

EDUCATORS' GUIDE

MAGIC TREE HOUSE[®]

MERLIN MISSIONS

Season of Sandstorms



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ABOUT *Season of the Sandstorms*

Jack and Annie travel back in time to a desert in the Middle East at the request of Merlin who has given them a rhyme to help on their mission. There they meet a Bedouin tribe and learn about the way that they live. From camel rides and oases to ancient writings and dangerous sandstorms, here's another Magic Tree House filled with all the mystery, history, magic, and old-fashioned adventure that kids love to read about.

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

Wise Wisdom

The Bedouins believed that knowledge belongs to all and that wisdom is to be shared. Wisdom is defined as accumulated learning (Merriam-Webster). Ask students to identify a piece of wisdom they have gained and then brainstorm ways to spread the wisdom-e.g., writing about it, talking about it, demonstrating it.

CURRICULUM: *Language Arts*

May I Have This Date?

Dates are a very important and popular food of the desert. Bring in several different types of dates for students to sample, including dates in their natural form, date ice cream, date nut bread, date shakes, and other foods that include dates. Have students identify which dates they prefer, and graph their preferences.

CURRICULUM: *Health • Math*

Sands of Time

Students can better understand how long it takes to accomplish tasks by using a sand timer. Have the students determine/watch how long it takes for the sand to flow through the timer. Then have them predict how many times they can do a variety of actions in the time it takes for the sand to flow from the top to the bottom of the

timer. Some possible activities include jumping, standing and sitting, reading pages, doing math problems, and writing words. Compare their predictions with the actual number of actions accomplished. Discuss how the knowledge that they were being timed influenced their reactions and feelings, and whether speed is the only determining factor in accomplishment.

CURRICULUM: *Math*

Camels Can

A metaphor used in this story is the camel as the ship of the desert. Discuss the meaning of this metaphor with your class and why it is appropriate. Have students draw a literal interpretation of this metaphor. Finally, have students come up with their own metaphors and use them in the context of a short story. You may want to start them off with a few ideas: “My brother is a hog at the dinner table “ or “My sister is a mule when it comes to bedtime.”

CURRICULUM: *Science • Art • Language Arts*

Teaching ideas by Dr. Peggy A Sharp, a national children’s literature consultant.

