

Springboard^{into} Comprehension

Identifying Detail Why Are There Bears in the Sky?

Main Idea Show Some Backbone

Sequencing Life on Venus

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Compare and Contrast Communities of the Desert

Fact and Opinion The Birds at Waders Flat

Cause and Effect Global Changes



Communities of the Desert



Written by Pam Rushby

Communities of the Desert

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Introduction

The San and the Mongols are desert peoples who move around and do not always live in the same place. They are **nomads**. In some ways, they are very different from each other. In some ways, their lives are alike.



San women carrying their belongings

The San People

Where They Live

The San people live in the Kalahari Desert. *Kalahari* means *the great thirst*. The Kalahari covers much of the country of Botswana. It covers parts of Namibia and South Africa, too. Parts of the Kalahari are very dry. Few trees and grasses grow in these places. However, people still live there.

Where the Kalahari Desert Lies



How They Live

The San live in family groups. Each family group has a large area that it moves around in. This area is called the group's **territory**. There are between 25 and 60 men, women, and children in a group.

The San hunt animals for food. In summer, they follow the animals around their territory. Animals move from waterhole to waterhole. They move to find new plants to eat. The San do not keep animals of their own or grow plants for food.



A San family group in the Kalahari Desert

The Kalahari is cooler in winter. Night frosts kill plants. Then, there is not enough food in one place for the whole group. The group splits up into smaller groups, which go to different parts of the territory. They come together again when winter is over and there is more food.

The San do not live in houses. Instead, they move to a new place every three or four weeks. At each new place, they build shelters from branches and grass. In winter, the dry season, the shelters are simple. In summer, the wet season, the shelters have strong roofs to keep out the rain.



These grass shelters must last for only a few weeks.