

# Back to the Past

## *Before Your Visit - Activity 2*

### Desert Survival Dilemmas

#### Background Information

Review the background information section from the previous Back to the Past activity, "Picture the Past".

#### Activity Preparation

Make an overhead transparency of "Four Desert Survival Dilemmas".

#### Activity Procedure

1. Begin this activity by reviewing with students some of the following questions about the Hohokam:

*How might people have survived in the desert thousands of years ago, without all of the conveniences of today (e.g., without shopping malls, grocery stores, Seven-Elevens, bulldozers)?*

*How did the Hohokam get their food? Where did they get their clothes, their water?*

*What kind of shelters did the Hohokam use?*

Explain that the Hohokam had to create ways to use things in nature to help them survive.

2. Display the overhead transparency "Desert Survival Dilemmas." Ask the students what they think the word "dilemma" means. Review the pictures on the transparency as a class asking students what they notice about each scene. Next, explain the dilemma in each picture as follows:

1. *How can they get the ripe fruit from atop the high saguaro?*
2. *How can they get water from the stream to their cornfield?*
3. *How can they grind the mesquite beans into flour?*
4. *How can they make a shelter from the storm?*

#### Objectives

##### Students will

- name and describe some survival problems associated with living in a desert environment.
- describe ways to solve selected "desert survival dilemmas" with objects from the desert.

#### Lesson Information

##### Materials

Overhead projector, overhead transparency of "Four Desert Survival Dilemmas" (master provided), blank drawing paper, crayons or colored pencils or blank transparency paper and markers.

##### Time

One class period

##### Subject

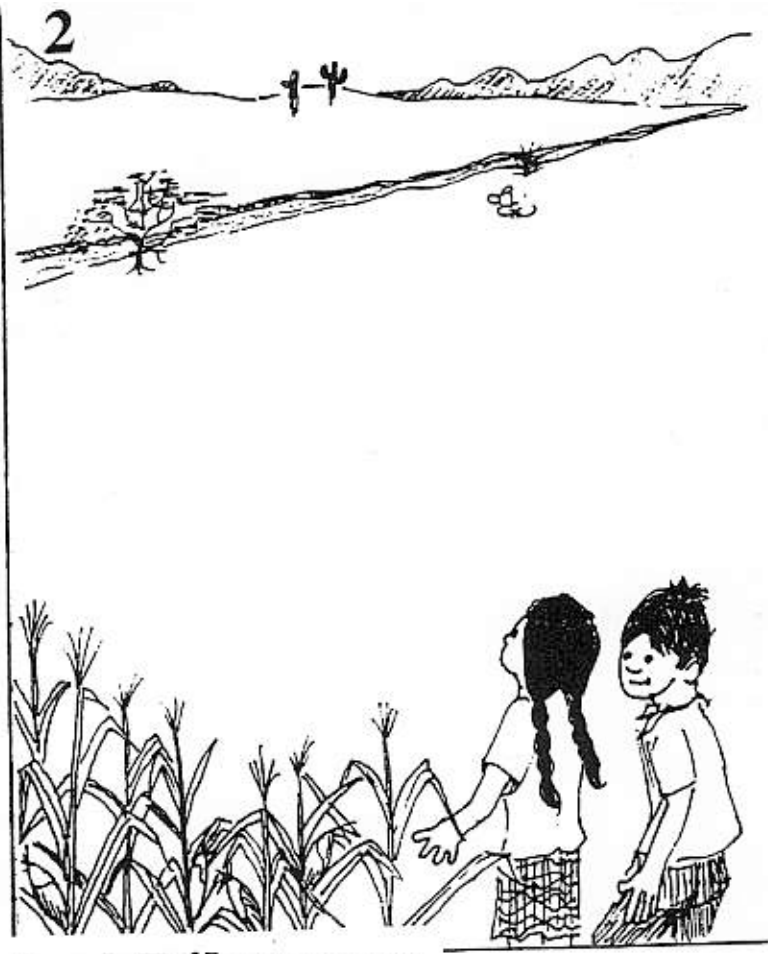
Social Science, Art

Write each of these problem questions on the board. Point out that these are actual survival problems that the Hohokam invented ways to overcome. Have students note not only the dilemma, but the other natural objects in the illustrations as well. Encourage students to **THINK** about creative ways to solve these problems.

3. Next, break the students up into 4 groups, leaving the transparency on display. Assign each group a dilemma and explain to the students that in their groups, they should discuss ways to creatively solve the survival dilemma. They should use the natural objects in the picture as part of the solution to the dilemma. When they decide on a solution, they should **DRAW** it on the paper provided. Encourage each student within the group to participate in the discussion and the drawing.
4. When all of the groups have finished drawing, have each group take a turn in front of the rest of the class to present the survival dilemma and their drawing of the solution. (You may provide students with blank transparency paper for their presentations.) When each group has finished presenting their resolution to the problem praise the class for its creative work.
5. Engage students in a discussion of how the Hohokam invented creative ways to use things in nature for desert survival. Also remind the students of the primary needs for survival: food, water and shelter. Have students consider how the Hohokam must have felt about the saguaro, the rabbit, or the mesquite tree, knowing they relied on them for survival. Discuss the traditional Native American respect for living things based on the understanding that humans rely on nature and the environment for survival.
6. Explain to the students that they will need to prepare for a special assignment they will conduct while visiting Sabino Canyon. In order to prepare for this special activity, the students need to turn on their imaginations while walking through Sabino and be aware of the natural objects around them that could be used to

create something useful for survival (food, water, shelter) or for expression (games or art). Stress that there is no need to collect anything, but that they will need to take careful mental notes on what the object is, and how it could be used. When they return to class they will be given time to draw or write about these special creations. Remind the students that these creations should have a purpose — either for survival (food, water, shelter) or for expression (games, art). While the students are at Sabino on their field excursion encourage them to ask their guide about any objects they are unsure about.

7. End this activity with a review of some of the plants and animals that are common in Sabino Canyon, as learned in the activity "Scenes of Sabino" and how they might have been useful for the Hohokam in their efforts at survival in this desert land.



**Four Desert Survival Dilemmas**

