PLANNING: Desert Animals

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Theme: National History & Geography

Overview of learning:

- Deserts and where they are in the world
- Investigate weather and climate in deserts
- Find out about people who live in deserts

Interesting aspects:

- Bleak environment - lack of water
- People who live in the desert - Bedouin
- Sand storms & animals

Inquiry questions:

- What kinds of animals have adapted to life in the desert?
- how do people live in the desert?

Narrative:

Description: A team of natural history photographers and film makers are commissioned by the BBC to visit Wadi Rum in Jordan to investigate what kinds of animals live there and film what they find. They are allocated a Bedouin guide to help them in the dangerous environment. Everything goes well until the team are separated from their guide following a sand storm.

Expert team: natural history photographers and film makers

Client: BBC - Natural History Unit

Commission: to visit Wadi Rum in Jordan to investigate what kinds of animals live there and film what they find.

Other points of view:

- Bedouin guide
- Bedouin people
- Viewers of the programme

Tasks:

- To take notes about Wadi Rum and where it is located
- To assemble the equipment they need for the job
- To meet the guide
- To set up their cameras and prepare to film/photograph the animals

Links to curriculum:

- Science - Animals and their environment
- Geography - deserts and the Bedouin people

Resources:

1. Paper, including a stack of A5
2. Slideshow from the BBC - deserts, WadiRum, Bedouin, and animals
3. Fact sheet for students to use - printed out and cut up
4. AIR as the Bedouin guide - prepared

Steps:

Step 1: Introduction to the context

1. "Have you ever seen those programmes on the TV about animals? The Blue Planet, Life on Earth - those kinds of things?"

2. Discussion

3. "Have you ever wondered how they get made and about the people who make them?"

4. Discussion

5. "If you were a team of people who travelled the world filming animals for one of these programmes, what kind of equipment would you take with you?"

6. TASK - Children draw and write lists of equipment.

Step 2: Setting up the meeting

1. Discuss inside the fiction (take on the role of a member of the team) what kind of equipment the team would need. During the discussion introduce the idea of a Team HQ.

2. "I guess along with all the other rooms in the our HQ we would have a meeting room, somewhere where we could meet together or talk with visitors. How do you think we should arrange this room to be like the meeting room?"

3. TASK: Move the chairs around.

4. [Start to write on the board - 'Meeting today at xxx, Mr Robert Brown from the BBC Natural History Unit, To discuss the filming of a new programme called - DESERTS]
5. "Well, as our story begins, the Team are meeting an important person today to discuss the making a new programme about deserts."
6. 'You'll need to take notes, so you don't forget what he says…" [Hand out A5 paper and pens]

Step 3: Introducing the Commission

1. "Are we ready? Well let's begin. I'm going to be Mr Brown and I'm going to come in and then we'll see what happens…"
2. Teacher-in-Role (TIR) as Mr Brown - "Good morning, thanks you for seeing me this morning. As you know I'm from the BBC and I've asked to see you this morning because we have another job for your Team. We are looking to make a new programme, called Deserts, and we'd like you Team to go out to a particular desert, called Wadi Rum in Jordan, and investigate what kind of animals are living there, how they survive, and to film them in their natural habitat?"
3. Come out of role - "What did you hear? Did you manage to make all the notes you needed? Shall we go through what he said again?"
4. Discussion

Step 4: Background knowledge

1. TIR: "As a way of giving you some background knowledge on Wadi Rum I've brought along a slideshow I would like to show you."
2. Run through slideshow, stopping and talking to the Team, answering any questions and giving them time to make notes. Come out of role if necessary to support them.
3. TIR: "When you arrive in Wadi Rum you will be met by a Beduin tribes-person, who will be your guide on this expedition. Please listen carefully to what your guide tells you, the information could be the difference between life and death. The desert is a very dangerous environment."

Step 5: Animals

1. TIR: "Lastly, along with the information I've given you about the desert, I have also brought along these information cards about the kinds of animals you are likely to find there. Please take a look and see what you think…"

2. TASK: Team read the information cards and feedback what they've found out. TIR (now as a member of the Team asks if there are any SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS or EQUIPMENT the Team must take as a consequence.

Step 6: The Guide

1. Using Google-Earth the teacher (using a NARRATOR'S VOICE) describes the journey of the Team to the Wadi Rum desert. "Taking off from Heathrow the Team flew in their commissioned aircraft to the airport in Damascus. After going though passport control and buying their visas, they unpacked their equipment from the plan and loaded everything into the back of the Land-Rovers. Driving south they kept to the road and after six hours drive they found themselves in the Bedouin village [Show slide] where they were met by their Bedouin Guide…
2. [Slide show] Children are introduced to an adult-in-role (AIR) taking on the part of the Beduin Guide.
   - Some background information on the Beduin - https://wadirumjeeptours.com/blog/2017/11/2/whats-in-a-name-all-about-bedouin-names-
3. The Role:
   - **Name**: Mehedi Saleh Mohammed abu-Rabia Al Heuwaitat [put this on a slide]
   - **Background** (ask the adult playing the part of the guide to invent some background, such as age, family, when the first became a guide, their most memorable experience, something that happened to them they find hard to forget and what are they most proud about being a Bedouin).
   - **Function:** The function of the role is:
     (1) To introduce the children (as the Team) to the Beduin people
     (2) To tell them about the desert
     (3) To give them safety information (TENSION)
     (4) To answer their questions
   - **Research:** To play the role the adult will know to have done some background research. (Follow the link above and search on Google). It is not necessary to be an expert, but decide what kind of knowledge you want the children to acquire.

Step 7: The camp

1. Once again adopting the NARRATOR'S voice the teacher takes the Team into the desert - "After talking to Mehedi, the Team went back to their Land Rover and followed Mehedi. Before long they had left the village and were out in the desert of Wadi [SHOW THE SLIDES OF THE DESERT]. For more than an hour Mehedi took them across the sand, the afternoon sun was beginning to drop below the height of the hills, but it was still hot. Suddenly their guide took a turn to the right and the Team could say a circle of tents coming up over the slope. It was their camp site.
2. "Arriving the Team unpacked their bags, staggered into their tents and were soon fast asleep."
3. "In the morning they were greeted by Mehedi who was making tea and they all sat down to breakfast. By the time they finished, although it was still early, the sun was raising in the sky and it was already beginning to grow hot.
4. AIR as Mehedi asks them about the kinds of animals they wanted to look for…
5. Discussion
6. AIR Mehedi: "I know exactly the right place, it is about 90 minutes away up in the dunes, but near some mountains. Let's go there now before it gets too hot."

Step 8: Into the Desert

1. Teacher NARRATOR - "The team grabbed their bags, followed Mehedi back to the cars and set off back into the desert. 90 minutes later they found themselves on the top of a high sand dune, stained the colour red. In the short distance was a tall mountain disappear into the sky."
2. AIR as Mehedi - "Here will be a good place to set up your cameras. Be careful to stay in the shade, out here it can get very hot. I am going to leave you for a short while, there is a water hole near here (about three miles away) it should provide us with fresh water if we need it, but I must check it hasn't dried up. The weather has been very hot this year."
3. Mehedi leaves.
4. TASK - The Team set up their cameras and organise the shade. [Give the children time to work together in role. If need be use the convention of a photograph (you can be in role as someone documenting their work) to keep control.

Step 9: The Sand Storm

1. NARRATOR - "As the Team worked, the sun rose high in the sky and then they noticed a change in the air. Some of the sand around the feet began to move and drift. A wind began to pick up and jostle their equipment. Before long the wind was getting stronger and stronger, blowing over their cameras and scattering their papers.
2. Ask the Team what they want to do - quick discussion.
3. Tell them the next five seconds are crucial - give them time to decide what they are going to do.
4. Explain that everything is going to slow down - like in a film when something really important is happening - and you're going to count through 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 -1. Each time you count they are going to move but only until you stay 'STOP' at that point they must freeze and listen…
5. FIVE (wait a second) STOP - (look around and describe what you can see: "The Team frantically began to grab their equipment… fighting against the sand that blasted into the eyes, mouth and ears… Etc).
6. FOUR…. STOP (Again describe what you can see: "They struggled towards the Land Rover. one of them fell… Etc)
7. THREE… STOP ("Reaching down their colleagues pulled them to their feet… on they went…)
8. TWO…STOP ("The land rover had now almost disappeared in the swirling sand and their was every chance they would were going to miss it and get lost in the desert…)
9. ONE… STOP ("But at the last moment, they stumbled upon it, hurled open the doors and staggered inside. Finally, for now, they were safe inside… But what about their equipment? What about the film they had taken that morning? Was it all lost?)
10. "AND WHAT SHOULD THEY DO NOW?

Further Steps: