



Mad About Meerkats!

Key Stage 2

Meerkat Facts:

- They are from the Kalahari Desert in southern Africa
- They live in extended families - with one mum and dad in charge
- They protect their territory from other meerkat families
- They take turns to be on sentry duty

How well do you know your meerkats? Fill in the blanks in the labels below. If you want, draw arrows to point to the correct parts of the meerkat.

You might be able to think of the words yourself, but to make it easier, see the word box on the next page.

Excellent eyesight for seeing long distances across the d _ _ _ _ _
Dark patches reduce glare from the s _ _

Small ears can be c _ _ _ _ _
to protect them from sand and dust. But the meerkat can still h _ _ _

Long c _ _ _ _ _ to d _ _ _
in the sand to find food or make b _ _ _ _ _

Colour and pattern give superb c _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
to hide the meerkat from p _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Strong back l _ _ _ help
the meerkat to stand upright to watch out for signs of d _ _ _ _ _

T _ _ _ helps the meerkat to b _ _ _ _ _ _ _
and also stops it falling b _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
when standing on tiptoe!

A family of meerkats is sometimes called a m _ _



Extra Activity - Meerkats are famous for their teamwork. Talk about or write about how you think this helps them to survive in the Kalahari Desert.

The Kalahari Desert

What is the weather like?

Like all deserts, the Kalahari is very dry (although *unlike most deserts*, at certain times of year it rains.) It can be VERY HOT - as high as 40 degrees C, but in the winter, the temperature can fall to below freezing! So it is a very challenging habitat!

What food is there?

Although much of the ground is bare, there are grasses, shrubs, such as thorn bushes, and cacti. Like many animals, meerkats survive by eating other animals. They dig most of their prey out of the sand. They also dig up roots to get moisture.

What predators are after meerkats?

Meerkats might end up as dinner for jackals, hyenas, hawks, eagles and snakes.



Label the Kalahari Desert on the map

Circle the foods that you think meerkats eat in the wild

scorpion roots spider
nuts goat insect lizard
mango leaves banana

What kind of animals are meerkats? Write the correct words

- 1 They have a backbone. So they are _____
- 2 They mostly eat other animals. So they are _____
- 3 They have hair on their bodies, feed their young on milk, and are warm-blooded. So they are _____

1 vertebrates 2 carnivores 3 mammals

Wordbox for meerkat labels on page 1

legs	tail	balance	sun	desert	mob	dig	backwards
closed	hear	danger	predators	burrows	camouflage	claws	

Extra Activity - On a sheet of paper, why not design a burrow that a meerkat family has made in the ground! Give it lots of tunnels, entrances and exits and at least three "rooms"!