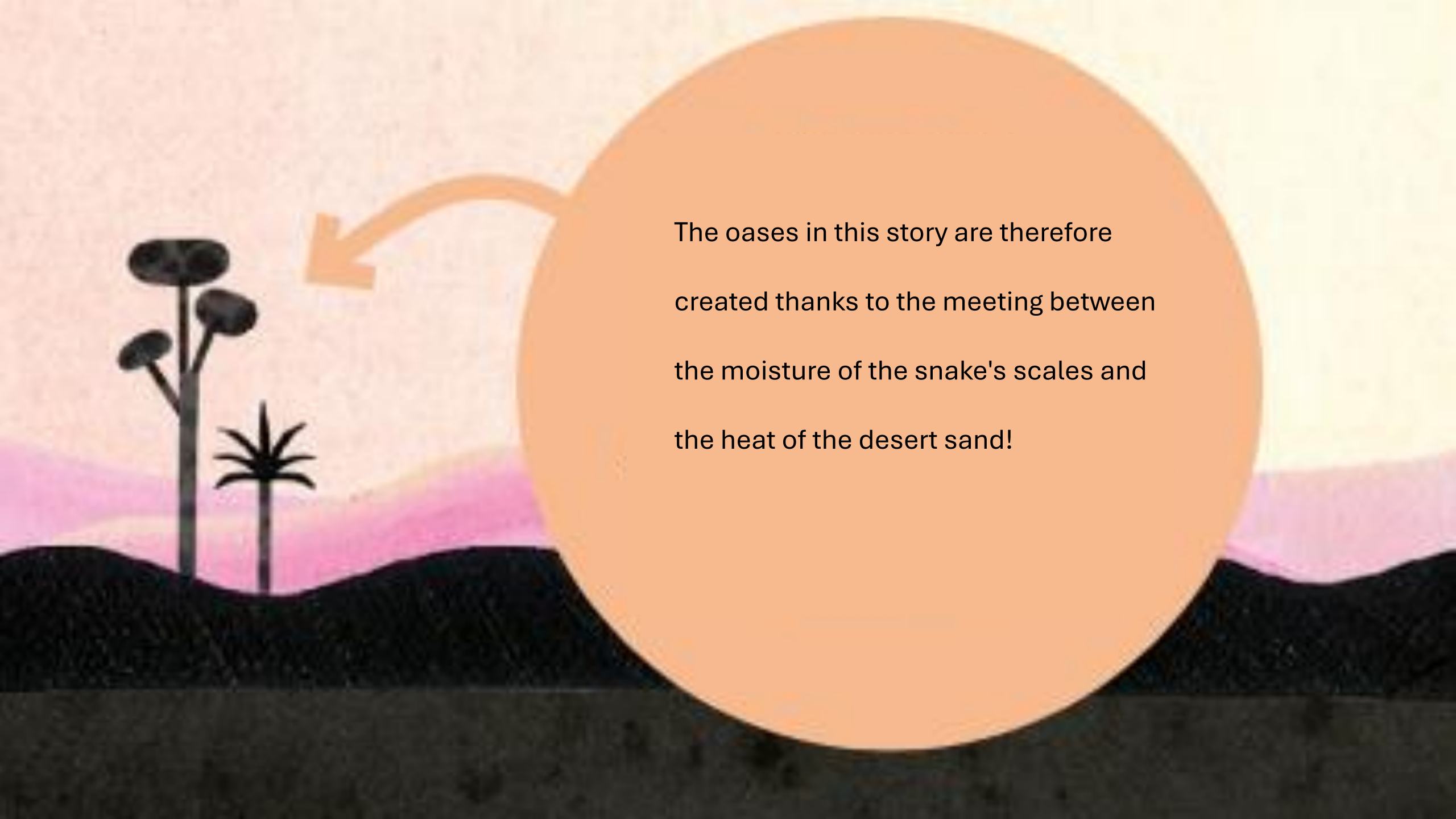
A cold-blooded snake and a warm-blooded camel meet in the scorched earth.



Where the snake crawls, plants, water and animals are born: an oasis is born!



The two new friends become inseparable.



The oases in this story are therefore created thanks to the meeting between the moisture of the snake's scales and the heat of the desert sand!

Here's what the oasis created in this story looks like

Spot the 7 mistakes that have crept into the images below

BUT IN REALITY

What exactly is an oasis?

Where is it located?

Is it really made using snake scales?

Let's start at the beginning...







THE DESERT

A desert is an area where it almost never rains and where the climate is extreme: it is either very cold or very hot. Therefore, there are cold deserts and hot deserts.

A hot desert can be made of **rocks or sand**.

Circle rocky deserts in brown and sandy deserts in orange.

Answers: You should circle images 2, 5 and 6 in brown and images 1, 3 and 4 in orange.





The largest hot desert in the world is called the **Sahara**. It is located in **Africa** and covers a very large part of the continent.

UNBELIEVABLE!

During the day, it is very hot in the Sahara: temperatures on average are 50°C. But at night, the temperature drops significantly: it can even reach 0°C!

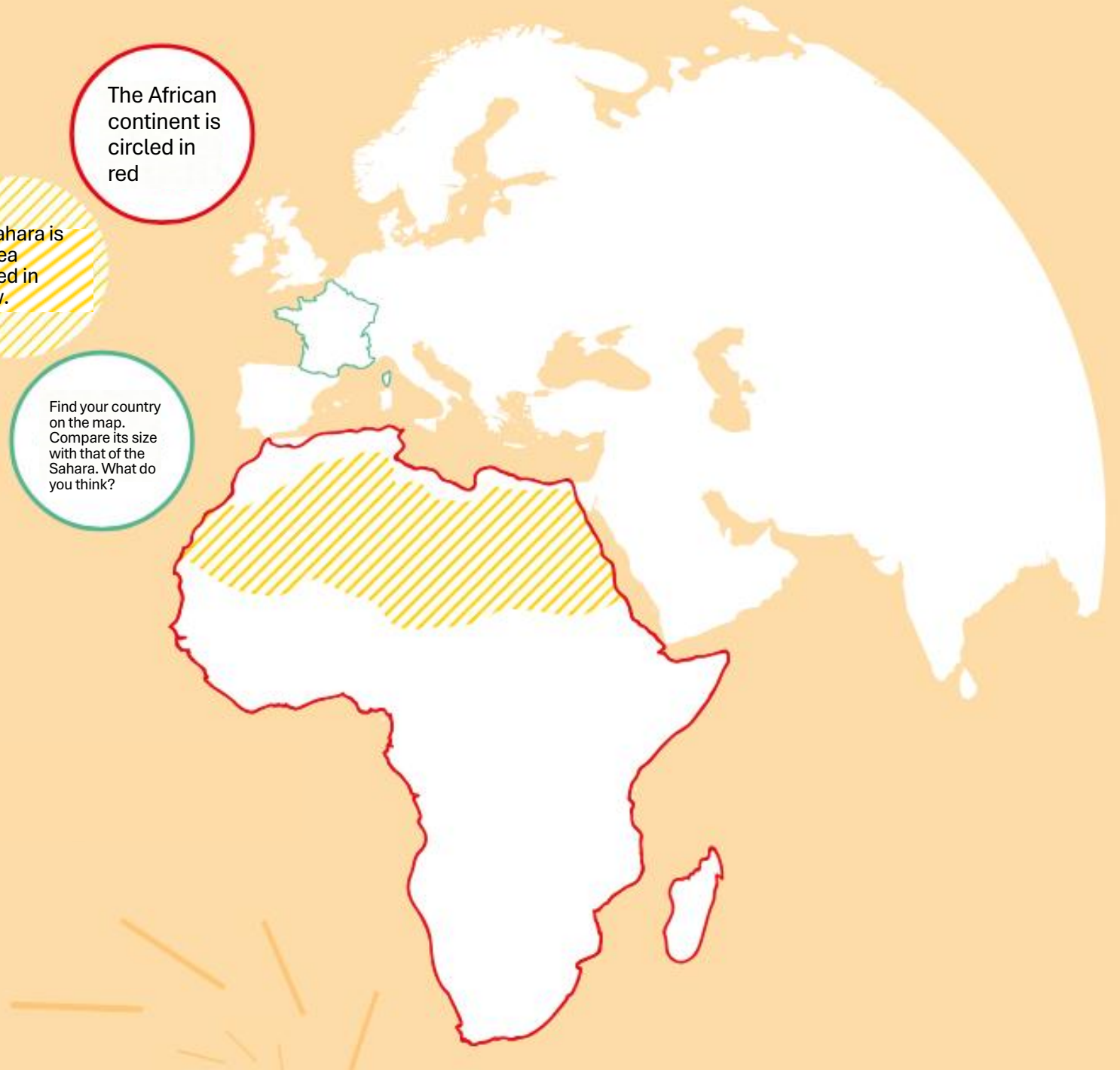
This is because the sand does not retain heat: it radiates it back into the air. So when the sun sets, the sand, having no longer stored heat, no longer radiates it. The temperature drops.

In addition, the air in the desert is very dry. However, it is water vapor that retains heat in the air. Without water vapor in the air, the heat cannot remain.

The Sahara is the area outlined in yellow.

The African continent is circled in red

Find your country on the map. Compare its size with that of the Sahara. What do you think?



What is in the middle of the photo?

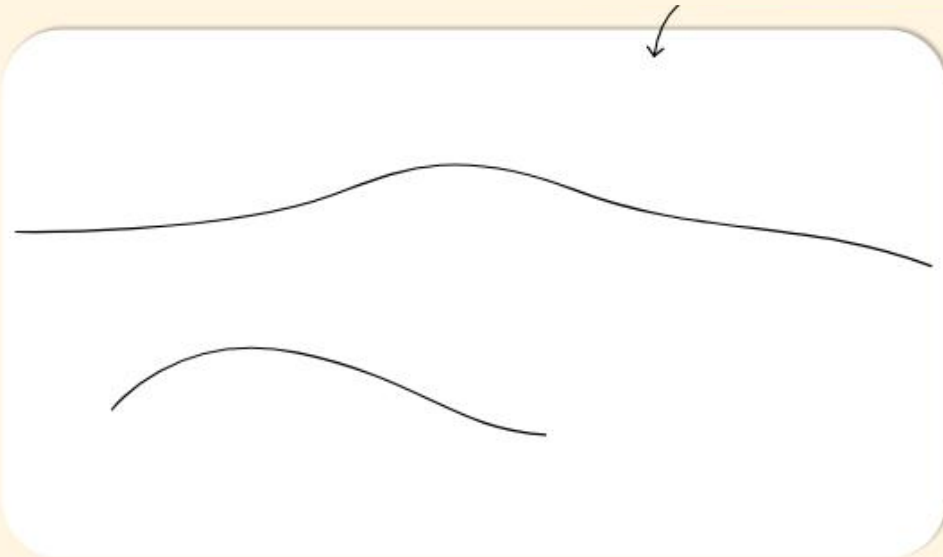
What do you see in the foreground and in the background?

Where is the vegetation?

Why is it there?



Draw a stream and some vegetation in this desert design.

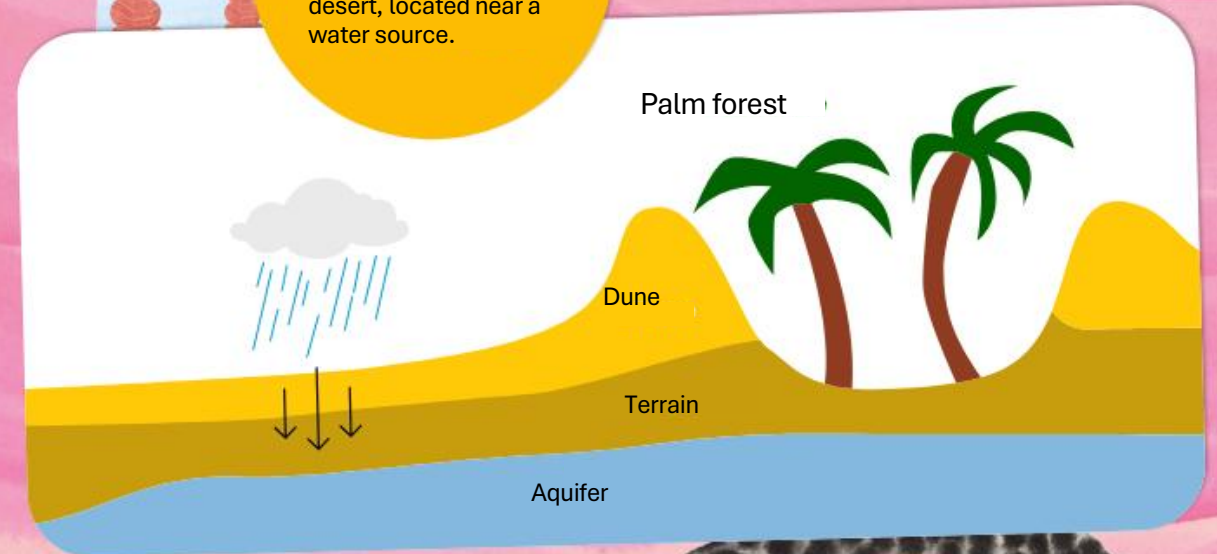


Streams, which originate from nearby mountains, are filled with melting snow or rain. This water circulates in certain places, between dunes or rocks.

There are also underground water bodies: these are like natural reservoirs of water in the ground, which fill up on the rare occasions when it rains.



An oasis is therefore a zone of vegetation, in the middle of the desert, located near a water source.



Humans have developed techniques to extract and use water naturally present in the soil in order to grow plants for food.

Specifically, they have grown cereals (wheat, barley, etc.), vegetables (onions, tomatoes, peppers, etc.), aromatic herbs, spices, and even fruit trees.

Match the names of the fruit trees with their fruits and with the corresponding fruit pictures:

Royal Dates

Fig

Olives

Apricot

Pomegranate






apricot tree

olive tree

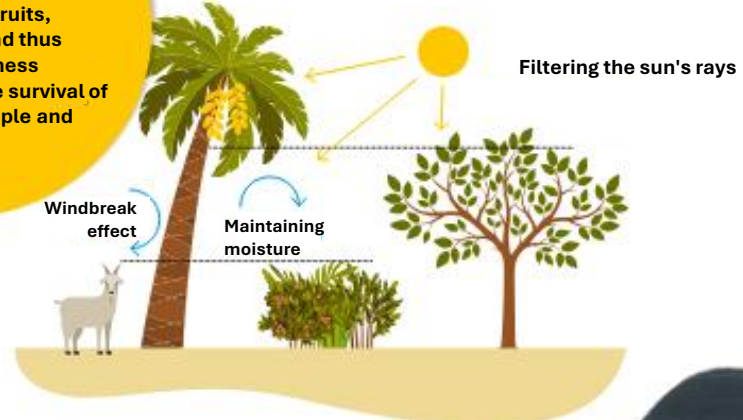
pomegranate tree

fig tree

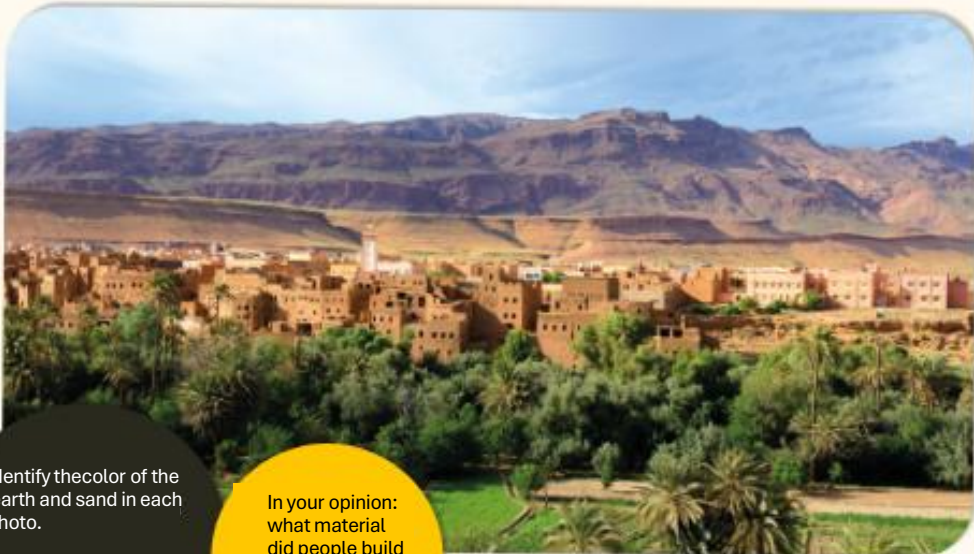
date tree



Date palms are very important in oases because they are large trees that, in addition to offering delicious sweet fruits, provide shade and thus provide the coolness necessary for the survival of other plants, people and animals.



Since **agriculture was possible in the oases, people settled there.** They built houses there to live sustainably near water points and their crops.



Identify the color of the earth and sand in each photo.

Then, observe the color of the houses.

In your opinion: what material did people build their houses with?



Answer: The houses were built with earth and sand.

Answers: Royal Dates > date tree > 5, Fig > fig tree > 2, Olives > olive tree > 3, Apricot > apricot tree > 1, Pomegranate > pomegranate tree > 4

HOT DESERT ANIMALS

Oases are a refuge for wildlife that lives in the hot desert. You will find the animals down there. Write their names on the dotted lines!



.....

A



.....

B



.....

C

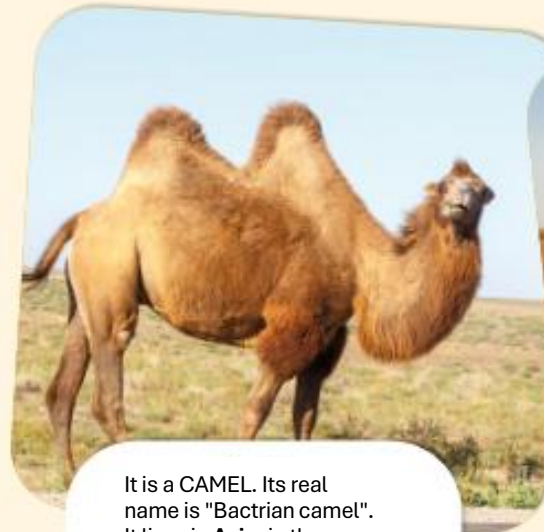


.....

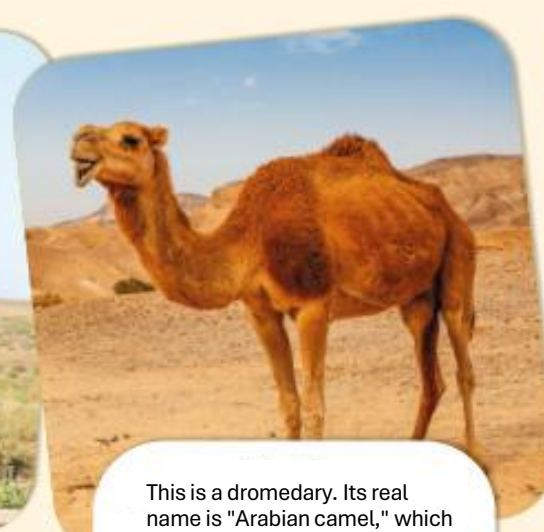
D

Answers: A = snake / B = fennec fox = scorpion / D = camel

Look at these two animals. Do you see any similarities? Any differences?



It is a CAMEL. Its real name is "Bactrian camel". It lives in **Asia**, in the deserts of cold countries, Mongolia. It has two humps.



This is a dromedary. Its real name is "Arabian camel," which can be confusing. It lives in Africa, in the deserts of hot countries like the Sahara. It has only one hump.



Did you know?

The humps of these animals are full of fat: they are energy reserves that allow them to withstand the harsh conditions of the environment they live in. Camels need a larger amount of fat to combat the extreme cold: that's why they have two!